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## Consumer engagement will drive sustainability – SLDF

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## Consumer engagement will drive sustainability – SLDF

By WGSN Newsteam, 19 November 2012:

Driving consumer awareness and engagement in sustainable fashion will be a key driver in moving the industry forward, speakers at Sri Lanka Design Festival's Sustainable Fashion Symposium said.

"We need to change shopping habits, we can create a demand for sustainable fashion if we educate and engage consumers in the right way," said Jonas Eder Hansen, development director at the Danish Fashion Institute. "If we can create a demand from the consumer for sustainable fashion, the industry will follow."

That demand is already coming through and leading to companies looking for ways to cut their environmental impact. Jil Hellmann Regouby from Hellmann Fashion Logistics said that it is important to look at all elements of the supply chain at once and take a systematic approach to reducing the carbon footprint, while Ryan Young, index manager at the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, said he hoped that the SAC's new Higg Index would become an industry standard for measuring the sustainability of apparel and footwear products.

"We're developing the Higg Index to be a common measuring tool for the industry, and a common language for the industry to use to talk about sustainability," he said.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, is attempting to develop and promote its craft industry so that it can be made more commercially sustainable. Linda Speldewinde, founder of SLDF and MD of the Academy of Design in Colombo, said that the sector is working with the hotel industry and the apparel industry to help drive gains that will benefit the wider community, while **Dr Darlie Koshy from India's Apparel Export Promotion Council** said that a greater understanding of craft can help develop new ideas for the luxury sector.

"The new ideas of luxury are going to come from the learnings you can take from craft," he said. "We need to protect crafts and make commercial value out of them."

### Thanks

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