

35th INTERNATIONAL COTTON CONFERENCE BREMEN 2021



ABSTRACT + PRESENTATION

Session:

Panel Discussion: Responsible Fibre Production Programs (C2)

Presentation Title:

Responsible Fibre Consumption

Speaker:

Dalena White, IWTO - International Wool Textile Organisation, Brussels, Belgium

Presentations are available on the conference archive:

<https://baumwollboerse.de/en/cotton-conference/lectures/>

Conference Organization

Faserinstitut Bremen e.V., Bremen, Germany. E-Mail: conference@faserinstitut.de

Bremer Baumwollboerse, Bremen, Germany. E-Mail: info@baumwollboerse.de

Bremen Cotton Conference
17 March 2021
Processes and Methods for Responsible Fibre Production

Responsible Fibre Consumption

Dalena White
International Wool Textile Organisation

ABSTRACT

The Oxford dictionary tells us the meaning of Responsible is '*being the primary cause of something and so able to be blamed or credited for it*'. Incidentally, the Oxford word of the year in 2018 was *Toxic*, in 2019 *Climate Emergency* and in 2020 the title was awarded to *Unprecedented*. The above all seems to tie in with our topic today. Will the textile industry continue to pollute our planet with toxic fibre production, adding to our current climate emergency and unprecedented global events, or can we clean up our act and take credit for a cleaner, greener planet in the near future?

During an interview with the Duke of Cambridge at Davos in 2019, Sir David Attenborough said: "We are destroying the natural world and with it, ourselves... We have to recognise that every breath we take, every mouthful of food, comes from the natural world. We are one coherent ecosystem."

According to a recent report by the *Changing Markets Foundation*, clothing production has more than doubled during the past 20 years.ⁱ The average European consumer now buys 26kg of textiles per year and discard almost 50% of it, in the same year.ⁱⁱ We are creating an incredible mess and textiles made from petroleum-based fibres are causing irreversible damage to land and water resources.

We believe that natural fibres such as wool and cotton offer many solutions to our current environmental conundrums. Unlike fossil fuel-based fibres, wool and cotton are indefinitely renewable, and can be grown again year after year. At the end of their life, these fibre types can be used again, with wool valued for insulation and bedding because of its inherent flame resistance and cotton valued because of its hydrophilic, moisture absorbent nature.

The wool fibre has been evolving on the sheep's back for millions of years and Mother Nature created the ultimate technical textile, with a complex structure offering many benefits to consumers searching for more sustainable alternatives to build back better, after the pandemic.ⁱⁱⁱ

IWTO members represent 23 countries and all stages of the wool pipeline. Members of Working Groups and Technical Committees have actively been seeking and establishing textile standards and best practices since 1930. IWTO members have established various traceability methods, to clarify the wool production pipeline and offer transparency to consumers. Block chain is earmarked as an important digital asset in the near future.^{iv}

Research has established that wool fibres biodegrade in water and do not cause microfibre pollution. We have published the first Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) for a wool garment and learned that as wool garments have higher value, consumers take better care of them and keep them for much longer. We have also proven that textiles made from wool require less washing, saving valuable resources during the use-phase.

International Wool Textile Organisation aisbl

Address Rue de l'Industrie, 4, 1000 Brussels, Belgium – **Tel** +3225054010 – **Email** iwto@iwto.org – **VAT number** BE 0541803891

Bank details IBAN BE41001712924010 – BIC GEBABEBB – BNP Paribas Fortis Bank Place du Luxembourg 14 – 1050 Brussels – Belgium

Research into consumer habits revealed that wool textiles are more readily and effectively recycled than any other fibre.^v

And yet, when we look at the current textile rating tools available to retail buying managers, we see that scoring methods exclude the use-phase of textiles. This scoring method is in direct opposition to ISO standards. Microfibre pollution is simply ignored, and this linear system seems to be directly opposed to the EU's drive for a circular economy. The European Union has targeted the textiles industry as a priority sector for establishing sustainability standards, in order to achieve climate neutrality and a true circular economy. They will soon be requiring clothing and textile products sold in the EU to carry labels displaying their environmental credentials – in the expectation that consumers will make the best choice for the planet in their purchasing decisions.

The EU's proposed PEF methodology has serious shortcomings, with attributes such as 'natural', 'renewable', 'recyclable' and 'biodegradable', either omitted from the PEF score or only minimally rewarded. By contrast, fossil fibres are not discounted for being non-renewable and non-biodegradable, and their contribution to microplastic pollution is not even considered in the EU's system.

Products made from wool and cotton are at significant risk of being rated poorly compared to synthetics, with the result that demand for wool and cotton will decline as brand purchasing managers are forced to look for alternative fibres with better ratings.

