SUSTAINABILITY

“As a responsible Organisation, we aim to provide thought leadership and accelerate the sustainability drive in the industry.”

Ashish Dixit

ASHISH DIXIT
Aditya Birla Retail
Managing Director

WELL DEFINED PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

By Sustain Labs Paris

Fashion globally accounts for around ten per cent of greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. India’s apparel market bears much of the weight of the task of protecting the environment as it is all set to be worth ₹39.3 billion in 2022, making it the sixth-largest in the world and comparable to the UK (£65 billion) and Germany (£63.1 billion).

The task for India’s apparel business is a lofty one, more so as it has very little circularity embedded in its model. Sustainable fashion in India often refers to sourcing from traditional weavers to provide liveliness and preserve traditions. Also, it is challenging since Indian fashion is still largely unorganized. Formal retail accounts for only 35 per cent of sales. Therefore, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFRL) with its 18,000 outlets and 2,714 stores across 750 cities has a vital role in the sector in limiting environmental degradation.

Ashish Dixit, Managing Director, ABFRL, stated on the company’s contributions, “With consumer centricity at the core, the business has rolled out multiple initiatives around consumer connect, personalised communications, and improved freshness on the back of a new planning system which automates stock replenishments. Simultaneously, targeted marketing campaigns revitalised brand imagery, enhancing its relevance in the minds of our target customers.”

Well Defined Sustainability Targets and Strategies

ABFRL has a well-outlined sustainability strategy governed by ten sustainability missions, each of which has clearly defined goals, yearly targets, responsibilities and data tracking mechanisms coupled with a digital platform measuring sustainability performance. The strategy is defined as ‘Sustainable Business Framework’, certified to 14 international standards including IFC, OECD, ISO, GRI and OHSAS.

One of the targets for energy in FY20 was to reduce 25 per cent in the consumption of grid electricity through renewable energy, against which ABFRL has achieved 24.79 per cent. This was possible due to 2 MWh solar rooftop generation across five ABFRL facilities, which resulted in a reduction of 2068 tCO2 emissions. The company achieved 82 per cent water reduction in one of its subsidiaries (set target 100 per cent).

The company has recently launched a new range of products under the brand, ‘Liveacco’, which support complete traceability of the textile value chain from forest to fashion, with a capability of sharing the sustainability credentials transparently up to the end consumer.

Bringing Circularity In Fashion

Some circularity initiatives that have been adopted by ABFRL are zero waste stores and take-back programmes in their retail operations. A noteworthy circularity initiative taken at the company is the manufacturing of a product by using pre-consumer garment waste and recycling it to make VSF. An anchor partner in the Circular Apparel Innovation Factory, an industry platform to build a circular apparel and textile industry in India, ABFRL has collaborations with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Sustainable Apparel Coalition, Cotton 2040.