



THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE
PROTECTION
of Fur-Bearing Animals

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Fur Is Not Green FAQ

Isn't fur a natural and renewable resource?

Many terms used by the Fur Council of Canada in their "fur is green" campaign are not well defined or regulated, and under the law, they don't have to be. Canada's Competition Act does not specifically restrict the use of terms such as "natural" or "eco-friendly". Regarding the notion that animals are a renewable resource, how few animals should be left of a species before trapping and killing for profit is halted? The wolverine, for example, is a species whose population levels are of great concern. In Canada, their eastern population is already officially listed as "endangered" and their western population is officially listed as a species of "Special Concern" due to their low numbers. Despite being listed as a species of special concern, wolverines are still legally trapped for their fur in snare traps and Conibear traps.

Isn't fur biodegradable?

"Biodegradable" is another popular term that remains unregulated in Canada. Marketers of fur products are quick to compare the so-called biodegradation of fur only to fake fur. But the alternative to fur is any and every fabric and textile that is available. The harmful chemicals used in fur production include acids, hydrogen peroxide, chromates, formaldehyde, bleaching agents, and various types of dyes. These substances do not allow fur garments to breakdown properly and can leech into our environment and water supply.

Note: Furriers contradict themselves when they say fur is biodegradable because they also advocate that you can turn your fur coat into a family heirloom.

Can't I reuse and recycle fur?

Fur is no more reusable and recyclable than most other textiles or garments. It is meaningless to claim that fur is recyclable or reusable, because all textile products can be reused or recycled in some capacity.

The Fur Council of Canada says that no endangered species is used for fur.

Refraining from intentionally harming or killing endangered species is the law, and following the law is a bare minimum requirement of all industries. But the fact remains that traps do not discriminate. Traps can and do catch all animals, wild and domestic; endangered or not.

Isn't trapping needed to regulate wildlife populations?

The fur trade traps and kills a million of Canada's wildlife every year from our ecosystem. These animals are not chosen because they are "surplus", weak, or diseased. They are killed because they happen to be the 10 or 12 species that have nice, thick fur out of an estimated 140,000 species of animals in Canada.

Isn't the fur industry highly regulated?

The so-called standards for the fur trade are written by the fur industry for the fur industry. These regulations simply protect profits, not animals. The industry will often refer to the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS). This agreement essentially just redefined the term "humane", so trappers could continue to use steel jaw leg-hold and other cruel traps.

Do fur farms cause pollution?

Yes! Fur farms account for 85% of the world's production of animal fur and there are many ecological problems and risks inherent in raising and killing animals on a large scale for consumer purposes. The Industrial Pollution Projection Systems, published by the World Bank (1995), ranks "Tanneries and Leather Finishing" *third* on the Linear Acute Human Toxic Intensity Index, after "Fertilizers & Pesticides" and "Industrial Chemicals Except Fertilizer".

What are "green" alternatives to real fur?

Today's consumers have many "green" alternatives to fur. Polyester fibres can be made from recycled plastic bottles, which can then be made into fleece. These recycled fibres are also very warm and durable and are commonly used by backpackers and outdoorsmen. Fibres can also be made from corn, soy, hemp and bamboo and can then be woven into fabric or spun into yarn. Even recycled rubber from old tires can be used for belts, shoes and handbags. In addition to these alternatives, consider shopping in consignment shops for gently used clothing.