To establish responsible textile and fibre production standards for the future, we will have to face the elephant in the room: our addiction to fast fashion. This highly lucrative business model, enabled by the massive growth in fossil fuel-based fibres turned into low quality garments by the lowest labour rate available for the season, has been dominating our industry for the past 30 years, resulting in opaque supply chains.

Legislators and policy makers are now being held responsible by well-informed consumers, demanding action, and transparency, throughout the textile value chain. This model cannot be adopted by future textile rating systems, such as the EU PEF Process, if the public's demand for a greener future is to be taken seriously.

Responsible fibre production systems of the future would have to include responsible fibre consumption and be built on true scientific facts or they will be blamed for causing more harm, instead of solving our dilemmas.

ⁱ Fossil Fashion: the hidden reliance of fast fashion on fossil fuels <https://changingmarkets.org/portfolio/fossil-fashion/>

ⁱⁱ European Textile Consumption https://www.instagram.com/p/CLLZgKbIMih/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

ⁱⁱⁱ IWTO Wool Notes <https://iwto.org/resources/wool-notes/>

^{iv} Wool Traceability <https://iwto.org/wool-supply-chain/traceability/>

^v IWTO Sustainability <https://iwto.org/sustainability/>



RESPONSIBLE FIBRE CONSUMPTION

BREMEN COTTON CONFERENCE – 17 MARCH 2021 – DALENA WHITE



RESPONSIBLE:
TAKE THE CREDIT OR GET THE BLAME

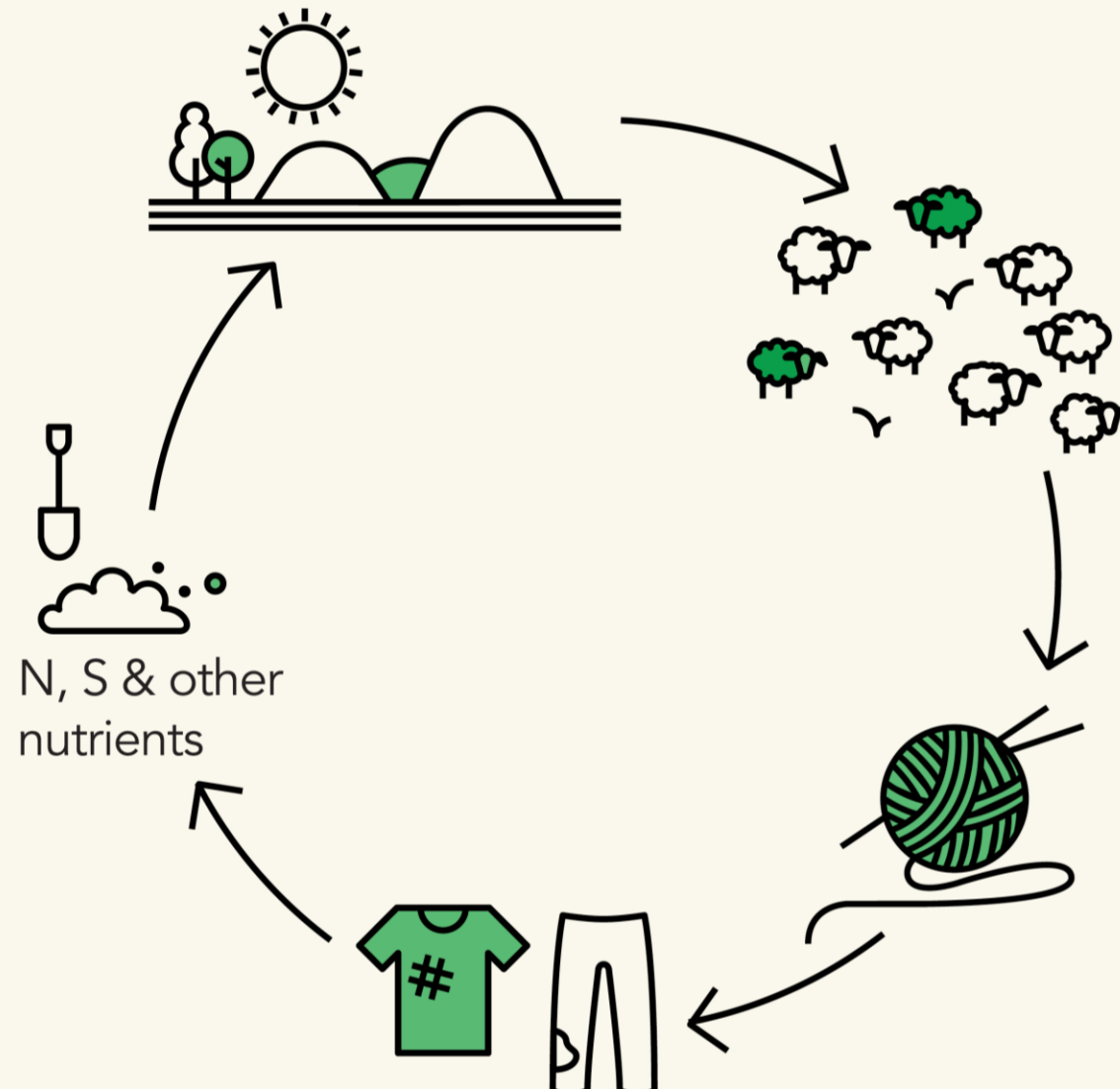


‘We are destroying the natural world, and with it ourselves.’

More than 8 million tons of plastic enter the ocean each year, some as microplastics, under five millimeters in length. No plastic, no matter the size, ever fully disappear.



**THE PERFECT
CIRCULAR
ECONOMY
DESIGNED BY
MOTHER NATURE
5.000 BC**





I TURN GRASS INTO WOOL. WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?



The XIVth International Wool Conference, (London)
June 13th - 17th 1938
Opening Conference, May Fair Hotel

IWTO MEMBERS REPRESENT
23 COUNTRIES,
FROM FARM TO FASHION, SINCE 1930

National Wool Declaration

- AWEX



The function of the National Wool Declaration (NWD) is to enable woolgrowers to declare and promote their animal welfare practices (i.e. Mulesing Status) and the Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk (DMFR) of their wool to exporters, processors and retailers. The NWD is the standardised declaration method for Australia and is applied to all breeds of sheep.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
http://www.wool.com.au	Australia	Mark Grove	Voluntary wool clip declaration	m.grove@wool.com.au

National Wool Declaration Integrity Program

- Australian Wool Exchange Limited



