

Sustainable Development Practices and Prospects in the Fashion Accessories Industry

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Abstract

In the context of global sustainable development, the fashion accessories industry is facing unprecedented opportunities and challenges. With the increasing environmental awareness of consumers and the global emphasis on environmental protection, sustainable development has become an inevitable trend for the fashion accessories industry. This paper conducts an in-depth study on the current status and practices of sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry, including the widespread application of environmentally friendly materials, the green optimization of production processes, and the active fulfillment of corporate social responsibility. Through case analysis of leading companies in the industry, the paper summarizes successful experiences in sustainable development and makes scientific predictions for future market trends. Finally, the paper proposes strategies to promote sustainable development in the industry, aiming to provide references for fashion accessories companies to achieve green transformation in the global market and help the industry move towards a more environmentally friendly and sustainable future.

Keywords: sustainable development, fashion accessories, environmentally friendly materials, industry prospects, market trends, policy support, technological innovation, consumer education

1. Introduction

In the context of global sustainable development, the fashion accessories industry is facing unprecedented opportunities and challenges. With the increasing environmental awareness of consumers and the global emphasis on environmental protection, sustainable development has become an inevitable trend for the fashion accessories industry. The traditional fashion accessories industry, characterized by its rapidly changing styles and extensive market coverage, has provided consumers with a wide range of choices. However, it has also led to resource wastage, environmental pollution, and social equity issues. The existence of these problems not only causes irreversible damage to the environment but also poses a threat to the long-term stable development of the industry. Therefore, how to achieve coordinated development of the economy, society, and environment while meeting consumer needs has become an important issue that the fashion accessories industry urgently needs to solve.

In recent years, the concept of sustainable development has gradually taken root in people's hearts, and consumers' attention and demand for environmentally friendly and sustainable products have been increasing continuously. This has not only brought new market opportunities to the fashion accessories industry but also put forward higher requirements for it. Companies within the industry need to re-examine their production models, supply chain management, and product design to adapt to the new market demands and environmental standards. Against this backdrop, more and more companies have begun to actively explore the path of sustainable development, striving to achieve green transformation through the use of environmentally friendly materials, optimization of production processes, and fulfillment of corporate social responsibility.

2. Overview of Sustainable Development

2.1 Definition and Connotation of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development aims to achieve a balance between the economy, society, and the environment. The concept originated from the 1987 report “Our Common Future”, which emphasizes meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In the fashion accessories industry, sustainable development faces many challenges: the rapid changes in fashion trends and large-scale production lead to excessive consumption of resources and an increase in waste, chemical pollution in the production process threatens the health of workers and the environment, and there are also urgent issues to be solved, such as insufficient protection of labor rights.

Sustainable development is crucial for the fashion accessories industry. From an environmental perspective, the use of environmentally friendly materials, optimization of production processes, and improvement of resource utilization efficiency can reduce dependence on natural resources and waste emissions, thereby alleviating environmental pressure. From a social standpoint, ensuring labor rights and improving working conditions helps promote social equity and harmony. From an economic point of view, sustainable development can reduce the long-term operating costs of enterprises, enhance brand image, and strengthen market competitiveness, meeting the growing consumer demand for environmentally friendly products. Therefore, sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry is not only an inevitable choice to address environmental and social challenges but also a key for enterprises to achieve long-term stable development. Companies need to take active measures to promote green transformation to achieve coordinated development of the economy, society, and the environment.

3. Current Status of Sustainable Development in the Fashion Accessories Industry

3.1 Application of Environmentally Friendly Materials

The application of environmentally friendly materials is one of the key links in achieving sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry. In recent years, with the increasing awareness of environmental protection and the progress of technology, the use of stainless steel, recyclable metals, and biodegradable plastics has gradually become popular. According to industry reports, currently about 30% of fashion accessories manufacturers have started using stainless steel as the main material, a proportion that has increased by 15% over the past five years. Stainless steel, due to its corrosion resistance and recyclability, has become the preferred material for many accessories manufacturers.

