Abstract

The textile industry is both a major water user and polluter, and is facing increasingly tight legislation regarding water discharges, air emissions and waste production. If the industry were to meet all higher standards now, the cost would make it uncompetitive. Consequently, the introduction of process changes to decrease water and energy consumption, and effluent costs must result in the necessary cost savings to pay for the investment required.

Technological sophistication, process efficiencies, and waste generation, treatment and disposal within the textile sector are examined. Current trends within the South African textile industry as a whole with respect to cleaner production and environmental pressures, are explored.