



Responsible Luxury Initiative: Animal Sourcing Principles

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Introduction

As companies in the luxury sector, dedicated to excellence in all areas, we are committed to responsible and sustainable business principles and practices, including sustainable sourcing. We work toward upholding such practices and principles throughout our own businesses as well as in our supply chains, by working with supply chain partners who share our values and approach to sustainable and responsible business. Since we may use material from animal origin, such as leather, animal fibers, exotic skins, and fur, in some of our products, we are deeply committed to principles and practices that require animals in our supply chain to be treated with care and respect, and for these species to be sustained, through sustainable trade, species conservation, and protection of ecosystems.

This document sets out the general principles according to which all animals, both farmed and wild-caught, in our supply chains should be treated. The principles have been developed to take into account the diversity of animal products we source as well as the different regulatory environments in which animals are caught, maintained, bred, raised, transported, handled, and slaughtered. Given the general nature of these principles and the diversity of animals covered by them, we recognize the need for species-specific implementation guidance (as defined by principle 13) and that to implement the principles, companies will need to develop their own implementation plans.

General Principles

We believe that these principles should apply throughout the animal sourcing supply chain, including the catching, maintaining, breeding, raising, transporting, handling, and slaughtering of live animals. The principles include both wild-caught and farmed animals in their scope.

1. We are committed to science-based approaches to determine animal welfare for the catching, maintaining, breeding, raising, transporting, handling, and slaughtering of animals in our leather, fur, and exotic skins supply chains. We strive to ensure that all such animals, while taking into account their species' needs, benefit from:
 - a. freedom from hunger and thirst, by ready access to fresh water and a diet for full health and vigor;

- b. freedom from discomfort, by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area;
 - c. freedom from pain, injury, or disease, by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment;
 - d. freedom to express normal behavior, by providing sufficient space, proper facilities, and company of the animal's own kind;
 - e. freedom from fear and distress, by providing conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering.
2. We believe that catching, maintaining, breeding, raising, transporting, handling, and slaughtering of animals must be undertaken in compliance with applicable local, regional, national, and international animal welfare, social, and environmental laws and regulations as well as internationally accepted human and labor rights standards. This would include, for example, following the [standards developed by the World Organization for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#).
3. We are committed to sustaining well-functioning and biodiverse ecosystems in the regions where we source. We believe that sourcing materials of animal origin only from legal entities and through legal processes will help maintain species populations at sustainable levels. We also believe that companies and authorities should follow the decisions, guidelines, and advice of the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#), relating to sustainable production methodologies for various species. The use of robust scientific assessment methodologies, such as the [Non-Detriment Findings](#) methodology promoted by CITES and [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™](#) / [National Red List assessments](#), is necessary to ensure that sustainable population levels of species are maintained.
4. We strive to support the most ecological agricultural and farming practices available which relate to the maintaining, breeding, and raising of animals in order to minimize impact on the environment, including working to eliminate deforestation throughout the lifecycle. Internationally recognized practices articulated by the Food and Agriculture Organization and similar bodies, designed to minimize impact on the environment in agriculture and farming, should be followed. Similarly, all applicable international regulations and standards governing labor practices and human rights relative to those workers who maintain, breed, raise, transport, handle, and slaughter animals should be followed.

Catching, Maintaining, Breeding, Raising, Transporting, Handling, and Slaughtering Animals

5. We believe that wild animals should not be caught in a way that is likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them. Established and science-based approaches to determine animal welfare governing the catching of animals in the wild should be followed.
6. We believe that during the maintaining, breeding, and raising of animals, they should have freedom of movement, be housed in clean and secure conditions; be provided with food, water, and care; and have appropriate lighting, temperature, humidity, air circulation, ventilation, and other environmental conditions necessary for the species, based on established experience and scientific knowledge.
7. We believe that animals should not be transported in a way that is likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them. All necessary arrangements should be made in advance to minimize the length

of the journey and to meet animals' needs during the journey in line with internationally accepted standards for transportation of animals by air, at sea, and on land, such as those outlined by the OIE and the [EU regulations on transport](#).

8. We believe that all animals should be handled in a calm and gentle manner to minimize agitation or other forms of stress. Those working in farm environments should be trained in species-specific behaviors and handling techniques appropriate to the species.
9. We believe that animals should not experience suffering, pain, or excitement during all stages of the process of slaughter, and that, as appropriate to the species, effective stunning techniques, as detailed by the European Commission and OIE, should be used in advance of slaughter.

Implementation

10. As a means to uphold these principles, we will work with our suppliers and, as appropriate, their own supply chains, to achieve these outcomes and encourage them to uphold these principles. We will seek to source from suppliers and countries that have well established policies and enforcement mechanisms covering animal welfare, sustainable sourcing, sustainable trade, and biodiversity conservation, or seek to establish frameworks and best practices where these are not in place.
11. We recognize that the ability to uphold these principles throughout our supply chains as well as across different types of species will vary according to the level of traceability in place. We aim for full traceability in our supply chains. We commit to continuous improvement towards realizing these sourcing principles.
12. We commit to collaborate on initiatives to bring about change in the luxury industry by implementing appropriate guidelines, procedures, and resources to uphold these principles. This includes committing to working with conservation and scientific authorities (government entities and non-governmental organizations) to maintain biodiversity, protect endangered species, and ensure compliance with local and regional wildlife trade policies, through effective monitoring, funding conservation programs, and ecosystem restoration projects, among other concrete actions.
13. We commit to developing species-specific guidance and supporting other mechanisms for the effective implementation of these principles, as appropriate, which we hope will support the development of third-party verification systems in the future.

The following principles were developed in 2011 by the Responsible Luxury Initiative (RELi), formerly known as the Luxury Working Group. These Principles were updated in 2016 in conjunction with the following luxury companies: Cartier, Harvey Nichols, Kering, LVMH, Mulberry, Ralph Lauren, Richemont, and Tiffany & Co., BSR and others.

References

[Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES \(1981\) Guidelines for Transport and Preparation for Shipment of Live Wild Animals and Plants](#)

[Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES, *Non-Detriment Findings*](#)

[Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO, *Environmental and Social Standards*](#)

[International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, *Red List of Threatened Species*](#)

[The Council of the European Communities \(1991\), *Council Regulation \(EEC\) No 3254/91*](#)

[The Council of the European Communities \(1993\) *Council Directive 93/119/EC, Protection of Animals at the Time of Slaughter or Killing*](#)

[The Council of the European Communities \(1998\), *Council Directive 98/58/EC, Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes*](#)

[The Council of the European Communities \(2009\) *Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1099/2009, Protection of animals at the time of killing*](#)

[World Organization for Animal Health, OIE \(2015\), *Terrestrial Code, Chapter 7.2-7.7*](#)