

Boxed In? Not Anymore: Join the Sustainable Packaging Movement

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Overview:

The focus of this project is to raise awareness among students about the lack of commitment to sustainability by online retailers in India. The project involves conducting a survey to gather data on students' awareness of sustainability in online shopping, and drafting a petition to encourage online retailers to commit themselves to standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and science-based targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

Problem:

The apparel industry, including online retailers, is responsible for a significant portion of global emissions. The World Resources Institute estimates that the apparel sector is responsible for 2% of global emissions. Additionally, many online retailers in India are not committed to sustainability and are not held accountable for their impact on the environment. For example, while companies like Zalando have committed to sustainability standards like GRI and science-based targets, Indian companies like Nykaa and Myntra have not.

Climate Justice:

Climate justice is an important aspect of this project. Climate change affects vulnerable communities disproportionately, and it is crucial to ensure that sustainability efforts do not exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities. By encouraging online retailers to commit to sustainability standards, this project aims to contribute to climate justice.

Paris Agreement:

The Paris Agreement is an international treaty that aims to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and to strive for limiting warming to 1.5°C. The science-based targets that this project seeks to encourage companies to commit to are in line with the Paris Agreement's objectives.

GRI Index:

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an international organization that helps businesses acknowledge their impacts on sustainability issues. The GRI provides a universal language for companies to report on their sustainability practices and impacts, which enables stakeholders to evaluate companies' sustainability performance.

The GRI Standards facilitate organizations in comprehending their influence on the economy, environment, and society, incorporating human rights impacts. This cultivates a sense of responsibility and amplifies transparency concerning their involvement in promoting sustainable development.

The Standards comprise three distinct series, including Universal Standards, Sector Standards, and Topic Standards, that form a modular system that must be employed together.

Using the GRI Standards, organizations can prepare a sustainability report that adheres to the Standards or utilize certain Standards, or portions of their content, to unveil information for specific purposes or users, such as disclosing climate change impacts to investors and consumers.

Science-based Targets:

Science-based targets are emissions reduction targets that are aligned with the latest climate science, and are consistent with the goals of the Paris Agreement. By committing to science-based targets, companies can reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to the global effort to mitigate climate change. By adopting Science-based targets, organizations can have a well-defined roadmap to curtail their emissions in accordance with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) presently collaborates with over 4,000 companies globally.

It is essential for the private sector to have a significant role in decreasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Integrating science-based targets into sustainability management is critical to this effort. Creating a science-based target involves a process of five steps:

1. Make a commitment by submitting a letter expressing your intention to establish a science-based target.
2. Develop an emissions reduction target that aligns with the criteria set by the SBTi.
3. Submit your target to the SBTi for official validation.
4. Communicate your target and inform your stakeholders.
5. Disclose your company-wide emissions and track the progress of your target on an annual basis.

Sustainability Practices in Western vs Indian Fashion Industry:

The fashion industry has become increasingly aware of the importance of sustainable and circular practices in recent years. In the European Union (EU), the [EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles](#) has been introduced to address this issue. However, such a requirement is absent in India, resulting in a lack of commitment from Indian companies towards sustainability.

Western companies like Zalando have shown their commitment towards sustainability by releasing annual [Sustainability Progress Reports](#) and adopting science-based-targets in line with the Paris Agreement to reduce carbon emissions. In contrast, Indian companies like Nykaa and Myntra do not release such reports and lack any significant commitment towards sustainability. Although Indian companies are mandated to have [Corporate Social Responsibility Reports](#) under The Companies Act, 2013, the reports do not address emissions. Even the [Integrated Report](#) does not highlight such commitment.

The absence of a Sustainable and Circular Textile Strategy in India puts Indian companies at a disadvantage compared to their European counterparts who are required to commit to sustainability indexes. This disadvantage could hinder India's progress towards achieving its nationally determined contribution to the Paris Agreement.

