

# Textile Recycling

A tale of the Emperor's New Clothes



चेतावनी  
जहाँ भी धीपी/मिस्केट  
शोध गारं वगैर

The U.S. alone sends about **25 billion** pounds of textile waste to landfills every year.

Right now, **less than 1%** of collected clothing is recycled into new yarns and fibers

only **10-15% of donated clothing** actually ends up in the secondhand market.

24% of donated clothing is shipped to Africa, Eastern Europe and South America to be resold. This has a slew of unintended consequences on their culture and economy

# The Rag Biz- Star Wipers

“sweatshirts....made in South Asia, exported to the U.S., and worn until they were donated to Goodwill, the Salvation Army, or some other thrift-based exporter. When they didn’t sell there, they were exported again (to India, most likely), cut up, and exported again—this time to Star Wipers in Newark.”

Bloomberg Report Nov 11, 2019



# Polyester

The manufacture of plastic-based fibers consumes more than 300 million barrels of oil annually

*Nearly half* of the world's clothing is made of polyester and Greenpeace forecasts this amount to nearly double by 2030

Fabrics that are polyester blends can not be recycled at this time.

Polyester fabrics can take 200 years to decompose.

They are not biodegradable.

# Recycle those plastic bottles



rPET (recycled Polyester fabric) takes 59 percent less energy to produce than virgin polyester,

it still requires more energy than hemp, wool and both organic and regular cotton.

We wear the fleece, we wash the fleece,  
we eat the fish, we eat the fleece

Each cycle of a washing machine can release more than 700,000 plastic fibers into the environment....doesn't matter if it is virgin or recycled poly.

These microfibers are contaminating our watersheds, the fish that we eat and the animals that rely on that water.

synthetic fibers, recycled or not, do not biodegrade and tend to bind with molecules of harmful chemical pollutants found in wastewater, such as pesticides.

# Back to the Future

Circular Economy: Research is being done to create ways to separate fibers in multi-fiber textiles into different components that can be used. This isn't coming tomorrow.

**Purchase less:** The most sustainable garment is the one you own

**Purchase sustainable fibers:** hemp, cotton, wool, silk

**Learn how to mend:** good for your soul and the planet

**Learn how to sew:** reinventing your favorite clothes into new unique fashions

**Learn how to weave:** old tee shirts make great place mats and rugs

**Learn how to dye:** over-dyeing a garment gives it new life