

# A New Vision of Fur for an Eco-Conscious World



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# FUR

## the ultimate eco-clothing

### FUR

a natural choice...

At a time when we are all more conscious of how our lifestyles affect nature, fur is an excellent choice. Nothing is 100% "green", if only because fossil fuels are used to bring most products to market. But like leather, suede and shearling, fur is a natural product, a true gift of nature.

Let's see why...

# FUR

## a renewable resource

**Fur is a natural, renewable and sustainable resource.** That means we only use part of what nature produces each year without depleting wildlife populations or damaging the natural habitats that sustain them. The goal is to maintain a long-term ecological balance.

The furs we use are *abundant*, never from endangered species. This is assured by strict provincial/state, national and international regulations.

*\*Synthetics, by contrast, are generally made from petroleum (a non-renewable resource), which is NOT consistent with the sustainable use of our environment.*



Photo: Luc Farrell

*Muskrats produce up to 8 kits a year in Canada, but only one or two will find enough food and shelter to survive the rigors of their first winter. Trapping is controlled by government regulations to ensure that we use only part of this natural "surplus" to maintain more stable and healthy wildlife populations. This is an excellent example of the responsible and sustainable use of wildlife.*

*Thanks to modern wildlife management and trapping regulations, there are as many beavers and muskrats in North America now as when Europeans first arrived on the continent. Raccoons, coyotes and foxes are more abundant than ever.*

# FUR

## durable, reusable & recyclable

Fur is naturally resilient and long lasting. With proper care, a fur garment will remain functional and beautiful for many years – far longer than most other clothing materials.

Fur garments can also be taken apart and restyled (“remodeled”) as fashions change. Your old fur coat can even be “recycled” to make bags, pillows, throws or other accessories.

At a time when the true ecological cost of mass-produced and short-lived “fast-fashion” is just beginning to be calculated – think millions of tons of poor-quality garments filling up landfills – the naturally durable and recyclable qualities of fur make more sense than ever!



Photo: Bill Abercrombie

*Fur is a remarkably long-lasting clothing material that can be “remodeled” or “recycled”. And after many years of use, fur is readily biodegradable.*

# FUR

## responsible practices

When animals provide meat, leather, fur or any other products, we have a responsibility to prevent unnecessary suffering.

**In the wild:** Without human intervention, wildlife can be subjected to extreme “boom and bust” cycles of overpopulation followed by disease and starvation. This is natural, certainly, but hardly humane. Using modern methods, trappers can help to maintain more stable and healthy wildlife populations. Environment Canada and the international fur trade have contributed more than \$13 million in recent years to research and refine humane trapping methods. This pioneering work, coordinated by the Fur Institute of Canada, provided the scientific basis for the *Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards* (AIHTS).

**On the farm:** Optimal standards for the nutrition, housing, husbandry and euthanasia of farmed-raised mink and fox are set out in *Recommended Codes*

*Farmed mink are fed with leftovers from abattoirs, fish plants and other food-processing – they “recycle” wastes that would otherwise go to landfills. In addition to fur, farmed mink provide fine oils for skin care and waterproofing leather, organic fertilizers and other products. Everything is used.*



*of Practice* developed by Agriculture Canada, in consultation with producers and animal-welfare agencies. Similar standards have been developed in the USA and Europe. There is a strong incentive to respect these codes because there is no other way to produce high quality fur. *Farmers who do not care for their animals will not remain in business very long!*

**In production:** Like all clothing, the processing of furs requires some chemicals, although these are mostly benign, as they must be to preserve the fur hairs and follicles. In North America, moreover, local environmental protection controls ensure that there are no harmful effluents.

# FUR supporting people & cultures

We all care about nature, but most of us now live in cities. When we buy fur we support thousands of aboriginal and other people who still live close to the land, in rural and remote regions.

**Trappers** are our “eyes and ears” on the land. Because they depend on nature, they have a direct interest in protecting it; they are the first to sound the alarm when wildlife habitat is threatened by pollution or poorly planned development projects.

**Aboriginal** (and many non-aboriginal) trappers hunt beaver and other fur animals for food. Fur provides important income in regions where alternative employment opportunities are scarce. Meat not eaten by trappers and their families is returned to the forest to feed other animals through the long, cold winter. Everything is used.



Photos:  
Claire Beaugrand-Champagne



Photo:  
North American  
Fur Auctions

*65,000 Canadians work in various sectors of the fur trade. The trade contributes \$800 million to the Canadian economy, including more than \$450 million in exports.*

**Fur farming** helps to maintain rural communities, at a time when efficient modern agriculture is reducing farming populations in many regions.

**The fur trade** also maintains centuries-old craft traditions: each fur garment is individually cut and sewn by skilled artisans.

# A NEW VISION OF FUR

## for an eco-conscious world!

Lightweight, warm and beautiful, fur is a true gift of nature.

The beauty of fur reminds us of the importance of protecting nature, our environmental "capital", so that future generations may also enjoy these gifts.

The modern fur trade is an excellent example of the sustainable and responsible use of renewable natural resources.

The fact that fur garments are long lasting and recyclable also makes ecological sense.

And when we buy fur we help to support thousands of people who live close to the land – people with a direct interest in protecting vital natural habitats.

Respect for the land, the animals and the diversity of human cultures. For all these reasons, we feel that fur is an excellent choice at a time when we are all concerned about protecting nature.

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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