Solution/Product Design:

The solution that this project proposes is to encourage online retailers in India to commit to sustainability standards such as GRI and science-based targets for greenhouse gas emissions

reduction. This will involve drafting a petition to raise awareness among students and to pressure companies to commit to sustainability standards.

Target Audience/Beneficiaries: The target audience of this project is university students who frequently shop online. By raising awareness among students, this project aims to create a binding force that can pressure online retailers to commit to sustainability standards. The beneficiaries of this project will be both the environment and vulnerable communities who are disproportionately affected by climate change.

Measuring the Impact:

To measure the impact of the petition, a Google Form was released to gather feedback from individuals who signed the petition. The Google Form was filled by 82 individuals who expressed their views on the petition and the issue at hand. The responses gathered from the Google Form indicate that the petition has created awareness about the lack of sustainability practices in the Indian fashion industry and the need for companies to adopt sustainability standards.

The responses received also suggest that individuals have gained a better understanding of the Paris Agreement, science-based targets, and other climate-related concepts that were highlighted in the petition. The petition has also encouraged individuals to take personal actions towards sustainable fashion practices.

The responses gathered from the Google Form demonstrate that the petition has been successful in creating awareness and generating interest in the issue of sustainable fashion in India. Overall, I believe that the petition has had a positive impact in terms of raising awareness and motivating individuals to take action towards a more sustainable future in the fashion industry.

Petition Link

<https://forms.gle/fZU8mQ4PdVjATexDA>

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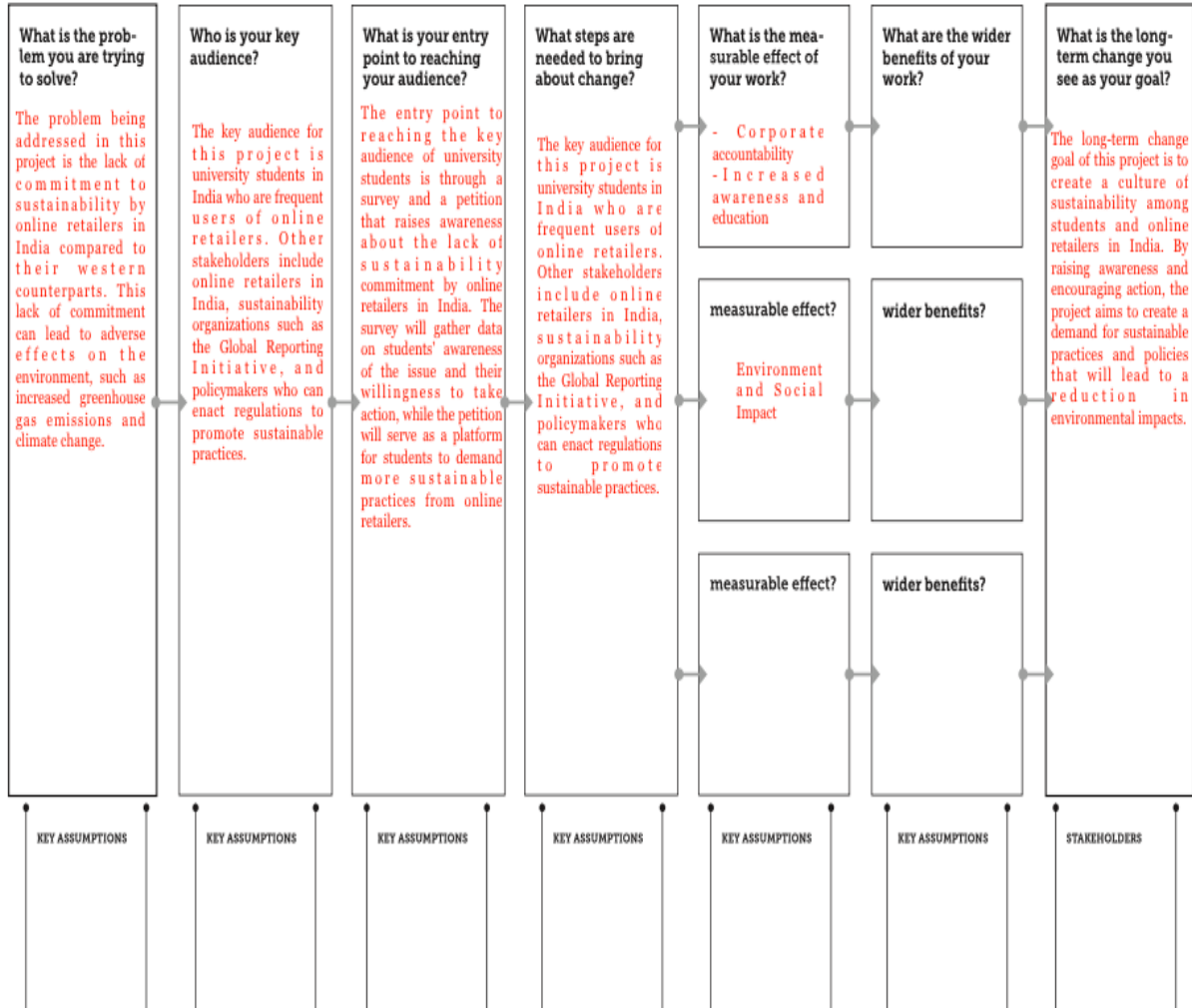
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Annexure 1- Theory of Change



