

Bend & Snap Consulting

<u>Team Member Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
Member 1: Kate Crass	Freshman	Management/Industrial Engineering
Member 2: Mia Picchietti	Junior	Statistics/Economics
Member 3: Cami Quick	Junior	Business Analytics
Member 4: Marlene Ngo Song	Junior	Finance/IB/Minor: Statistics

Advisor(s): Tory Kinson, Hadiya Javed

Topic Title: From Runway to Runoff: SHEIN's Waste

Audience: The Executives of SHEIN

Sustainable Development Goals

SDG #(s):

#6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

#12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Executive Summary

SHEIN's is a fast fashion powerhouse, one that has accelerated global overconsumption and textile waste. By producing extremely low-cost garments designed for short-term use, the company encourages impulse purchasing and rapid disposal. Much of this discarded clothing is exported to developing countries such as Ghana, where limited waste infrastructure leads to clothing accumulating in landfills, waterways, and informal dumping sites. Environmental impacts also occur during production. Textile dyeing processes release chemical dyes, heavy metals, and untreated wastewater into rivers, contaminating drinking water, agriculture, and aquatic ecosystems. Many SHEIN garments are made primarily of polyester, a non-biodegradable material that sheds microplastics and can take hundreds of years to decompose. Some investigations have also identified hazardous chemicals in SHEIN clothing linked to potential health risks. This issue is urgent due to the scale and speed of SHEIN's production.

To address this challenge, we propose that SHEIN should implement circular fashion systems, which reduce waste and extend the garments' life cycle. This includes partnering with companies such as FabBRICK to convert unsellable clothing into sustainable construction bricks, as well as supporting initiatives that repurpose textile waste into art materials. In addition, SHEIN should adopt extended producer responsibility policies to ensure the company financially supports textile collection, recycling infrastructure, and responsible waste management in regions affected by fast-fashion waste. This solution improves past approaches by creating a scalable circular system that transforms textile waste into valuable materials, rather than relying on limited recycling or donation-based efforts that still result in landfill overflow. Working together, these measures would reduce environmental harm while transforming discarded textiles into valuable resources. It also ensures SHEIN is financially accountable for the full lifecycle of its products, shifting the burden away from vulnerable communities and enabling long-term, systemic impact. Because in a circular economy, even fast fashion will build a stronger future.