

## What do we mean by the environment?

In the broadest terms, the environment refers to the surroundings of an object. It ranges from the built environment - the constructed surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, to the natural environment - all living and non-living things that occur naturally on earth.

The environmental movement, a term that includes the conservation and green movements, is a diverse scientific, social, and political movement for addressing environmental issues.

Environmentalists advocate the sustainable management of resources and stewardship of the environment through changes in public policy and individual behaviour. In its recognition of humanity as a participant in (not enemy of) ecosystems, the movement is centered on ecology, health, and human rights. The environmental movement is represented by a range of organisations, from the large to grassroots. Due to its large membership, varying and strong beliefs, and occasionally speculative nature, the environmental movement is not always united in its goals.

A key element relating to the environment, is the issue of sustainability. This is concerned with economic activities (such as production, manufacture and other forms of wealth generation including design) that take into account and address issues of ethics and the environment (e.g. labour practices, land degradation, pollution etc), thus it is development at a rate that can be sustained.

## What does this mean for fashion and textile design?

This has wide-ranging implications, impacting on:

- the resources used (raw materials, energy, labour, water, land etc)
- the design, manufacture and production processes
- distribution, marketing, packaging and transport
- the consumption, utilisation and disposal of the product

You may want to think about issues relating to:

- nature - how can this be reflected?
- technology - what role can this play?
- sustainability - what does this mean for mass market fashion and apparel?