

## NOV-DEC 2020

A drive to stop overusing resources is a major factor with many companies offering sustainable solutions. "I used to work as a fashion buyer for a couple of years and realized how wasteful the retail industry is; producing cheap products that don't last and that are meant to be thrown away after a couple uses/months, trends that exist to make customers buy more, underpaid workers with bad working conditions, product transportation (making products in Asia to sell in America), the culture of disposable, plastic packaging, inventory surplus that

are thrown away or burned," says Virginie Clusiaux, Co-Founder, Itemerie, San Francisco, United States. "I've soon realized that this situation is unsustainable. I wanted to be a part of the solution, not the problem."

While doing market research, Parikshit Borkotoky, Managing Director, Kraftinn Home Décor India Private Limited, Assam, India, discovered "consumer products form 40% of the non-biodegradable products and a substantial part of the remaining comes from industries producing those products."



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### eco-friendly materials

Working with natural materials to produce a quality product is not just good for the home, but is beneficial to the environment.

"Early in our career, we understood that as designers, we have a responsibility, driven by the acknowledgement that 80% of a product's environmental impact is already determined at the drawing table," says James Dart, Co-founder, OnMateria, Sweden. "Our approach goes beyond choosing a sustainable material to apply on our latest design, but rather it is a critical exercise where we try to understand the repercussions of what we are designing. This continuous process brings us to a deeper understanding of the material and helps us choose how to use resources wisely," he adds.

Linen, for instance, is a fast-growing and renewable resource. "As a crop, it's good for the agro-industry and the soil in which it grows. We are able to see so many advantages to use this textile that has less water consumption and a smaller carbon footprint than cotton or synthetics, and also a positive end-of-life prospect," says Dart. Adding "Our developments with this material also see it as a future material, able to replace carbon fibre composites for sports equipment, transport, and products in the home."

