

Dressing Vegan For The Planet
From [ALV Animal Liberation Victoria](#)
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Animal agriculture is a leading cause of global warming, water usage, oceanic dead zones, land clearing, and species extinction. We save lives and the planet when we don't wear animals.

The single best thing you can do for the [environment is be vegan](#). The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has confirmed that eating a plant-based diet is vital to curbing the climate crisis. But such reports always forget one major consideration: we must also stop *wearing* animals.



When we consider figures about the impact of animal agriculture on the environment, we must remember that it is not only the demand for beef and lamb meat that causes these emissions, but also the demand for leather and wool.

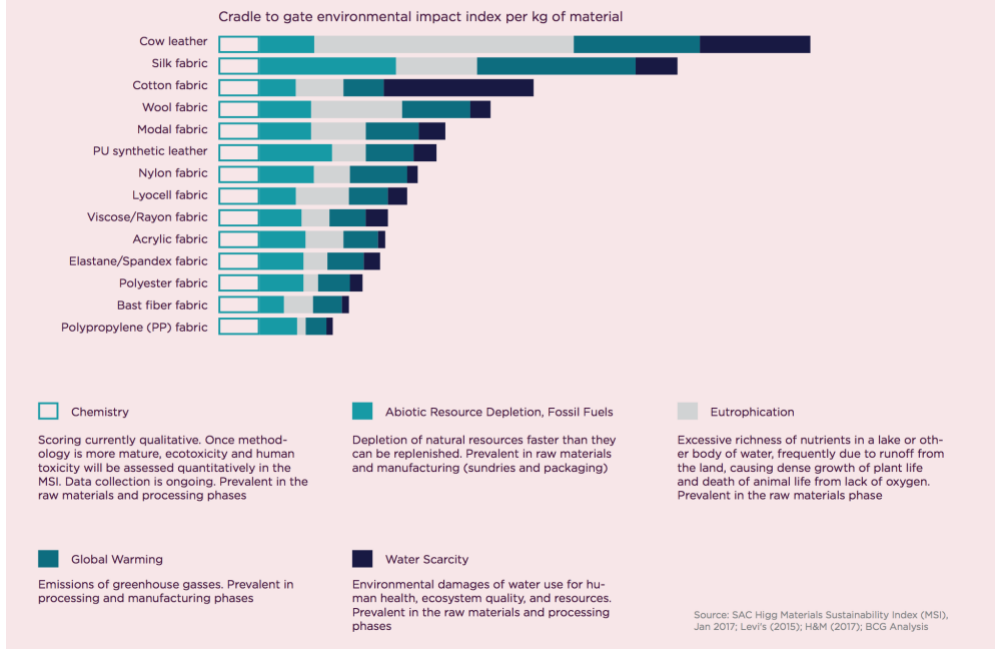
After researching the most commonly used materials, the [Global Fashion Agenda](#) found that when considering the production of a material from cradle to gate:

- **cow skin leather** is the single most environmentally impactful material
- **silk** is the second most impactful material
- **wool** is the fourth most impactful material

Greenhouse Gas

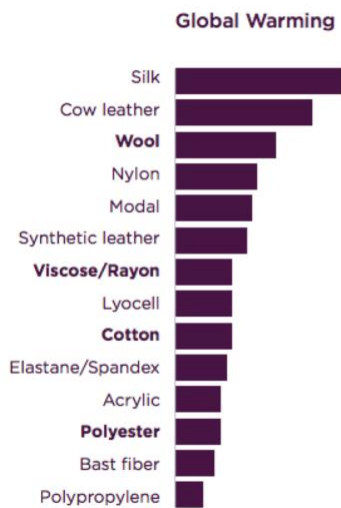
Calculated using a 20-year time frame, Australian agricultural industries contribute around [54% of Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions](#).

Exhibit 16 Cradle to gate environmental impact by material



Heat generating emissions from land clearing (for pasture), enteric fermentation (cow and sheep belching and breathing), burning savannah, manure, and livestock production generate 83% of all Australian agricultural emissions (p 45).

Cradle to gate environmental impact index per kg of material



Water

The water footprint of raising cattle for leather is 17,100L of water per kg of leather.

The water usage required for leather continues, as the specific water intake resulting from the tanning process of a hide can consume between 170-550 litres of water per hide.



Wool has to be 'scoured', or cleaned (of dirt, lanolin grease and other materials) before it can be used as a fashion fibre. The liquid waste from a typical wool scouring plant is equivalent to the sewage of a town of around 30,000 people.

Wool scouring detergents often can use alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEOs). APEOs are endocrine disruptors, meaning they interfere with the body's endocrine system. They are known to be toxic for aquatic life, causing fertility issues in fish populations. This is clearly alarming if scouring plants are releasing their waste into our natural environment and into waterways.



Land Clearing

Vast quantities of forests, open woodlands and native grasslands have been [cleared to create grazing pasture for pre-slaughter farmed animals](#) (p 15), including cows and sheep whose skins and wool are used in the fashion industry.

We've cleared around [1 million sq km of our 7.7 sq km land mass, 70% of clearing is estimated to have been for livestock production.](#)

Outside of Australia the situation is just as bad. Animal agriculture is responsible for around [90% of destruction in the Amazon rainforest](#), one of the worlds greatest carbon sinks. Much of this destruction is for cattle farming, for both beef and leather, [Brazil being the second largest exporter of raw cow hides](#). Intense land clearing is not only harmful to the planet itself, it also negatively impacts the indigenous people and animals that live off that land.



Aerial view of forested land around Paragominas, Northern State of Para, Brazil. Credit: AP Photo/Andrew Penner

These are just some of the reasons animal materials are harmful to the environment. It is clear that to be a true environmentalist, we must not purchase clothing, shoes or accessories made from animals. There are plenty of animal-free bags, shoes, jumpers, jackets and other clothes which you can wear without harming animals, or the planet. Please choose them, and choose kindness!



A cork alternative leather jacket by Ovide