I want to clarify my priorities
by defining my goals and the path to reach them

THEORY OF CHANGE



Annexure 2- Strength of Idea Rubric

Problem

1. What problem [of CLIMATE JUSTICE IN INDIA] are you working on?

Answer: The problem being addressed is the lack of commitment to sustainability by Indian online retailers, as compared to their western counterparts.

2. What evidence do you have that this is a problem?

Answer: Evidence of this problem can be seen through the lack of sustainability reporting and initiatives by Indian online retailers. Additionally, studies have shown that India ranks poorly in terms of sustainability and climate action compared to other countries.

3. Who faces this problem?

Answer: University students who use online retailers in India face this problem as they are likely unaware of the sustainability practices (or lack thereof) of these retailers.

4. Why does this problem exist?

Answer: The lack of commitment to sustainability by Indian online retailers may be due to a lack of regulations and incentives for sustainable practices, as well as a lack of awareness and education on the importance of sustainability.

Beneficiary/User:

1. Who is your beneficiary/user?

Answer: University students who use online retailers in India are the beneficiaries/users of this project.

2. Why do they face the problem?

Answer: They face this problem because they are likely unaware of the sustainability practices (or lack thereof) of the online retailers they use.

3. What evidence do you have that they consider this issue to be a problem?

Answer: This issue can be considered a problem as students are becoming increasingly aware of their impact on the environment and are interested in sustainable practices.

4. Why haven't they solved this problem themselves?

Answer: They may not have solved this problem themselves due to a lack of awareness and information about the sustainability practices of online retailers in India.

Solution:

1. What is your solution?

Answer: The solution is to raise awareness among university students about the lack of sustainability practices by Indian online retailers and encourage them to sign a petition calling for these retailers to commit to science-based targets and the Global Reporting Initiative.

2. How will the solution help the problem? (social value proposition/ theory of change)

Answer: The solution will help the problem by creating a binding force and raising awareness among students about the importance of sustainability. This will put pressure on online retailers to commit to sustainable practices, which will ultimately lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the effects of climate change.

3. What evidence do you have that the solution will help the problem?

Answer: Similar campaigns and petitions have been successful in creating change and influencing companies to commit to sustainable practices.

4. How do you sustain yourself financially/energetically/temporally?

(financial/energetic/time value proposition)

Answer: The project does not require significant financial resources and can be sustained through the efforts of volunteers and interested individuals.

Make it real:

1. Do you have primary data?

Answer: Primary data will be collected through the survey that is part of the prototype.

