**Let’s do different, let’s make a change.**

This is the second of a monthly column setting out the why and the how of making changes to reduce our carbon emissions.

**The clothes we wear can have a huge impact on the environment and the climate.** Can we look for clothes that make life more sustainable?

100 billion garments are manufactured every year and the fashion industry continually tempts us to buy more. But this is taking its toll. Clothes production produces emissions, can cause pollution, uses precious natural resources and creates mountains of waste.

Some facts are quite shocking. Fashion uses more energy than aviation and shipping combined. It is the third-largest manufacturing industry in the world and, by some calculations, it produces up to 10% of the world's emissions. About 70 million barrels of oil a year are used to make polyester fibres and the fashion industry accounts for 20% of global wastewater. A polyester shirt has double the carbon footprint of a cotton one and polyester takes hundreds of years to decompose.

Not only do we need to choose different clothes but we also need to buy less.

Fashion brands are overproducing to meet our demands and countries in West Africa and South America, for example, are drowning under the weight of waste shipped to their shores. I recently watched a very distressing BBC programme about the amount of clothing from ‘the West’, including the UK, that is now embedded in the beach in Accra in Ghana and is in the sea. In Chile, more than half of the 60,000 tonnes of clothes imported each year ends up in illegal desert landfills, with dire consequences for the environment and local communities.

Over production to meet our desire to have new clothes year-on-year means there is just too much to recycle.

There are manufacturers leading the way in reducing fashion's environmental impact and we all need to be really willing to change our habits. Buy less, buy better and ask questions about the impact of your clothes on the environment. And spread the word to family and friends.

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