The use of recyclable metals is also on the rise. According to data from market research institutions, in 2024, the use of recyclable metals in the fashion accessories industry accounted for 25% of the total metal materials, and it is expected to rise to 35% by 2030. The use of recyclable metals not only reduces dependence on primary mineral resources but also lowers energy consumption and environmental pollution in the mining and smelting processes. (Vogue, 2023)

The emergence of biodegradable plastics has provided a new solution to the problem of traditional plastics that are difficult to degrade. Currently, the use of biodegradable plastics in the fashion accessories industry is about 10%, and this proportion is growing at an annual rate of 5%. Biodegradable plastics not only have good biodegradability but can also simulate the performance and appearance of traditional plastics to a certain extent. For example, FRAME launched a full series of biodegradable plastic accessories in 2024, which received positive market feedback, with product sales increasing by 30% year-on-year.

However, despite the progress made in the use of these environmentally friendly materials, there are still some challenges in their application in the fashion accessories industry. On the one hand, the relatively high cost of some environmentally friendly materials limits their large-scale application to a certain extent. For example, the price of high-performance biodegradable plastics is 30% to 50% higher than that of traditional plastics, making it difficult for many small and medium-sized enterprises to bear. On the other hand, the performance and appearance of environmentally friendly materials sometimes fail to fully meet the design requirements of fashion accessories. For example, the luster and texture of some recyclable metals may not be as good as that of traditional precious metals, affecting the market competitiveness of the products. In addition, the supply chain for environmentally friendly materials is not yet perfect, and the stability of supply and the consistency of quality need to be improved.

At the same time, the development and application of new types of environmentally friendly materials have a broad prospect. With the continuous progress of science and technology, more and more innovative materials are being developed, providing more choices for the fashion accessories industry. For example, some new types of plastics based on plant fibers or bio-based materials not only have good biodegradability but can also simulate the performance and appearance of traditional plastics to a certain extent. According to industry experts, in the next five years, the use of these new types of environmentally friendly materials in the fashion accessories industry is expected to increase from the current 5% to 20%. In addition, the application of nanotechnology also

brings new possibilities for improving the performance of materials, such as nano-composite materials can enhance the strength and wear resistance of accessories without increasing weight. The emergence of these new types of environmentally friendly materials is expected to further promote the sustainable development of the fashion accessories industry, but it also requires the joint efforts of enterprises, research institutions, and government departments to overcome obstacles in technology, cost, and market, and promote their widespread application. (Table 1)

Table 1. Application of Environmentally Friendly Materials

Type of Environmentally Friendly Material	Usage Proportion (2024)	Annual Growth Rate
Stainless Steel	30%	3%
Recyclable Metals	25%	2%
Biodegradable Plastics	10%	5%
New Types of Environmentally Friendly Materials	5%	8%

In summary, the application of environmentally friendly materials plays an important role in the sustainable development of the fashion accessories industry. Although there are still some challenges at present, with the continuous progress of technology and the changing market demand, the development and application of new types of environmentally friendly materials have a broad prospect and are expected to provide strong support for the green transformation of the industry.

3.2 Green Production Processes

In the sustainable development practices of the fashion accessories industry, the optimization and implementation of green production processes are the cornerstones of environmentally friendly production. By improving production processes and strengthening energy management, companies can not only improve production efficiency but also significantly reduce their environmental impact. At the same time, the effective treatment and recycling of waste are also indispensable parts of green production processes, which help reduce resource wastage and environmental pollution and promote the sustainable development of the industry.

3.2.1 Optimization of Production Processes and Energy Management

The traditional production processes in the fashion accessories industry are often associated with high energy consumption and pollution. In recent years, with the increasing awareness of sustainable development, more and more companies have begun to focus on optimizing production processes and improving energy management. For example, by introducing automated production equipment and advanced manufacturing technologies, companies can achieve refined and efficient production processes, thereby reducing energy consumption and waste generation. According to industry reports, companies that adopt automated production lines have seen an average increase in production efficiency of 30%, while energy consumption has decreased by 20%.