2. Have you received outside feedback on your ideas? (prototype/ minimum viable product [MVP])

Answer: The prototype and survey can be tested and refined through feedback from students.

3. Do you have a clearly articulated plan for the next steps?

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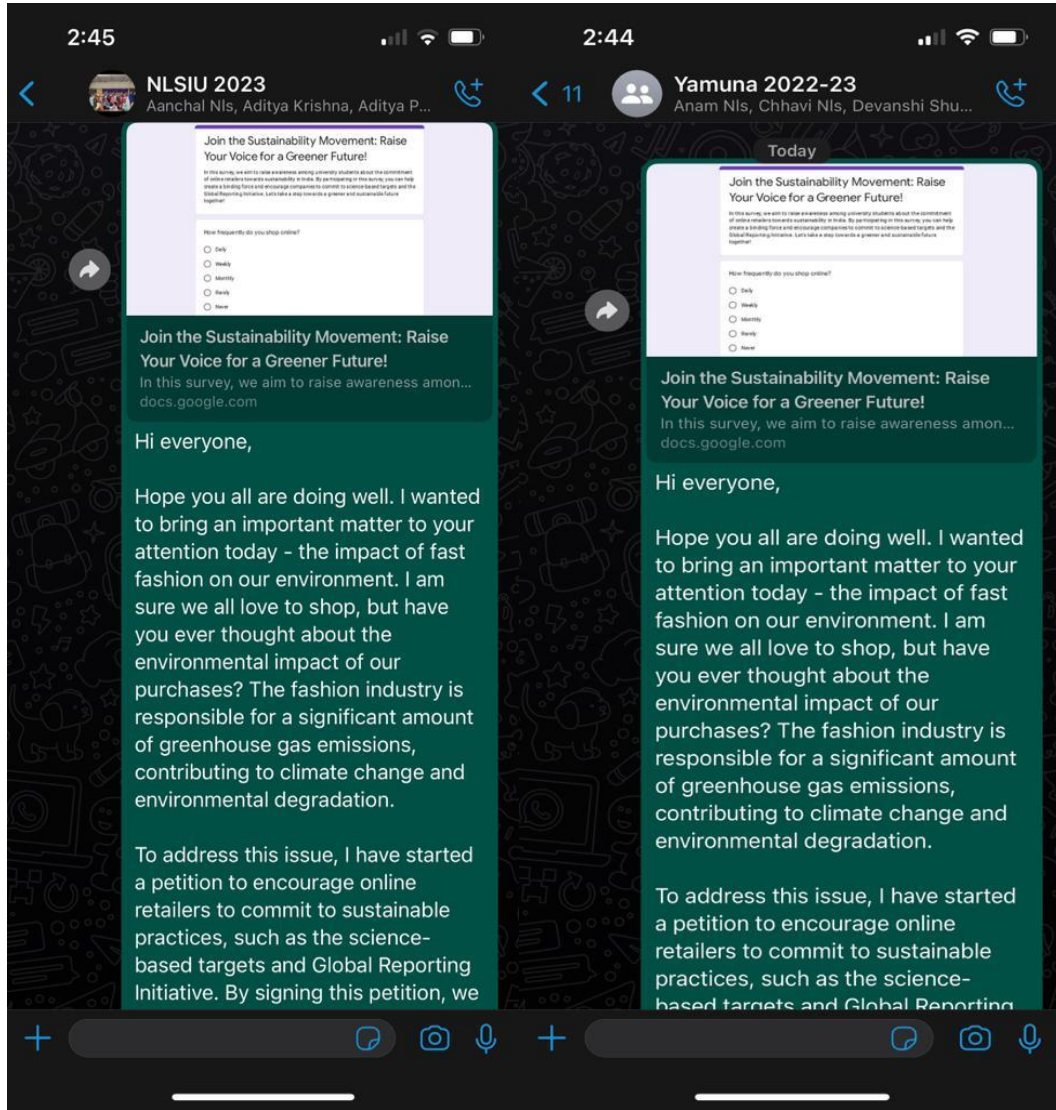
Answer: The next steps involve disseminating the survey to university students and using the results to refine the petition and campaign. The petition will then be circulated and presented to online retailers.

