The Environmental Impact of Clothing: A Comparative Study Between Cotton and Lyocell from an Environmental, Economical and Quality Perspective

Nilsson Rapping, Liv (School: Vagga Gymnasieskolan)

The study was a comparative study between cotton and lyocell from an environmental, economic, and quality perspective. The results are based on a literature study, on an interview, on a market research and on a survey. The fashion industry contributes to a large part of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. If the goal of reducing environmental impact is to be achieved, a change must take place. A constantly increasing demand for cheap and fashionable clothes is a trend towards increased emissions. To reduce emissions, we need to produce fewer clothes and we must start now. Since it seems easier said than done to change consumption behavior, the choice of material could contribute to lower emissions. The aim of the study was to investigate various factors that could enable or prevent a possible replacement of cotton with lyocell. The results show that the factors, investigated in the study, can make it possible to replace cotton with lyocell. The environmental impact was clearly lower for lyocell than for cotton and the quality of the fabric seems to be better. The market research showed no price differences between clothes in the different materials and consumers attitudes towards the environmental impact of clothing enable the replace of cotton with lyocell. To summarize, a replacement of cotton with lyocell could be able to reduce a part of the negative environmental impact caused by the fashion industry.

Awards Won: