

# ELLE SAYS WILL DROP FUR FROM MAGAZINES WORLDWIDE

Elle magazine announced yesterday it will stop using fur in all its editorial and advertising content worldwide, becoming the first major publication to do so. The monthly lifestyle magazine, which originated in France and is owned by French media group Lagardere, comes out in 45 different editions around the world. It has some 33 million readers from Mexico to Japan, with 100 million monthly online visitors.

But Elle's international director Valeria Bessolo Llopiz told a conference organized by The Business of Fashion publication that fur was no longer acceptable. "The presence of animal fur in our pages and on our digital media is no longer in line with our values, nor our readers," she said. "It is time for Elle to make a statement ... rejecting animal cruelty," she told delegates in Chipping Norton, in Oxfordshire, southern England. Instead, she said the magazine wanted to "increase awareness for animal welfare" and "foster a more humane fashion industry". The magazine has signed an undertaking to drop fur that is already in force in 13 of its editions. Twenty more will impose the measure from January 1, 2022 and the rest will start a year later.

Welcoming Elle's decision, PJ Smith, director of fashion policy for the Humane Society of the United States, said he looked forward to other fashion magazines following suit. "This announcement will ignite positive change throughout the entire fashion industry and has the potential to save countless animals from a life of suffering and a cruel death," he told the conference. "Fur promotions belong only in the back copies of fashion magazines from days gone by," the UK director of animal rights organization PETA, Elisa Allen, told AFP. She welcomed decisions by publications including British Vogue, InStyle USA, Cosmopolitan UK, and the newly launched Vogue Scandinavia for rejecting fur on their editorial pages and expects the move to soon extend to advertising.

## Consumer pressure

The decision comes as the fashion industry has faced pressure from animal rights activists to stop the use of real fur on humane grounds and mounting public opposition. Smaller fashion weeks held in cities such as Amsterdam, Oslo, Melbourne and Helsinki have all banned fur but larger ones in Paris, Milan and New York leave it up to designers. Many big names have already chosen not to do so. They include Gucci, Versace and Prada, Burberry, Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen, Donna Karan, DKNY and Michael Kors, as well as Jean-Paul Gaultier and Balenciaga.

A 2020 YouGov survey found that 93 percent of British people refuse to wear natural fur while another by Research Co suggested that in the United States, 71 percent opposed killing animals for their fur. In Europe, an FOP poll indicated that 90 percent of French opposed the fur trade, while 86 percent of Italians expressed opposition in a 2019 survey by Eurispes. In a German poll by Kantar in 2020, 84 percent said cruelty towards animals and killing them for their fur was unacceptable.

The fur industry itself argues that its natural product is being replaced with synthetic fur made with plastics that damage the environment. In November, French furriers wrote an open letter to Vogue magazine claiming it was "absurd" to present "plastic" garments as environmentally friendly, when they contain acrylic and modacrylic fibres. The group has complained of a "climate of fear" created by protesters, which has encouraged designers to drop fur from shows and discouraged fashionistas from wearing it. While fake fur coats are often made from polyester, which takes hundreds of years to biodegrade, some designers such as Britain's Stella McCartney opt for plant-based materials. Others use natural fibres such as wool and feathers to mimic the appearance of fur. —AFP



## Armani gives up angora wool as part of fur-free policy

Italian fashion house Armani announced Wednesday it would no longer use angora wool, a product made from rabbit hair, as part of its fur-free policy. The company said it would no longer use the material across all of its lines from next year's fall-winter collection. At Armani "the percentage of clothing items containing angora wool is very low and we plan to replace it with materials that meet higher criteria in terms of animal well-being," a group spokeswoman told AFP. Soft and silky angora wool is a fibre made from the

coats of angora rabbits.

The animal rights group Peta called in 2013 for a halt to the use of angora wool, releasing a video of an angora rabbit wailing as its fur was pulled out to be collected. Armani renounced using fur in its products in 2016, saying there are now practical alternatives "that render the use of cruel practices unnecessary". A growing number of fashion companies are adopting policies against using materials that require cruelty towards animals. —AFP