4. Do you have the right partners team; have you identified who you would like to work with/bring into your team?

Answer: The project can involve partnerships with student organizations, environmental groups, and online retailers who are committed to sustainability. The team can consist of interested individuals and volunteers.

Annexure 3- Broadcast

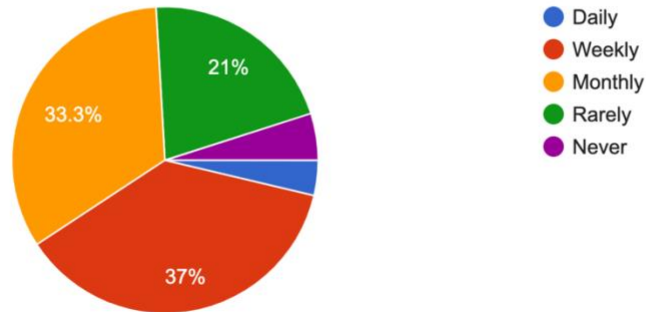
My primary mode of spreading awareness and calling out companies was through WhatsApp broadcast. I have asked students from different universities and have not restricted my scope to NLS.



Annexure 4- Responses to Google Form

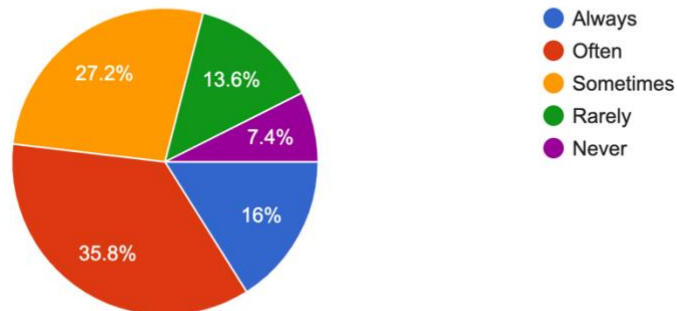
How frequently do you shop online?

81 responses



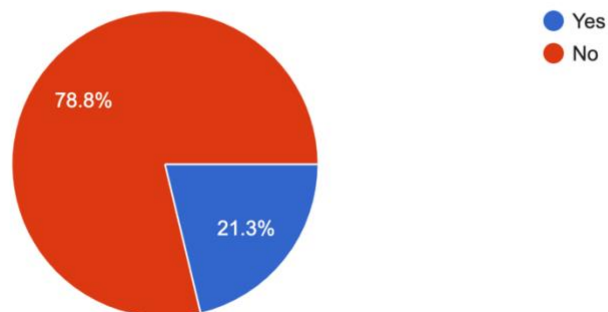
How much do you consider sustainability before purchasing from an online retailer?

81 responses



Are you aware of the sustainability practices of the online retailers you frequently shop from?

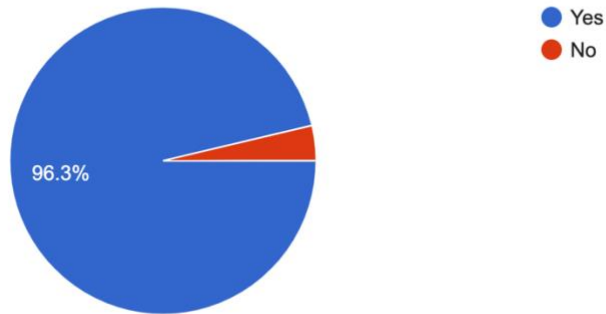
80 responses



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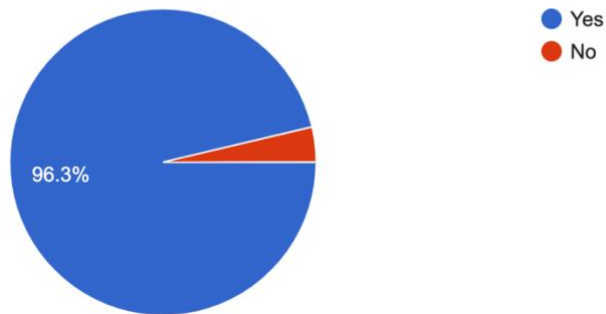
Do you think it is important for online retailers to commit to sustainability practices?

