

The Futures of Laundry in Mexico City, 2040

Natalia Silva | June, 2022

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Introduction

In 2022, **domestic laundry** carries a **great environmental weight**¹. At the same time, it **does not promote clothing care** and often leads to **disposal** -a problem that only adds up to the already large impact of the fashion industry². By **2040**, Mexico City might have already gone through a massive **water crisis**³. So, as a futurist and designer, I want to lay out **alternative futures** for solving something that is part of our **daily life**.

Key Findings:

In Mexico, traditionally basic laundry habits are **inherited** by **care figures** at home, and are hardly questioned only **acquired** and **replicated**.

A big part of the environmental footprint of laundry can be **reduced** by **better user habits**, such as: switching from hot water to **cold water** cycles⁷.

Laundry is a well **hated** chore because of the **time** it takes up and because of the **insecurity** of the user of doing it right.

Most **innovations** around laundry are **iterations** of the same products to reproduce the **traditional water-dependent** process.

Laundry has a huge **social impact**: not being able to effectively and quickly wash clothes leads to **absenteeism** in **primary education** schools⁸.

It is estimated in 2022, that the **water reserves** of Mexico City will last only **two more years**⁹.

Space agencies are, so far, the only organizations interested in coming up with **alternatives** to laundry in order to increase **space tourism**⁵.

Problem Definition

How can we care for our clothes **without the use of water**? How can we **make this task easier** so that it doesn't take up much of our **time**? How can we do those things while also making sure to **take good care** of our clothes?

Short Term Strategies:

Business



- Product **optimization** through **clean** raw materials.
- Optimization of appliances in order to **reduce time** of use.
- **Disruptive business** models that improve products and services.
- Popularization of **antimicrobial** fabrics in all categories of clothing.
- **Social innovation** initiatives to **democratize** the access to clean clothes.
- **Specialized media** to communicate **effective** clothing care.
- An entrepreneurial ecosystem that both **innovates** and **invests** in laundry alternatives.
- **Pivot** of harmful dry cleaning services.

Society



- Better **consumer** and **care habits**.
- **NGOs** to **promote** necessary social and political **changes**.
- Consumer and citizen **participation** to **demand change** in businesses and governments.
- **Responsible** individual waste management.

Government

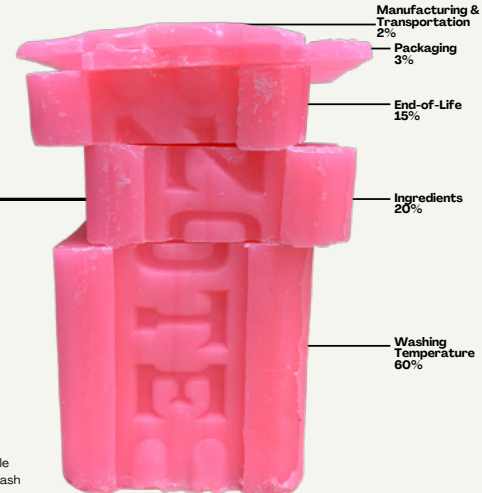


- Washing machine **regulation** of microfiber **filtering**, and energy and water **consumption**.
- Public **programs** that **grant access** to clean clothes.
- Rigorous **laws** regarding **water politics**.

Academia



- **Research** on **non water-dependent** alternatives.
- Research on textile **solutions** to **microplastics**.
- **Education** and awareness for new garment **designers** to consider **product care**.



Laundry's Carbon Footprint⁴

Conclusions

The **washing machine** is considered the **greatest invention** of the 20th Century by many economists¹⁰. However, looking into the 21st Century, the traditional laundry process is **time consuming**, depends on **non-renewable** resources, is not **practical** for many lifestyles, and is **not accessible** for everyone, making it still a **privilege** for few. Domestic laundry **must evolve** the **efficiency** of its technologies and the **efficacy** of its products, so that it becomes environmentally conscious. But it also must change the time it demands from the user so that in 2040 it brings about the same social progress as it first did in the 20th Century.

Long Term Vision

In **2040**, the task of taking care of our clothes will be done through **non-water dependent** technologies, it will be and **immediate** process and it will be part of our **daily routine**.

Signals bank



References



The Futures of Laundry in Mexico City, 2040
El futuro de la lavandería en la Ciudad de México, 2040

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