



Media release  
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## Textile Circular Economy gets the green light in Aotearoa-NZ

Diverse partners have come together to create a circular system to reuse the untapped resource of unwanted clothing and textiles, onshore in Aotearoa. Textile waste is one of New Zealand's fastest growing waste streams, their outsized impact relative to weight make them an ideal focus for carbon reduction activities.

Leading the co-design and building of a national circular economy for clothing and textiles in Aotearoa, UsedFULLY® began working with Scion exploring potential applications for waste textile fibre in New Zealand quickly sparked industry interest and led to funding.

Cellulose is currently imported for use as an additive in asphalt roading mix to stabilise it, improve its workability, homogeneity and the strength of the final road. Meanwhile, we have an estimated 220,000 tonnes of potential fibre in the form of textiles going to landfill in New Zealand every year.

As the viability of waste textiles as a cellulose replacement proved successful in the lab, collaborators were brought onboard for their unique perspective, background and vision to the project. UsedFULLY and its Textile Reuse Programme Partners Alsco NZ, Deane Apparel and Barkers Clothing focused on textile collection and recycling systems and connecting value chain partners. In parallel, Scion worked on fibre processing, testing and material development; WSP Research on roading material development and testing; and Waka Kotahi on road construction and future infrastructure requirements.

"The success of this initiative is down to the expertise and enthusiasm of each of the partners involved and also thanks to the support of Waka Kotahi, the Ministry for the Environment and Wellington City Council who provided funding." Says Peter Thompson CEO UsedFULLY.

Wellington City Council joined the collaboration providing a central city road for the first demonstration of the product, with Fulton Hogan as construction partners. The Terrace between Ghuznee and Buller Streets will be the first section of road trialed with the new product. It'll be laid with 'StrengthTex' which incorporates 500kgs (half a tonne) of used textiles, conserving approximately 11,725kgs CO<sub>2</sub>e (carbon equivalent) and 568,500 litres H<sub>2</sub>O (water).

Proving the circular pathway for unwanted textiles onshore. Reusing the fibres in roading will boost the roading industries resilience by reducing the country's reliance on imported products and improve the performance of our roads. Diverting New Zealand's textile waste from landfills could result in potential greenhouse gas emissions reduction of 400,000 t CO<sub>2</sub>e a year.

Improving the performance of our roads, creating jobs and economic opportunity onshore while also reducing waste and emissions is a win-win-win scenario, says Mayor Andy Foster.

"We're supporting organisations, projects and initiatives that reflect a circular economy as part of our [Te Atakura – First to Zero goal](#).

"This trial is a perfect example of cross collaboration and stewardship focused on improving sustainability for future generations – and we're proud to be laying the groundwork."

"StrengthTex is the first of a number of industrial scale solutions we have developed from unwanted textiles. It not only provides a fit for purpose product for our roads and construction industry, it also supports organisations to take action on climate change by diverting their unwanted textiles from waste into local, real-world solutions. Says Peter Thompson CEO "We measure the impacts of these solutions through the UsedFULLY Resource Management Platform, so organisations can track their progress towards their decarbonisation targets."

This unique cross sector collaboration is accelerating New Zealand's transition to a low-carbon, circular economy, says Councillor Laurie Foon.

"We are hearing more and more about the circular economy and how it is a crucial component in future sustainability and protecting the environment, and our residents are demanding this sort of action from us and Central Government.

"The circular economy model lengthens the timeframe of products by reusing them, repurposing them, and building on their lifecycle. This trial ticks all those boxes, and we look forward to hearing the results, and this innovative approach becoming the norm not an anomaly."

Organisations wanting to connect their unwanted textiles and clothing with these solutions can order a Textile Audit with UsedFULLY or become a Partner in the Textile Reuse Programme.

For more information and images, please contact:

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