81 responses



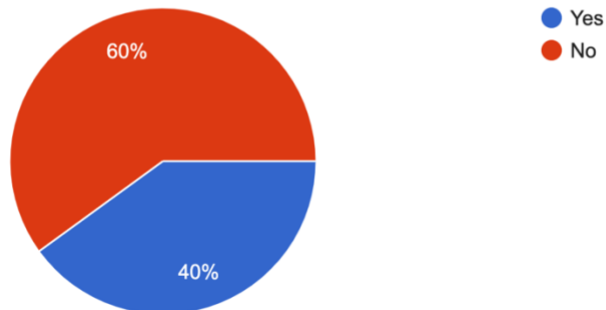
Do you think it is important for online retailers to commit to sustainability practices?

81 responses



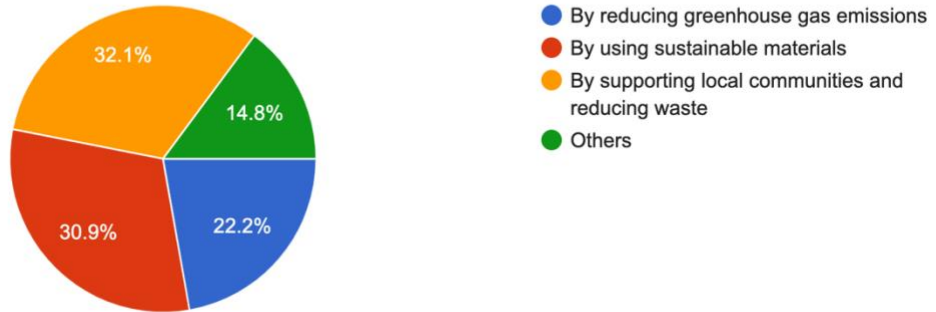
Have you ever looked for sustainability information about online retailers before making a purchase?

80 responses



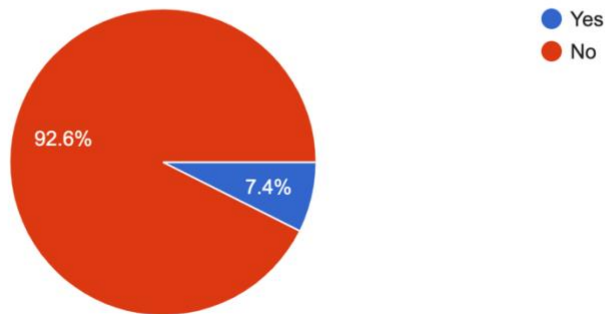
How do you think online retailers can be more committed to sustainability practices?

81 responses



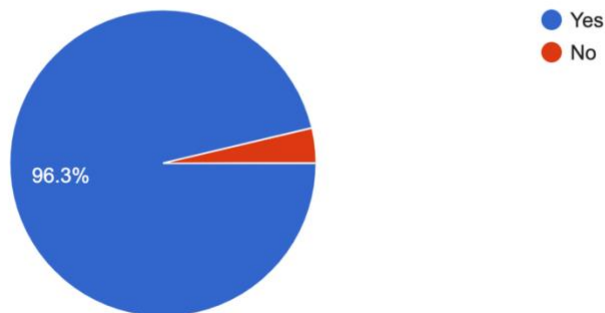
Have you ever signed a petition related to sustainability or environmental issues?

81 responses



Would you sign a petition to encourage online retailers to commit to sustainability practices?