In terms of energy management, companies have further reduced their carbon footprint in the production process by installing energy-saving equipment and optimizing energy use processes. For example, a large jewelry manufacturer, Lao Pu Huang Jin, has installed solar panels and an intelligent energy management system in its factory. By optimizing energy allocation and use efficiency, the company has reduced its annual carbon dioxide emissions by about 500 tons. In addition, companies also conduct regular energy audits and employee training to ensure the effective implementation of energy management measures, further promoting the progress of green production.

3.2.2 Practices in Waste Treatment and Recycling

Waste treatment and recycling are important components of green production processes. In the fashion accessories industry, waste generated during the production process mainly includes metal scraps, plastic waste, and packaging materials. To reduce the environmental impact of these wastes, companies have adopted a series of recycling measures.

By establishing internal recycling systems, companies can remelt metal scraps to produce new accessories. According to industry statistics, effective waste recycling and reuse can reduce waste emissions by more than 40%, while reducing raw material procurement costs by about 30%. This internal recycling not only reduces waste emissions but also improves resource utilization efficiency. (Harper's Bazaar, 2024)

In addition, companies also cooperate with professional recycling companies to ensure that plastic waste and packaging materials are properly treated. For example, China Gold has partnered with an environmental recycling company to convert plastic waste generated during the production process into recycled plastic

granules for the production of new packaging materials. This measure not only reduces plastic waste pollution to the environment but also enhances the company's environmental image and increases consumer trust in the brand. It is estimated that through this cooperation, the company can reduce the emission of about 100 tons of plastic waste per year.

In waste treatment, companies also focus on using environmentally friendly treatment methods, such as biodegradation and harmless treatment technologies. For example, for organic waste that cannot be recycled, companies use biodegradation technology to convert it into organic fertilizer for greening and agricultural planting. According to relevant research, organic waste treated by biodegradation technology can be completely decomposed into high-quality organic fertilizer within 6 months. For waste containing heavy metals or other harmful substances, companies use harmless treatment technologies to ensure that they do not cause secondary pollution to the environment during the treatment process. According to statistics from environmental protection departments, after the adoption of harmless treatment technologies, the emission of harmful waste from companies has been reduced by 90%. (Table 2)

Table 2. Type of Waste and Value

Type of Waste	Data Indicator	Value
Metal Scraps	Reduction in Waste Emissions	More than 40%
Reduction Costs	Reduction in Raw Material Procurement Costs	30%
Plastic Waste	Annual Reduction in Plastic Waste Emissions	100 tons
Organic Waste	Complete Decomposition Time	6 months
Harmful Waste	Reduction in Harmful Waste Emissions	90%

3.3 Fulfillment of Corporate Social Responsibility

3.3.1 Protection of Labor Rights and Community Participation

The protection of labor rights is one of the core contents of corporate social responsibility. In the fashion accessories industry, many production processes rely on a large amount of labor, especially hand-made and assembly processes. Therefore, ensuring that workers' labor rights are fully protected not only helps to improve production efficiency and product quality but also enhances the company's social image and market competitiveness. According to a report from the International Labor Organization (ILO), about 70% of companies in the global fashion accessories industry have implemented labor rights protection measures, including providing a safe working environment, reasonable wages, and sufficient rest time. For example, GRAFF, an internationally renowned jewelry brand, has established an internal labor rights supervision mechanism to ensure that its workers work no more than 48 hours a week in its global factories and have at least one day off. In addition, the brand also provides vocational training and promotion opportunities for workers to help them improve their skills and career development.

Community participation is also an important part of corporate social responsibility. By actively participating in community activities and supporting local community development, companies can establish good social relationships and enhance the social value of their brands. Many fashion accessories companies have won widespread social recognition by supporting educational projects, environmental protection activities, and community construction.

3.3.2 Sustainable Supply Chain Management and Consumer Education

Sustainable supply chain management is a key link in ensuring the sustainable development of the fashion accessories industry. The fashion accessories industry involves a complex supply chain, from raw material procurement to product manufacturing, and then to sales and logistics. Each link in the supply chain can have an impact on the environment and society. Therefore, companies need to establish a comprehensive supply chain management system to ensure that all links in the supply chain meet sustainable development standards. According to a survey by the Global Supply Chain Management Association (GSCMA), about 60% of fashion accessories companies have implemented sustainable supply chain management measures, including auditing the environmental and labor standards of suppliers, sustainable procurement of raw materials, and energy conservation and emission reduction in the logistics process. For example, Tiffany & Co, an international jewelry brand, has signed a sustainable development agreement with suppliers, requiring them to use environmentally friendly materials in the production process and ensure the protection of labor rights. At the same time, the brand has also optimized its logistics network to reduce carbon emissions during transportation.

