The Sustainability Report

2018: Year in review

Big companies report their profits in quarterly earnings reports. We think companies should be accountable for more than just profits. Here's a look at what we've been up to in 2018, and a look ahead to 2019.

Sexy math

We believe in sharing the true cost of fashion—not just the price tag. RefScale tracks our environmental footprint in terms of water, carbon dioxide, and waste using these sexy calculations. It covers everything from growing the raw materials, dyeing, manufacturing, packaging, shipping, and even garment care. It helps us keep our true costs in mind when we make design and business decisions and motivates us to create better solutions.

Here's our impact from last year:

Here is how much MORE we saved per unit in 2018 compared to 2017—progress!

C02 eq. (metric tons)	20%
Water (M gallons)	45%
Waste (metric tons)	60%

We are 100% carbon, water, and waste neutral

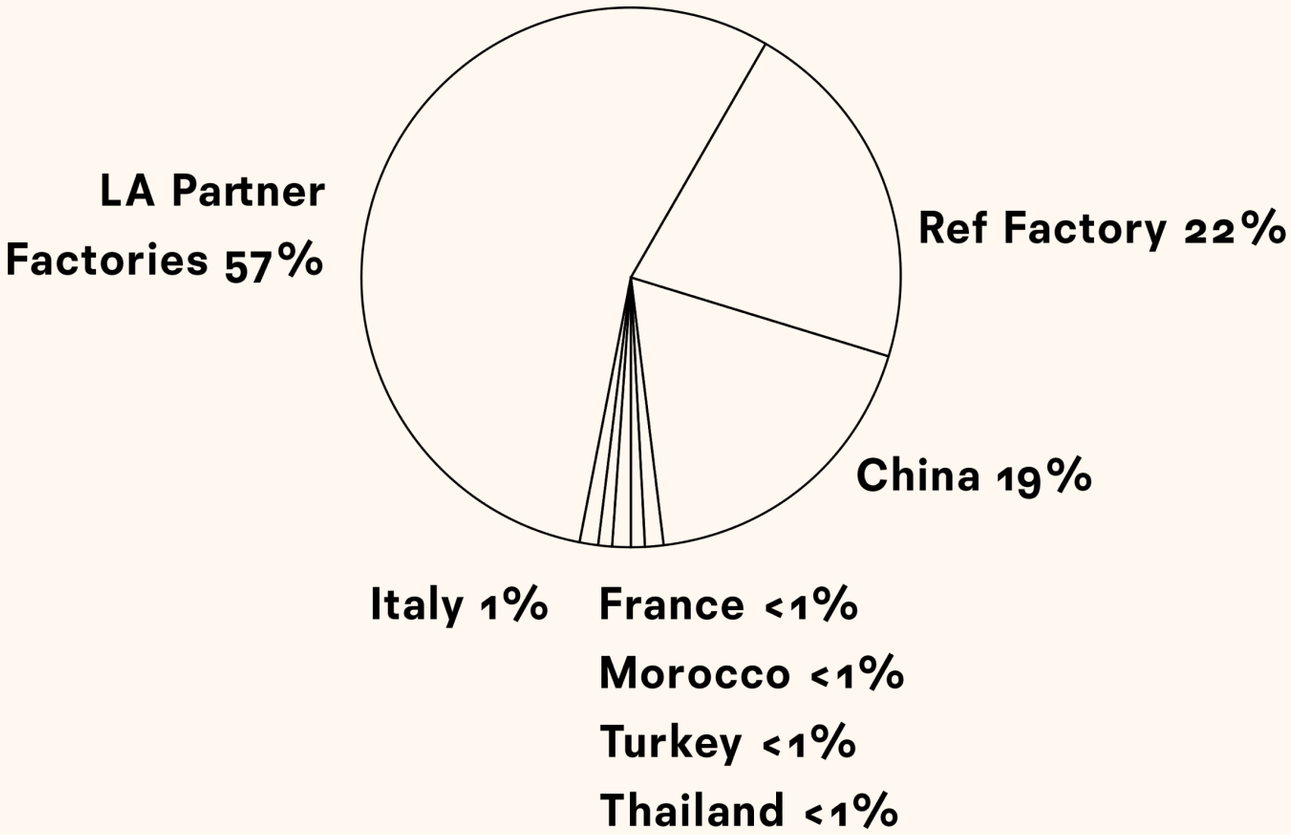
In exchange for the emissions, water, and waste our clothes used last year we planted trees, purchased landfill gas offsets, and restored freshwater to rivers and wetlands in California. Kinda like Venmo, but for the Earth.

For water restoration credits, we partnered with Bonneville Environmental Foundation (BEF) to contribute 27 million gallons of water to a project that helped protect the Kern Wildlife Refuge, a critically dewatered wetland habitat. What is extra cool about this is that the project is a pilot for a long-term Water Trust Concept to secure and deliver water for environmental benefit throughout the Central Valley in California.

Our factories

We're committed to making clothes with a smaller environmental impact in places that treat workers well. Our partners share a common vision of sustainability, accountability, and transparency. We require all our direct cut, sew & finish manufacturing partners to adhere to our Code of Conduct (basically our requirements for ethical operations), and be monitored for compliance and continuous improvement by a third-party auditor.

Here's where our stuff was made in 2018:



We host tours of our factory in Los Angeles (we've hosted over 600 guests in 2018!) so you can see it IRL and meet the people who make your clothes. To save your spot, email us at love@thereformation.com.

Our top five of 2018

Earth Day
We partnered with Depop to help resell gently loved Ref Stuff into your closets so our garments could have a second chance at romance. We also did a take back program in our stores to encourage reusing + recycling stuff back into the fashion system.

