The Problem
I HAVE NOTHING TO WEAR
‘Fast Fashion’ and our consumer culture have super-charged the growth of textile waste
And diversion efforts have not been keeping up
AND THIS AMOUNT IS GROWING

Between 1999 and 2009 the volume of PCTW generated grew by 40%, while the diversion rate only increased by 2%.

1999: 18.2 billion pounds
2009: 25.46 billion pounds
2019: Projected: 35.4 billion pounds
New York State has gone further than any other state in its response to the textile recycling emergency
ReClothe NY

Nation’s first statewide textile diversion initiative

&

ReClothe NY Coalition

Nation’s first statewide coalition for all for-profit and non-profit stakeholders
Coalition Benefits

A supportive framework for used clothing collectors that engenders public trust and participation.

Setting the Gold Standard for:
- Transparent business practices
- Sharing of collections data
- Aligning all stakeholders

The Coalition model will be KEY to increasing diversion rates
But even if we were diverting it all..

DIVERSION is still only half the battle
This is what diversion looks like
The Supply Chain

U.S. Consumers
Throw out 70 pounds of clothing per person a year, 20 Billion pounds in total

1 Clothing Bin
Collects up to 5,000 pounds of clothing a year

U.S. Thrift Stores
Buy used clothing from for profit and non-profit recyclers

Sorting Companies
Across the world purchase used clothing and surplus thrift store inventory in order to supply global markets:

Vintage Retailers
Purchase just over 1% of the items processed by the sorters

Overseas Thrifts
in developing countries import 40% of clothing processed by the sorting companies

Rag and Fiber Processors
Purchase up to 50% of the clothing to make rags, carpets and other items
Weak demand has caused private recyclers to struggle to stay profitable the last two years.
Used clothing prices have collapsed by over 50%  
In the last 24 months
Key facts:
1. Over 80% of the diverted clothing volume is exported to emerging market countries

2. Prices drop when emerging market economies struggle

3. Weak foreign currencies have made U.S. Used Clothing harder for emerging markets to afford
This is what a 20% Drop in Kenya’s Shilling Looks Like
All commodity markets have crashed

It’s a cyclical phenomenon that has been exacerbated by the growth of PCTW
But that’s not all:
6 major East African countries are trying to ban used clothing imports

- This would have a drastic effect on used clothing pricing
What can be done?
1. Support SMART’s robust efforts to keep international markets open

2. Encourage domestic demand for used clothing and post consumer textile products
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