Kering creates committee tasked with sustainability

By Florent Gilles - July 25, 2013

From the gold used in Boucheron jewelry to the crocodile skins at Bottega Veneta — Kering intends to be blameless when it comes to environmental ethics. The luxury and lifestyle conglomerate has created a new advisory unit comprised of three external members, all leading experts in the field of sustainable development. The three outside members, Holly Dublin, John Elkington and Michael Wells, will advise the committee’s in-house members, Jochen Zeitz, Jean-François Palus, Marie-Claire Daveu and Patrizio di Marco (Gucci). The task force members’ initial term has been set for two years with an option to renew.

Holly Dublin is director of strategy for the B Team, an NGO co-founded by Richard Branson (Virgin Atlantic) and Jochen Zeitz, chair of Kering’s sustainable development committee. John Elkington is co-founder and chair of the NGO Volans since five years. Michael Wells is an independent consultant on the environment and development through his firm Michael Wells & Associates. "The primary role of STAG is to offer informed technical insights on the Group’s sustainability initiatives and provide expertise on sustainability challenges and investments," said the company in a press release.

"We place sustainability at the core of Kering’s business activities and in all areas of governance," said Group CEO, Francois-Henri Pinault, who was "pleased with the level of international specialists" recruited for the advisory committee.

Kering already has a head start on the front of sustainable development, following the creation of an ambitious strategic five-year plan in 2011 to reduce its environmental footprint and implement social best practices on a global scale.

Previously called "PPR Home," Kering’s sustainable development division under the leadership of Marie-Claire Daveu now has a committee of 15 members, chaired by Jochen Zeitz and Jean-François Palus, Kering group managing director.
Kering's goal is to publish a first full environmental profit and loss account statement by 2016 to "measure the environmental footprint across our entire supply chain and then calculate the monetary value of the footprint as a common basis of comparison." The trailblazer in this initiative was Puma, at the time run by Jochen Zeitz, but now every brand of the group has gotten on board.

By 2016, "100% of gold and diamonds in Kering's products will be sourced from verified operations that do not have a harmful impact on local communities, wildlife or the ecosystems which support them."

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