Shoes

Our first shoe collection featured espadrilles made with jute, a renewable natural fiber. Jute actually has a positive carbon footprint because it takes up more carbon from the atmosphere than it releases.

Reformation x thredUP
We partnered with thredUP to help you clean out your closet and get credit to spend on Reformation. Selling or donating a used garment reduces its carbon, waste, and water footprint by 73%.

Sustainable Brand of the Year
We were awarded the Sustainable Brand of the Year at ReMode.The ReMode Fashion Awards are a celebration of solution providers and brands that are at the forefront of innovative sustainable practices. Gotta love a trophy!

Ref Fiber Standards
We updated our fiber classifications based on their combined social and environmental impact. It will help us keep pushing for better as we design more great stuff.

We’re always pushing for better

These were our big 2018 goals and how we held up. We tried to tackle a lot and know we didn’t hit the mark in some areas. But we have some bigger programs (aka multi-year sneak peek into 2019!) in the works and will keep working to make a difference.

2018 GOAL: 75% of all fabric spend are Ref’s most sustainable fibers
HOW WE DID: 67%

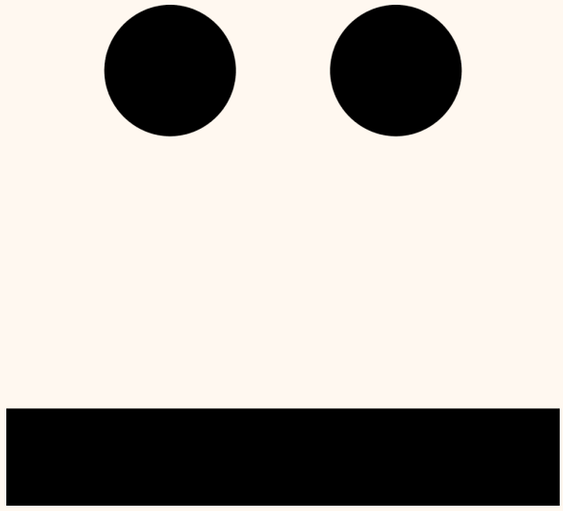
Up to 2/3 of the sustainability impact of fashion happens at the raw materials stage - before the clothes have actually been made. We closed the year slightly under goal for sourcing our most sustainable fibers.

2018 GOAL: 75,000 garments reused or recycled
HOW WE DID: 92,852 garments

There is actually enough clothing and textiles in existence today to meet our global annual demand. That’s why we are excited to announce that we were able to reuse or recycle over 90,000+ garments and finish the year above goal! We couldn’t have done it without your help and some amazing resale partners like Depop and thredUP!

2018 GOAL: 100% traceability of Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers
HOW WE DID: 89%

We have mapped out and are currently monitoring 100% of our Tier 1 suppliers (that is our cut and sew vendors) for ethical working conditions and are almost done with our Tier 2 vendors, so our fabric mills, dye houses, and printers.



2018 GOAL: 75% of units are machine or hand washable
HOW WE DID: 56%
Hand washing or machine-washing your stuff in cold water can save 500 lbs of CO2 from entering the atmosphere every year. We think that is pretty amazing, so we made it our goal to make 75% of our products low impact garment care to make it easier for you to give back to the Earth. Unfortunately, we ended the year a little short but did pass the "majority" mark and won't let that stop us from pushing harder next year.

2018 GOAL: 75% of Factory team earn LA's living wage
HOW WE DID: 22%
All of our teams make more than California's minimum wage. In 2018 we tried to implement an incentive program to get at least 75% of our team above LA's living wage standard of $13.65 but it didn't work. So in 2019 we will be increasing our base wage to $14.25 to ensure we hit 100%. Also we provide a 401k and health benefits to all full-time employees and extra perks like massages and ESL classes.

2018 GOAL: 75% of all fabric spend have clean chemical certifications
HOW WE DID: 26%
We have work to do on this one! We are meeting with our fabric mills, dyehouse, and printers to pursue Bluesign,Oeko-tex, and similar certifications to ensure responsible use of chemicals and that products are safe for you and the environment. Two of our main partners are likely using compliant dyestuffs, but don't have the certifications and documentation all sorted yet. We also test all of our stuff against our Restricted Substance List to confirm there are no hazardous substances in our products.

2019 here we come!

We put sustainability at the center of everything we do. We want to focus on efforts that have the biggest impact. So we created our first Sustainability at Reformation framework we will use to set our goals and priorities for the next five years (2019–2023). It influences four main areas:

Product People Planet Progress

View our 2019-2023 framework. We'll of course let you know our progress in our quarterly reports too.

Product

- 75% of fabric spend meet A/Bs for Ref's Fiber Standards by 2019
- 90% of fabric spend meet A/B/Cs for Ref's Fiber Standards by 2023
- 100% RSL compliance of finished goods & fabrics
- 75% of fabric spend certified clean
- Publish vendor list on website
- Publish factory & mill spotlights on website

People

- Monitor 100% Tier 1 & 2 suppliers
- Pursue FLA accreditation
- 100% Reformation Factory team earning L.A. living wage
- Participate in Better Buying and improve our purchasing practices based on feedback
- Support at least 2 strategic non-profit campaigns a year

Planet

Progress

- 100% carbon, water, and waste RefScale totals offset
- HIGG Facilities assessment rollout for Tier 1 & 2
- 60%+ of product assortment safe for hand / machine wash

- Reuse or recycle 100,000 garments a year
- Build a program to reduce, recycle & upcycle fabric scraps
- Secure 2-3 major sourcing "wins" a year
- Shift majority of viscose spend to clean and traceable viscose

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