81 responses



Annexure 5- The Petition

Climate change and environmental degradation are rapidly becoming some of the most pressing issues of our time. The fashion industry is one of the major contributors to environmental degradation, responsible for around 10% of global carbon emissions. Based on 2019 World Resources Institute calculations, the apparel sector alone is responsible for 2% of global emissions. When it comes to fashion products, raw material extraction accounts for 24% of emissions, while processing raw material into yarn accounts for 15%, materials production accounts for 52%, and cut, make, and trim account for 9%. These statistics are staggering and make it clear that the fashion industry must take immediate action to curb its carbon footprint.

We, as concerned citizens and consumers, are calling on the fashion industry to commit to sustainable business practices. We believe that the industry has a significant role to play in mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing the carbon footprint. Our petition aims to raise awareness among university students about the lack of sustainable business practices in the fashion industry, particularly in India.

We urge the fashion industry to commit to science-based targets or commit to Global Reporting Initiatives to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Science-based targets offer a precise and clearly outlined approach for companies to decrease their greenhouse gas emissions, thereby reducing the most severe effects of climate change and safeguarding the growth of their businesses. Targets are classified as "science-based" if they are consistent with the most recent climate science recommendations for achieving the objectives of the Paris Agreement, which include restricting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and striving to limit warming to 1.5°C.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an impartial and worldwide organisation that assists businesses and other entities in acknowledging their effects by giving them a universal language to convey those impacts. By committing to these standards, companies can improve their environmental performance, build consumer trust, and demonstrate their commitment to sustainability.

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It is also crucial to hold companies accountable for their sustainability commitments. We urge consumers to support companies that have committed to sustainable business practices and to avoid companies that have not. We must send a clear message to the fashion industry that we care about the impact their business practices have on the environment.

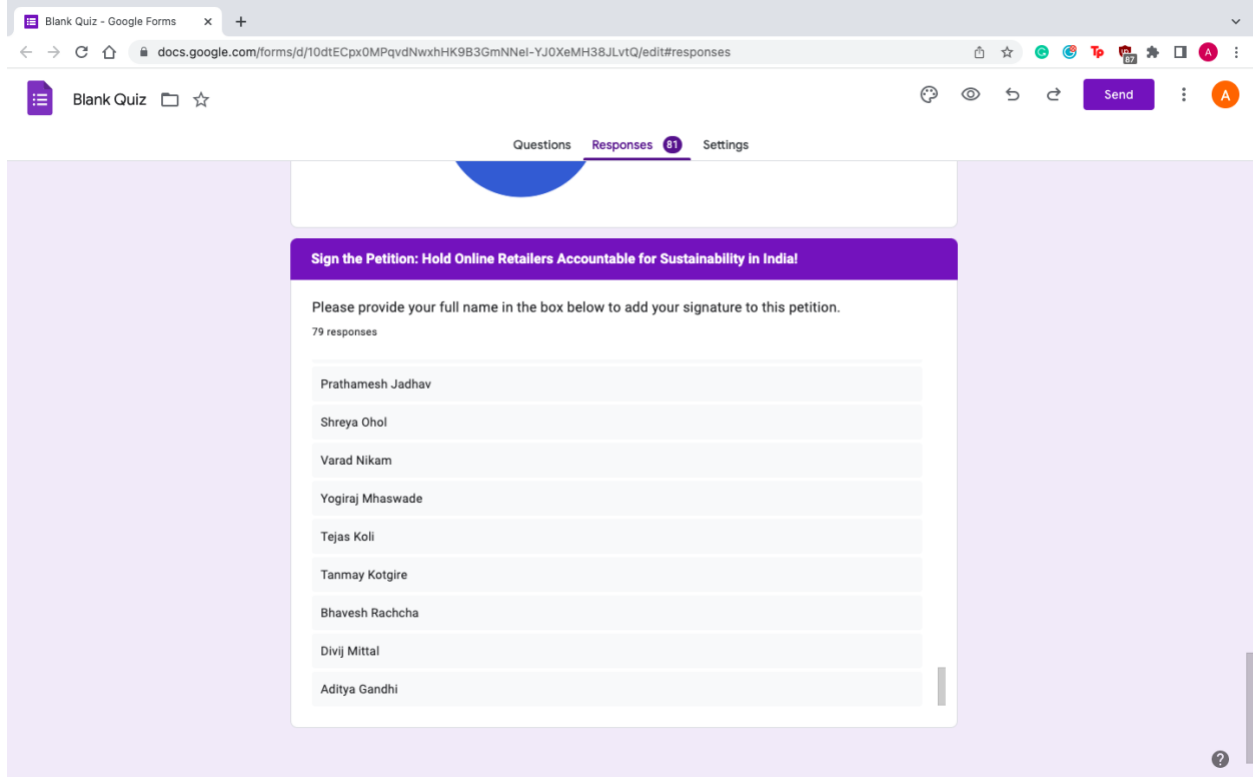
As per the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), the top three online fashion retailers in India - Myntra, Nykaa, and AJIO - collectively contribute around 1.3 million tonnes of CO2 emissions each year, which is equivalent to the emissions of 280,000 cars. In contrast, Zalando, a German-based online retailer, has committed to science-based targets to reduce their carbon emissions in line with the Paris Agreement. They aim to be carbon neutral by 2025 and reduce their carbon emissions by 80% by 2025. Companies like Nykaa and Myntra, among others, have not yet committed to these standards. If Zalando can commit to these standards, why can't Indian companies do the same? While it is not that they are not taking actions, they are not being held accountable since they have not committed. We urge these companies to commit to science-based targets or GRI to reduce their carbon footprint.