The National Wool Declaration is an industry initiative, recognized globally, for its transparency and traceability from farm. The NWD Integrity Program (NWD-IP) is an extensive program of Desktop Audits and On Farm Inspections with a single purpose: to build wool pipeline and consumer confidence in Australian wool.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.wool.com.au	Australia	Dr Kerry Hanford	3rd Party Certification	khanford@wool.com.au



Global Organic Textile Standard

GOTS by Ecocert
RWS Responsible Wool Standard
by Control Union
Chargeurs Protocol by Control Union



- Lanas Trinidad S.A

LANAS TRINIDAD is a traditional wool company with roots extending back to 1916. It is the main producer of combed wool tops in Uruguay and exports globally, to customers demanding the highest quality.

Lanas Trinidad is not only committed to animal welfare and responsible land management, but also proper working conditions for its labour force, good stewardship of the environment and generation of energy with renewable resources from its waste water treatment process. Regenerating natural resources remains the aim of the entire business.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
http://www.lanastinidad.com	Uruguay	Pedro Otegui	3rd Party Certification	potegui@chargeurs-wool.com

IWTO Test Certificates

- IWTO



The IWTO Specifications and Regulations offer the global industry a set of standards to trade wool on. Once wool has been tested to these standards, a wool certificate or test report will be issued. The document is a summary of the wool weight, specifications and measurements, as well as its origin.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.iwto.org	Global	Delena White	Wool Testing Laboratories	info@iwto.org



Wool Traceability Systems 2019

Authentico

- G. Schneider



Authentico was first launched in 1999. It is built on existing standards, best industry practices and legislations honoured by wool growers. The system has the highest animal welfare and environmental requirements. The wool is fully traceable to farm level, as it is processed in company owned mills, to GOTS and RWS certification.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
https://www.gschneider.com/authentico/	Switzerland	Jeffrey Loskoot	3rd Party Certification	jeffrey.loskoot@gschneider.com

Cape Wools SA

- Cape Wools SA



Cape Wools SA offers buyers traceability through a unique producer number, which can be traced from the farm to the auction floor.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.capewools.co.za	South Africa	Dean Sanyaman	Wool Bale traceability system	dean@capewools.co.za



WoolClip

- Australian Wool Exchange Limited



WoolClip™ is an online internet and smartphone app solution that allows the user to create wool Specifications and National Wool Declarations (NWDs). It uses a simple, intuitive workflow designed to reduce workload and error. Once created (on farm) WoolClip provides independent traceability of wool and data from the farm through the wool supply chain.