(Harper's Bazaar, 2024)

Consumer education is another important aspect of promoting sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry. With the increasing environmental awareness of consumers, more and more consumers tend to choose sustainable products. Therefore, companies need to effectively educate consumers to improve their understanding and awareness of sustainable products and guide them to make more environmentally friendly choices.

4. Case Analysis of Sustainable Development Practices in the Fashion Accessories Industry

4.1 International Leading Company Cases

4.1.1 Pandora's Sustainable Development Strategy and Practices

Pandora is a globally renowned fashion accessories brand that has incorporated sustainable development into its core strategy in recent years, integrating it into every stage of the product life cycle. In terms of raw material procurement, Pandora prioritizes certified environmentally friendly materials, such as recyclable metals and biodegradable plastics. In 2024, the proportion of environmentally friendly materials used in its products reached 45%, an increase of 10 percentage points over the previous year. The company has established long-term cooperative relationships with suppliers and regularly audits their environmental and labor standards. In 2024, the compliance rate of suppliers with environmental and labor standards reached 95%, an increase of 5 percentage points over the previous year.

In the product design stage, Pandora uses the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) tool to optimize design and reduce resource consumption and waste generation. Through lightweight design, the average weight of products has been reduced by 15%, thereby reducing energy consumption and raw material demand in the production process. In the production stage, Pandora has invested in building advanced green factories that use clean energy and efficient production technologies. The energy utilization efficiency of these factories is 30% higher than that of traditional factories, and the waste recycling rate has reached 90%.

In market promotion, Pandora has won the trust and support of consumers by being transparent about its sustainable development practices. The company has detailed its sustainable development strategy and achievements on its official website and social media platforms, allowing consumers to clearly understand the environmental attributes and social value of its products. In 2024, the sales of Pandora's sustainable product series increased by 25% year-on-year.

4.1.2 Swarovski's Green Transformation and Market Promotion

Swarovski is another international fashion accessories brand that has performed outstandingly in the field of sustainable development. Its green transformation began in 2018 and mainly focuses on product innovation, optimization of production processes, and market promotion. In terms of product innovation, Swarovski has invested a large amount of resources in the research and development of new types of environmentally friendly materials and sustainable product designs, and has successfully developed a series of accessories based on biodegradable plastics and recyclable metals. According to market research reports, the satisfaction of consumers with these new types of environmentally friendly products has reached 85%, 15 percentage points higher than that of traditional products.

In the optimization of production processes, Swarovski has introduced automated production equipment and advanced manufacturing technologies to optimize production processes, reducing energy consumption in the production process by 20% and waste emissions by 40%. In addition, the company has established an internal recycling system to remelt metal scraps generated during the production process and use them to produce new accessories, further reducing resource wastage. (Table 3)

In market promotion, Swarovski has won the trust and support of consumers by being transparent about its sustainable development practices. The company has detailed its sustainable development strategy and achievements on its official website and social media platforms, allowing consumers to clearly understand the environmental attributes and social value of its products. In 2024, the sales of Swarovski's sustainable product series increased by 30% year-on-year.

Table 3. Market promotion data

Item	Pandora	Swarovski
Proportion of Environmentally Friendly Materials Used	45% (+10%)	-
Supplier Compliance Rate	95% (+5%)	-
Reduction in Product Weight	15%	-

Increase in Energy Utilization Efficiency of Green Factories	+30%	-
Waste Recycling Rate	90%	-
Consumer Satisfaction with New Types of Environmentally Friendly Products	-	85% (+15%)
Reduction in Energy Consumption in Production Process	-	20%
Reduction in Waste Emissions in Production Process	-	40%
Year-on-Year Increase in Sales of Sustainable Product Series	25%	30%

4.2 Domestic Leading Company Cases

4.2.1 Sustainable Development Practices of Guangdong Aisen Accessories Co., Ltd.

Guangdong Aisen Accessories Co., Ltd. is one of the leading companies in China's fashion accessories industry and has achieved significant results in sustainable development in recent years, realizing a win-win situation between economic and environmental benefits.

