



# UNEP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

# TOPIC A:

## ADDRESSING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE FAST FASHION INDUSTRY

If you look at the tag of your shirt, I guarantee you it does not say, “Made in the U.S.A.” Instead, it probably says “Made in Bangladesh,” “Made in Vietnam,” or maybe “Made in China.” In this committee, we will be exploring why that is, as well as why it matters.

People are constantly buying new clothes to keep up with current fashion trends. Because customers now retire clothes after a few short wears, they are looking for quantity, not quality. Businesses meet this high demand for clothes by exploiting workers, laws, and the environment. Companies like Shein place their factories in countries with weak environmental laws and cheap labor like Bangladesh, Vietnam, and China. In these countries, businesses are able to mass produce clothing items at minimal cost to them, feeding a resource-intensive global cycle known as “fast fashion.”

The fast fashion industry has grown exponentially in recent years, with customers purchasing 50 percent more clothing than they did only six years ago. The growing amounts of fashion waste is what makes this issue an urgent topic of discussion. Fast fashion already causes microplastic pollution, water pollution, and landfill waste, and the affected countries have yet to address this pollution. This pollution is mostly being dumped in developing countries, which is putting the health of humans and marine wildlife in those areas at risk. The lack of regulation in the industry will only exacerbate existing issues and potentially cause new environmental crises.

Governments and individuals alike struggle to address the environmental damage caused by fast fashion. Individuals have become desensitized to the environmental crisis because they are constantly reminded of the facts. Governments also struggle to

proactively address the issue because the industry is growing at a much faster rate than countries can clean up the existing pollution.

I chose this topic because I am passionate about holding businesses accountable for environmental damage. Many consumers, including myself, do not support fast fashion companies due to their unethical business practices. Making informed choices about which businesses to support is important; however, individual choices are not enough to resolve this huge global issue. Companies often put this social responsibility in the hands of the consumer, but this responsibility should be borne by companies.

This committee should explore different macro-level regulations countries can implement. Solutions should include suggestions like business regulations, clean up technologies for clothing landfills, and ensuring sustainable sourcing. Countries have the regulatory power to address this issue on a large scale, and I hope delegates are able to “think big” when coming up with solutions.



March 8-10, 2024

72nd Session

[unepbmun72@bmun.org](mailto:unepbmun72@bmun.org)

# TOPIC B:

## USING GEOENGINEERING TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

What happens if we don't reach net zero by 2050? Scientists and researchers are creating various equipment and infrastructure that can cut emissions, but if this technology cannot be implemented fast enough, we may need a supplement. That supplement may be geoengineering.

Geoengineering refers to a broad set of technologies that can be used to manipulate the climate. In this committee, we will focus on two types of geoengineering: solar geoengineering and carbon capture geoengineering. Solar geoengineering involves using particles to reflect more sunlight back into space. When this sunlight is reflected into space rather than absorbed by the Earth, the rate at which the Earth is heated slows down. Solar geoengineering prototypes have been created, and an experiment conducted by Harvard University shows that computer models struggle to predict outcomes of solar geoengineering, but it is a promising technology. Carbon capture geoengineering is a technology where researchers remove massive amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it elsewhere. Carbon capture projects have also been explored, but so far these projects have proven to be too costly to move forward. Scientists are continuing to explore this technology in hopes of building successful models.

These technologies have the potential to slow the Earth's warming, but not enough research has been done about the risks and benefits of geoengineering. Some advocates argue that geoengineering should be seriously considered because humans are polluting faster than we are developing clean technologies. Others in the scientific community are more skeptical about this technology, countering that utilizing geoengineering does not eliminate the root issue of climate change. Delegates will have to address this foundational question, while

coming up with regulatory ideas in case the world does resort to geoengineering in the future.

We already know that not enough research is being done to fully address the issue. My goal for this committee is not limited to delegates discussing the limitations of existing research. Instead, delegates should also discuss what regulations need to be implemented if the scientific community decides we need to use geoengineering. What happens if a large-scale geoengineering experiment goes wrong? How do we approach the transnational-boundary issues associated with geoengineering?

Although experts in the field are unsure about the future of geoengineering, international discussions about the topic are still crucial for climate progress.



March 8-10, 2024

72nd Session

[unepbmun72@bmun.org](mailto:unepbmun72@bmun.org)