WoolClip is the first step in the data pipeline.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.woolclip.com.au	Australia	Mr David Collier	3rd Party Certification	dcolier@wool.com.au

Wool Dynamics

- Pack-Tainers Pty Ltd



Pack-Tainers is a Wool Dump/Packing facility for export. Located in Victoria & NSW and receiving wool from throughout Australia. Our complete traceability system allows Pack-Tainers to identify particular wool bales, the exact location and its journey from warehouse to the ship, ready for export.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.wooldynamics.com.au	Australia	Mark Wilson	3rd Party Traceability system	mark@wooldynamics.com.au

Wool Integrity NZ

- PGG Wrightson LTD



PGG Wrightson's Wool Integrity Programme was established in 2014. The in-house export company Blich & Barnes Wool (NZ) Ltd is responsible for the supply of "Wool Integrity" wool as well as being certified to supply GOTS and RWS Standard wool.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.woolintegrity.com	New Zealand	Alan Dawson	3rd Party Certification	alan.dawson@pggwrightson.com

Quality Assurance Programme

- Wright Wool



As a strict policy, Wright Wool supports best practice and traceability to all operations that interact with animals, complying with all relevant national legislation, codes of practice and best industry practices.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.wrightwool.co.nz	New Zealand	Philipa Wright	Integrity Programme	phillip@wrightwool.co.nz

SustainaWOOL™

- Australian Wool Exchange Limited



SustainaWOOL™ is the world's largest wool integrity scheme, extending AWEX's National Wool Declaration, clip appraisal and Cluster Registration schemes to provide an audited means for informing the wool trade of a comprehensive suite of farm sustainability practices. Over 1000 growers are accredited SustainaWOOL™ suppliers.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.sustainawool.com.au	Australia	Dr Paul Seem	3rd Party Certification	paul@seem.com.au

TF-Traceability & Fashion and RWS Responsible Wool Standard

- Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia S.p.A.



Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia produces premium wool yarn, including fancy natural fibres and noble blends for knitwear and weaving. The Company has been operating in Italy for almost 170 years and it has always stated, as a priority, the commitment towards territory and people, throughout the production process.

Website	Country	Contact	Method	Email
www.baruffa.com	Italy	Giuseppe Baruffa	3rd Party Certification	giuseppe.baruffa@baruffa.com

IWTO | Traceability Systems 2019

01



Wool is Biodegradable

Author: Dr Paul Swan

Nature - the original circular economy

In nature, one life nourishes the next - all biological products are recycled life. In this "original circular economy," the carbon, oxygen, and other molecules which make up all biological life forms, cycle from one form of life to the next.

The key to this continuous recycling process is biodegradation. Through biodegradation micro-organisms in soil or water break down matter, turning a former life form into a new life form.

This cycle has operated since life on Earth began around 3.5 billion years ago, and underpins the fertility of our soils, the cleanliness of our water, and the enormous diversity of life forms on our planet.

Wool – a life fibre

Wool, a renewable fibre which grows naturally on sheep, is made of a special protein called keratin.

Keratin is part of a unique family of structural proteins that provides the foundations for the hair, fur, feathers

First Full Wool LCA Reveals Importance of Use Phase



Save

Use Phase is key to sustainability of clothing, wool research finds.

The sustainability of our clothing is strongly influenced by the number of times it is worn and how long it is actively used, new wool research reveals.

Facts & figures – the wool sweater

- The average number of lifetime wears for the "first user" of the garment: **79**

By examining the full life cycle of a wool sweater, researchers found significant opportunities to reduce environmental impact by wearing clothes more often and keeping them longer.

Completing seven years of work, a team of researchers from Australia, New Zealand and

05



Wool in Marine Environments

Author: Dr Beverley Henry

A Global Challenge

Microplastic pollution has emerged as one of the most critical global challenges of our times. It is estimated that 12.2 million tonnes of plastic enter the global marine environment each year. Of this, 3.2 million tonnes are estimated to be primary microplastics, i.e. particles less than 5mm in size released directly into the environment.

Major sources of primary microplastics are road abrasion of synthetic tires and the shedding of fibres during washing of textiles such as nylon, acrylic and polyester.

A Natural Fibre Solution

One proposed strategy against the problem is to increase the use of natural fibres in apparel. To date, scientific reporting on microfibres has not included data on microfibrils of natural origin, and the textile industry is seeking evidence that fibres such as wool and cotton do not similarly contribute to pollution of marine environments.