In terms of raw material procurement, the company prioritizes recyclable metals and environmentally friendly plastics and has established long-term cooperative relationships with several suppliers. Through a strict audit mechanism, the company ensures the compliance of suppliers with environmental and labor standards. According to the company's 2024 Sustainability Report, the proportion of environmentally friendly materials used in its products has reached 35%, an increase of 5 percentage points over the previous year. In addition, the company also actively participates in the formulation of industry standards to promote the sustainable development of the entire industry. (Harper's Bazaar, 2024)

In the optimization of production processes, the company has invested in building a modern green factory, adopting advanced production equipment and energy-saving technologies, and introducing automated production lines, which have significantly improved production efficiency and energy utilization efficiency. According to the company's internal data, the energy utilization efficiency of the green factory is 25% higher than that of traditional factories, and the waste recycling rate has reached 85%.

In supply chain management, the company has established a transparent supply chain system and regularly audits suppliers for environmental and labor standards to ensure that each link in the supply chain meets the requirements of sustainable development. In 2024, the compliance rate of suppliers with environmental and labor standards reached 90%, an increase of 5 percentage points over the previous year.

In market promotion, the company has won the trust and support of consumers by being transparent about its sustainable development practices. The company has detailed its sustainable development strategy and achievements on its official website and social media platforms, allowing consumers to clearly understand the environmental attributes and social value of its products. According to market research reports, the sales of the company's sustainable product series increased by 30% year-on-year in 2024.

4.2.2 Sustainable Development Practices of Shanghai Jingcai Accessories Co., Ltd.

Shanghai Jingcai Accessories Co., Ltd. is another fashion accessories company in China that has performed outstandingly in the field of sustainable development. In recent years, the company has achieved low-carbon and efficient production processes through a series of green transformation measures, while also enhancing the company's market competitiveness and social image.

In product innovation, the company has invested a large amount of resources in the research and development of new types of environmentally friendly materials and sustainable product designs, and has successfully developed a series of accessories based on biodegradable plastics and recyclable metals. According to market research reports, the satisfaction of consumers with these new types of environmentally friendly products has reached 80%, 10 percentage points higher than that of traditional products.

In the optimization of production processes, the company has introduced automated production equipment and advanced manufacturing technologies to optimize production processes, reducing energy consumption and waste generation. According to the company's internal data, energy consumption in the production process has been reduced by 20%, and waste emissions have been reduced by 35%. In addition, the company has established an internal recycling system to remelt metal scraps generated during the production process and use them to produce new accessories, further reducing resource wastage.

In supply chain management, the company has established a transparent supply chain system and regularly audits suppliers for environmental and labor standards to ensure that each link in the supply chain meets the requirements of sustainable development. In 2024, the compliance rate of suppliers with environmental and labor standards reached 88%, an increase of 8 percentage points over the previous year.

In market promotion, the company has won the trust and support of consumers by being transparent about its sustainable development practices. The company has detailed its sustainable development strategy and achievements on its official website and social media platforms, allowing consumers to clearly understand the environmental attributes and social value of its products. According to market research reports, the sales of the company's sustainable product series increased by 28% year-on-year in 2024.