The fashion industry's commitment to sustainable business practices will not only help mitigate the effects of climate change but also contribute to India's nationally determined contribution to the Paris Agreement. We must act now to create a sustainable future for ourselves and future generations. The actions we take today will have a profound impact on the world we inherit tomorrow. Let's show these companies that we care about the planet and demand that they do their part to create a more sustainable future.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to climate justice. Sign this petition today to make a difference. Your name and support can help create the change we need.

Sincerely,

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Malay Shah
Esha Goyal
Om Bhor-Patil
Pratikkumar Parmar
Preet Nahar
Hana masoumi
Anish Bachal
Taha Khapra
Raj mehra
Kalash
Dheeraj Venkata Vundavilli
Tarush Bachal
Ansh Shetty
Grisha Shah
Janavi shah
Prithvi shah
Jay oswal

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Nischay Ramchandani
siddhart nimhan
aditya nimhan
ansh shetty
sanjay rathod
tina nibjiya
deepa oswal
darshan parmar
Ankita jain
harsh oswal
Purshottam shetty
raj bafna
Amol kawade
Anuj Molwane
Arnab Mitra
Aarya kurlekar
Devesh Patil
Ishan MANKAR
Ganesh Naik
Yash Marle
Neil yardi
Pratham matal
Vedant patil
Harsh Rikame
Karan Agarwal
Vikas obero
Vardhaman Shah
Sakshi Mandot
Daksh jain
Darshit Oswal
Janak Rathod
Gautam Mutha
Darshit oswal

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Mudar Bharmal
Naman Sanghvi
Nayan Karnavat
Neel waghresha
chirag sanghvi
Tushar Ramsinghani
meet jain
Yash shah
aishwarya patil
Abhishek kadam
Akshay Koli
Anjali Kale
chaitanya Gawali
Gaurav Gire
Harshada Kulkarni
Himanshu Jaiswal
Manish Naik
Ketan Nilgund
Muthu Krishnan
Prathamesh Jadhav
Shreya Ohol
Varad Nikam
Yogiraj Mhaswade
Tejas Koli
Tanmay Kotgire
Bhavesh Rachcha
Divij Mittal
Aditya Gandhi