Global consumers are thinking about the environment, as 86% say sustainability concerns are very real and require a change in our behaviors. This translates into action as 8 in 10 consumers report engaging in at least one sustainable practice, such as recycling or avoiding plastics, “all the time.” Brands can stand out by connecting with consumers’ feeling of responsibility by protecting the environment with natural product offerings.

**KEY INSIGHTS**

- Consumers regularly engage in sustainable practices that are convenient and well-publicized, including their purchase behavior. Brands who can clearly signal their products’ sustainability can connect with consumer desire to act on their concern for the environment.
- Marketers may promote cotton products in line with consumer motivations to protect future generations, act responsibly, and lead a balanced lifestyle.
- Consumers recognize fabric as a component of clothing sustainability, perceiving natural fibers such as cotton and wool as safer for the environment than manmade fibers.

**IMPACT OF SUSTAINABILITY**

Percent saying environmental concerns play a strong role in daily life choices.

- **MEXICO 61%**
- **INDIA 62%**
- **ITALY 49%**
- **CHINA 48%**
- **U.S. 37%**
- **U.K. 36%**
- **GERMANY 35%**

**COMMON SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS**

Percent who do this regularly.

- **87%** Recycle Cans, Bottles, Paper
- **84%** Purchase Energy Efficient Appliances
- **85%** Reduce Waste
- **83%** Limit Water Usage
- **79%** Avoid Using Plastics

**MOTIVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS**

- **50%** To protect the world for future generations
- **44%** I feel responsible for the planet
- **38%** To live a more balanced/healthier lifestyle

Source: CCI & Cotton Incorporated’s 2017 & 2021 Global Sustainability Survey, a survey of 6,000 consumers in the U.S., U.K., Germany, Italy, Mexico, India, and China. ©2021 Cotton Incorporated.
With noticeable signaling and frequent opportunities to practice sustainability, consumers are most likely to consider the environment when purchasing food and household appliances. Clothing and home textiles, however, are not far behind, with two-thirds of consumers saying that sustainability has a moderate or great deal of influence on their purchases of these products. Brands can signal the sustainability of their clothing using terms consumers consider related, such as "environmental-friendliness" and "natural," and by using fibers perceived as safe for the environment, such as cotton.*

### Terms to Describe Sustainable Clothing

- **Sustainable**: 75%
- **Eco-Friendly**: 73%
- **Environmentally Friendly**: 72%
- **Natural**: 71%
- **Biodegradable**: 70%

**73%** say fabric is very important in determining the sustainability of clothing.

### Fiber Sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiber</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rayon/Viscose</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lycra/Spandex</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polyester</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nylon</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CCI & Cotton Incorporated’s 2017 & 2021 Global Sustainability Survey, a survey of 6,000 consumers in the U.S., U.K., Germany, Italy, Mexico, India, and China. *Brand must be sure to use such terms in compliance with the FTC Green Guides. ©2021 Cotton Incorporated.