Until research results become available, independent sources provide some confidence that fibres shed during washing of wool clothing are unlikely to contribute to persistent pollution as do those from synthetic clothing:

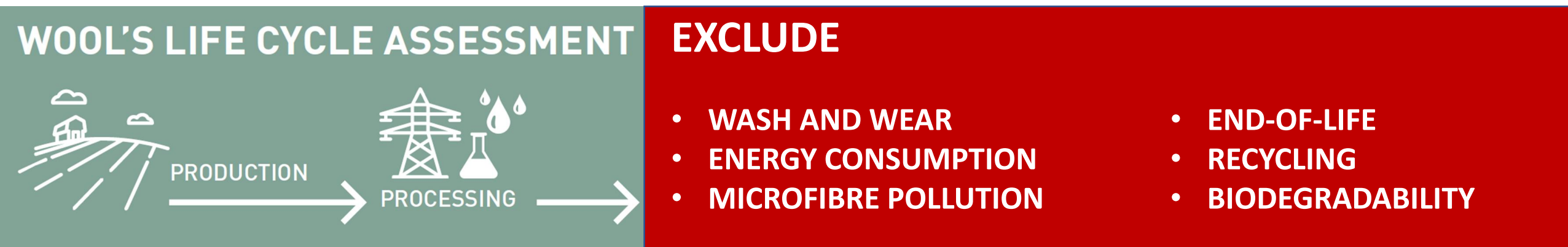
1. Wool has been shown to be biodegradable in marine environments, in laboratory and on-site testing.²
2. In vitro experiments in New Zealand showed surface damage to wool fibres after 21 days incubation in seawater.

FACT: Wool fibres biodegrade in water
FACT: Wool garments have higher value, resulting in longer wear
FACT: Wool textiles require less washing, less energy and water
FACT: Wool textiles are more readily recycled than any other fibre

TEXTILE SCORING METHODOLOGY ACCORDING TO **ISO STANDARDS**



TEXTILE SCORING METHODOLOGY ACCORDING TO **TEXTILE RATING AGENCIES**



Green Deal Going Local

Achieving climate
neutrality

Sustainable transport

Clean, reliable and
affordable energy

Preserving Europe's
natural capital

Financing
the transition

Transition to a
circular economy

Leave no one behind
(Just Transition)

A zero-pollution
Europe

Towards a modernised
and simplified CAP

The transformation
of agriculture
and rural areas

From farm to fork





EU PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT (PEF) PROJECT (2019-2022)



Environmental Footprint

Mid-term conference on the Environmental Footprint pilot phase

3-4 November 2015
The Egg, Brussels



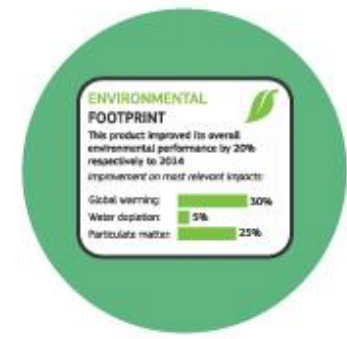
PERFORMANCE LABEL



TRAFFIC LIGHT LABEL



IMPROVEMENT LABEL



FACTSHEETS



WEBSITES



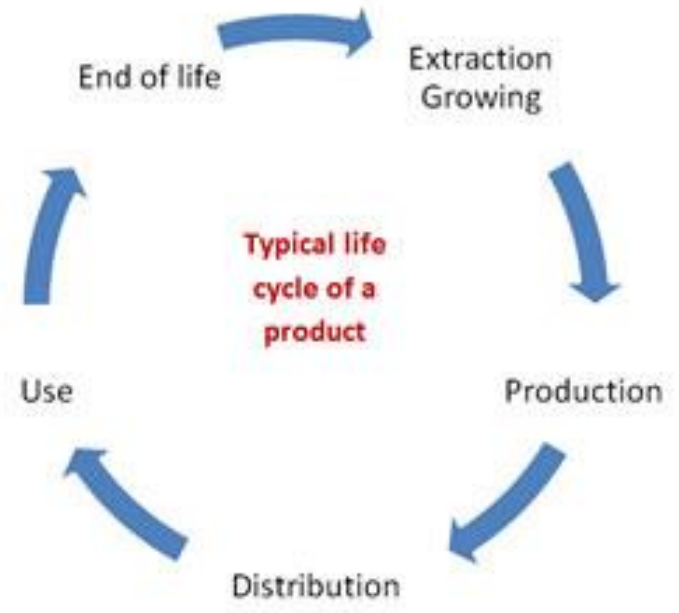
MOBILE APPS



ONLINE SHOPS



INFOGRAPHICS



What
Elephant?

FAST FASHION





24 APRIL 2013 - RANA PLAZA BANGLADESH



Thank you

Dalena White – IWTO - white@iwto.org

**2021
IWTO**



LET'S TALK WOOL
17 - 21 May

