

# ARMANI / VALUES

## **THE ARMANI GROUP ANNOUNCES A NEW PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SUSTAINABLE MARKETS INITIATIVE'S FASHION TASK FORCE AND THE CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY ALLIANCE: APULIA REGENERATIVE COTTON PROJECT, PAVING A SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE PATH FOR FASHION IN ITALY**

**Milan - 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023** - On the occasion of **World Environment Day**, the Armani Group further testifies to its commitment towards environmental issues and the active promotion of sustainable practices with the announcement of a new project in collaboration with the Sustainable Markets Initiative's Fashion Task Force and the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance, both founded by His Majesty King Charles III in his former role as The Prince of Wales. The **Apulia Regenerative Cotton Project** will focus on the development of agroforestry-based cotton production.

Supported by the **Sustainable Markets Initiative's Fashion Task Force** in partnership with the **Circular Bioeconomy Alliance** and coordinated by the **European Forest Institute (EFI)** together with the **Council for Agricultural Research and Economics of Italy (CREA)** and with **PRETATERRA**, the objective of this pilot project is to develop an experimental agroforestry regenerative cotton site, among the first of its kind, to test and scientifically assess new ways to implement sustainable cotton production in Italy. The aim is to demonstrate how to enhance landscape diversity, water saving and soil fertility as well as biodiversity-related ecosystem services while producing cotton with a low carbon footprint through the use of agroforestry systems. This innovative approach responds to increasing consumer demand for sustainable fashion globally, and at the same time, it ensures traceable and resilient value chains as well as the safety of resources.

*"In fashion, everything begins from the material: all my designs start with the choice of fabric. And it was by experimenting and using non-traditional fabrics that I revolutionized fashion. But the textile industry is one of the sectors with the greatest impact on the planet and that is an issue that cannot be neglected. Our commitment with Sustainable Markets Initiative is to drive positive change: it is a bold and innovative project and one that is particularly meaningful for me and my company. Actively participating in the development of agroforestry regenerative cotton, especially on Italian soil, is an important step and will also have a real impact on local communities. Once a utopia, regenerative fashion finally begins to assume a tangible form"* said Giorgio Armani.

Puglia (Apulia) has a mild climate which creates the perfect environment to grow a great diversity of agricultural crops and this project contributes to the reintroduction in the region of a long tradition of cotton farming, which dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. After the initial cotton planting on one hectare of land which started being implemented last May, from 2024 cultivation will gradually expand to occupy a total farm area of five hectares.

Over five years, this farm site will be among the first field experiments in Europe testing agroforestry cotton with alternative tree species and regenerative practices. Regular scientific reports will evaluate the properties of the cotton yielded and will assess the environmental impacts and production levels of the different plots established.

The **Apulia Regenerative Cotton Project** is part of the **Regenerative Fashion Manifesto**, developed by the **Sustainable Markets Initiative's Fashion Task Force**, chaired by entrepreneur Federico Marchetti in partnership with the **Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA)**, led by scientist Marc Palahí.

By adhering to the manifesto, members of the **Sustainable Markets Initiative's Fashion Task Force** are committing to a progressive shift towards regenerative fashion – a circular biobased industry that uses newly created or restored regenerative landscapes as the basis for bioeconomy value chains and practices that empower local communities and support their prosperity.

This initiative is in line with the pledge of the Armani Group to integrate and strengthen sustainable and responsible development into the company's values and business strategies. Indeed, in 2021 the Group enhanced its governance on this issue and launched a new sustainability strategy based on three main pillars "People, Planet, Prosperity". The Group has also defined concrete objectives for the company and along its entire value chain according to the ESG approach (Environmental, Social, Governance).

For more information

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### **About The Armani Group**

Established in 1975 by Giorgio Armani, Chairman and CEO, the Armani Group is one of the leading fashion and luxury goods companies in the world. The Group designs, manufactures, distributes and directly retails fashion and lifestyle products including apparel, accessories, eyewear, watches, jewellery, cosmetics, fragrances, and furniture and home décor and operates in the areas of food and beverage and *hotellerie*.

[www.armanivalues.com](http://www.armanivalues.com)

### **About the Sustainable Markets Initiative**

In his former role as The Prince of Wales, His Majesty King Charles III launched the Sustainable Markets Initiative (SMI) in January 2020. The Sustainable Markets Initiative is a network of global CEOs across industries working together to build prosperous and sustainable economies that generate long-term value through the balanced integration of natural, social, human, and financial capital. The Sustainable Markets Initiative also launched its Terra Carta in 2021, which provides a practical roadmap for acceleration towards an ambitious and sustainable future; one that will harness the power of Nature combined with the transformative power, innovation, and resources of the private sector.

[www.sustainable-markets.org/](http://www.sustainable-markets.org/)

### **About the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA)**

The Circular Bioeconomy Alliance was established in 2020 by His Majesty King Charles III (formerly The Prince of Wales) to connect the dots between finance, companies operating within biobased value chains and action on the ground to restore land, enhance biodiversity and provide jobs and prosperity to local and indigenous communities. Members include intergovernmental organizations, companies, investors, research organizations and NGOs providing expertise and implementing projects in areas related to the circular bioeconomy.

<https://circularbioeconomyalliance.org>

### **About the European Forest Institute (EFI)**

The European Forest Institute (EFI) is a pan-European international organization conducting scientific research and providing policy support on forest-related issues. EFI has 30 Member Countries and c. 130 member organizations from 40 different countries working in diverse research fields. EFI has more than 25 years of experience in coordinating complex transnational scientific forest-related projects funded by the European Commission and Member States. EFI will have the overall coordination and management of the project and communication with the donor. EFI will lead the experimental design and contribute to all phases of the project.

<https://efi.int>

### **About the Council for Agricultural Research and Economics of Italy (CREA)**

The Council for Agricultural Research and Economics of Italy is organised into 12 Research Centres located throughout Italy. CREA-AA (Centre for Agriculture and Environment) carries out studies and

research for the characterization, sustainable management, and the space-temporal modelling of agricultural and forestry ecosystems by means of an inter- and multi-disciplinary approach. The CREA-AA based in Bari (Puglia region), owning five experimental farms, will be the implementing partner of the consortium. CREA-AA will be responsible for implementing the experimental sites, monitoring and scientific assessments in the 5 hectares of the “Venezian experimental farm” in Rutigliano.

[www.crea.gov.it](http://www.crea.gov.it)

#### **About PRETATERRA**

PRETATERRA develops and implements replicable, regenerative agroforestry systems, combining scientific data, empirical ancestral information, and traditional knowledge with technological innovations. PRETATERRA will contribute to the co-designing of the agroforestry cotton experimental sites and regenerative practices to be tested.

<https://pretaterra.com/english>