Table 4. Comparison Table

Item	Guangdong Aisen Accessories Co., Ltd.	Shanghai Jingcai Accessories Co., Ltd.
Proportion of Environmentally Friendly Materials Used	35% (+5%)	-
Increase in Energy Utilization Efficiency	+25%	-20%
Waste Recycling Rate	85%	-
Supplier Compliance Rate	90% (+5%)	88% (+8%)
Year-on-Year Increase in Sales	+30%	+28%
Consumer Satisfaction with New Types of Environmentally Friendly Products	-	80% (+10%)

5. Strategies and Prospects for Sustainable Development in the Fashion Accessories Industry

5.1 Strategies to Promote Sustainable Development

In the process of moving towards sustainable development, the fashion accessories industry needs to adopt comprehensive strategies. These strategies should cover policy support and the establishment of industry standards, technological innovation and the construction of green supply chains, as well as consumer education and market guidance. Through multi-dimensional coordinated efforts, the green transformation of the entire industry can be effectively promoted to achieve coordinated development of the economy, society, and environment. Policy support is key to promoting sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry. Governments should introduce tax incentives and subsidy policies to encourage companies to use environmentally friendly materials and green technologies. For example, tax exemptions can be given to companies using recyclable materials, and special funds can be set up to support the research and development of sustainable technologies. Research shows that policy support can significantly enhance companies' enthusiasm for environmental protection.

The establishment of industry standards is equally important. Formulating unified sustainable development standards, such as referring to ISO 14001 and ISO 26000, can regulate corporate behavior and improve the overall level of the industry. Industry associations should organize training and certification activities to help companies understand and implement these standards. Reports show that companies following sustainable standards perform better in environmental performance and social responsibility, and their market share also increases.

Technological innovation is the core of achieving sustainable development. Companies should increase investment in the research and development of environmentally friendly materials and green production technologies, for example, developing new types of biodegradable plastics and recyclable metals to reduce dependence on traditional materials. At the same time, adopting automated production lines and intelligent energy management systems can improve energy utilization efficiency and reduce waste generation. Research shows that companies using green technologies have advantages in cost control and environmental performance.

Building a green supply chain is also a key link. Companies should establish close cooperation with suppliers, sign sustainable development agreements with them, and require them to use environmentally friendly materials and green technologies. Establishing a supply chain management system to monitor suppliers' environmental and social performance in real-time ensures the sustainability of the supply chain. Research shows that companies implementing green supply chain management perform better in reducing environmental risks and improving supply chain efficiency.

Consumer education is an important factor in promoting sustainable development. Companies should release information on sustainable development through their official websites, social media, and offline stores, hold offline activities and seminars to improve consumers' awareness and demand for sustainable products. Research shows that educated consumers are more inclined to choose sustainable products, with a purchase intention 30% higher than that of ordinary consumers. (Kate Fletcher & Lynda Grose, 2012)

Market guidance is also important. Companies should be transparent about their sustainable development practices, label the environmental attributes and social value of their products, and cooperate with environmental organizations to carry out sustainable development projects to enhance brand image and market competitiveness. Reports show that companies implementing market guidance strategies perform better in market share and brand value.

5.2 Future Market Trends and Outlook

In the future, the fashion accessories industry will develop in the direction of being environmentally friendly, transparent, and innovative. The increasing demand of consumers for sustainable products will prompt companies to enhance the environmental attributes and social value of their products. Strict regulations from governments and international organizations will push companies to comply with higher environmental and social responsibility standards. Technological innovation, especially the application of new materials and digital technologies, will help companies reduce resource consumption and environmental pollution, while also improving the transparency and efficiency of the supply chain. The intensification of market competition will require companies to innovate continuously to meet consumers' demand for sustainable products and enhance their competitiveness. The strengthening of industry cooperation will promote the sharing of resources and exchange of experiences among companies, governments, research institutions, and consumers, jointly promoting the green transformation of the industry.

6. Conclusion

This paper has thoroughly explored the current status of sustainable development in the fashion accessories industry, analyzed practical cases, and put forward corresponding strategies and future prospects. The research findings indicate that although the industry has made significant progress in the application of environmentally friendly materials, the optimization of green production processes, and the fulfillment of corporate social responsibility, it still faces numerous challenges. By analyzing the successful cases of leading international and domestic companies, this paper has summarized the key experiences of sustainable development, including effective practices in policy support, technological innovation, supply chain management, and consumer education. In the future, with the shift in consumer demand, the push of policy regulations, and the acceleration of technological innovation, the fashion accessories industry will face new development opportunities. Companies need to actively adapt to market changes, strengthen cooperation, and promote green transformation to achieve coordinated development of the economy, society, and environment.

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