

Adapting environmentally conscious processes for a sustainable future

With the advancement of technology and newer sustainable ways, the market now offers an array of safer and more sustainable chemicals to work with, says **Pankaj Poddar**.

The textile industry is one of the largest and oldest markets both in India and globally in terms of economic activities with estimates to reach \$ 1,230 billion by 2024. But, there's a catch. The industry is a double-edged sword that produces profitable products at one end but also requires a high level of monitoring and adaptation to a proper course of action to reduce its ill effects on the ecosystem on the other end.

Adopting sustainability in the textile industry has to go a long way from its current stage of using organic materials or cost-efficient processes. The majority of textile production operations, such as scouring, washing, dyeing, bleaching, sizing, and finishing, use a lot of fresh water and produce a lot of effluents along with consumption of energy and use of various chemicals and harmful substances.

To give a perspective, the water consumption ranges between 10–645 L/kg product, and for mills with finishing and dyeing processes, the range is 21–645 L/kg product. Depending on the fiber and technology used, the amount of water consumed per kilogram of product could exceed 932 L/kg. Thus, there must be an ominous need to adopt new generation technologies and methods of manufacturing that utilize renewable natural resources with clear results in terms of preserving the environment.

The manufacturing process includes the processing of fibers where during the spinning and weaving process, a lot of dust, cotton lint among other pollutants is generated. This is believed to considerably degrade the working environment in the industry and also result in severe ecological impacts.

However, with the advancement of technology and newer sustainable ways, the market now offers an array of safer and more sustainable chemicals to work with. Brands and manufacturers should therefore be concerned about the amount of chemical usage in production, and where a possible transition to sustainable fiber sources and alternative natural dyes and processing methods.

Technological fixes aside, reshaping behavior and practices often requires working with changing the values associated with production and consumption and doing so in a way sensitive to different cultural, geographic, and political contexts.



Pankaj Poddar, Group CEO, Cosmo Speciality Chemicals, Cosmo Films, Cosmo Ferrites and Zigly

A major role in this will be re-skilling and up-skilling the already on the job workforce. The current manufacturing conditions of the textile businesses need to change and become more sustainable. The employees need to be trained to adapt to the changing environment. It is these men and women with the right set of skills and knowledge that will play a crucial role in the coming days in making green production processes and sustainable investment strategies to bring about a real change.

Cosmo Speciality Chemicals is a 100% subsidiary of Cosmo Films Ltd with strong research capabilities has developed competitive products through innovations based on sustainable science to its customers. The company currently has 56 products in its range all of which are designed with sustainability as the primary focus.

Last, but definitely not least comes consumer sentiment. For any business to profit, the product or service should resonate with the consumer's sentiment. And as per the latest trends, consumers have become more conscious than ever when it comes to buying eco-friendly products and adopting a sustainable lifestyle. If businesses do not adapt to change and continue with products at a cost to the environment and the people, they cannot dream to survive the changing market.

About the author:
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