

PIONEERS



The G-10

Sustainable. Circular. Recycled. These are the leaders shaking up the fashion industry.



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1 Eloise Bishop

David Jones and Country Road Group head of sustainability

When it comes to managing sustainability across multiple touchpoints, there's no-one quite like Eloise Bishop. Bishop is not only responsible for a multi-brand approach – having both the Country Road Group and David Jones labels under her helm – she oversees various targets across ethical trade, social development, waste reduction and sustainable farming and sourcing of raw materials. Why does she take out the #1 spot this year? Country Road Group has long publicised a goal to ensure every product has one sustainable

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attribute by 2020. In the realm of fabrics alone, it has partnered with BCI Cotton to support greener farming practices, joined forces with Canopy to source deforestation-free cellulose, is a member of Leather Working Group and has ongoing projects around responsible wool. With further targets set to 2025, this is one business group to watch in the sustainable fashion space. “For a company that is committed to becoming one of the most responsible retailers in the world, it's incredibly rewarding to know that our programs have very real and tangible benefits across all touchpoints,” she says.

2 Justin Levis

Cue Clothing Co. director

Founded in 1968, Cue Clothing Co. has pioneered sustainability and ethics from its inception. The national womenswear retailer still manufactures the majority of collections on-shore and is accredited with Ethical Clothing Australia. In addition to supporting local makers, it collaborates with a number sustainably certified fabric suppliers such as Manteco, which has won awards for its innovative initiatives such as recycled wools and mohair. In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, the company quickly pivoted to avoid an inventory surplus by restructuring orders and fabrications for future use. “Regardless of the pandemic, customers are now focusing on where and how their clothes are made,” Levis says. “We did a survey in 2018 and the number one reason people love Cue is the fashion forward nature of design, garment quality and sustainability. We are a long life product.”

3 Elizabeth Keegan

Cotton On Group sustainability project lead

Cotton On has a wide-reaching Ethical Sourcing Program, which includes 14 Rules to Trade spanning sourcing, manufacture and supply. The supplier code of conduct aims to protect workers' rights and the environment, as well as a commitment to traceability, transparency, cotton sourcing and sustainability. In FY19, the company conducted over 600 factory assessments, with 150 criterion to be satisfied in each audit and the completion of 2,500 worker surveys. For Keegan and the sustainability team, there have been many landmark achievements. One is the development of its own unique sustainable cotton growing program in Kenya and as a business, Cotton On has set itself a goal to have 100% sustainable cotton through its supply chain by 2021.



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4 Sacha Laing

General Pants Co. CEO

“Consumers will make a conscious choice about the businesses they'll partner with – and it will become less and less of a something that you would call out and instead become the norm,” Laing says. “We're focused on doing our own thing – doing the right thing for the environment, our teams and our customers.” One of Laing's key achievements in sustainability centres around circular fashion – namely around its Denim Amnesty program. Partnering with the University of Queensland and textile firm BlockTexx, it saw the retailer cycle jeans back through the circular economy and into raw materials. By breaking down poly-cotton blend textiles and repurposing fibres into new products, General Pants Co. became a high profile leader in the field of responsible fabrications and manufacturing.

5 Rick Lambell

Kmart Group head of sustainable development

Lambell leads the development and implementation of Kmart Group's sustainable development program with a focus on policy and strategy around living wage, modern slavery, worker empowerment, ethical sourcing, transparency and traceability, materials, waste, water and chemicals. In considering the combined footprint of Kmart and Target stores, which spans 520 locations and sizable product SKUs, this is no easy feat. A key area of its sustainability program is Better Together, which includes time-bound targets in the field of raw materials for own brand products. By December 2022, it wants to ensure 100% of wood and cellulose material is sustainably accredited, fully traceable and via verified low-risk forests or made using recycled materials. By July 2021, it will source 100% cotton as Better Cotton and by December 2025, 50% of polyester and nylon will be from recycled material.

6 Debra Wittner

Wittner founder

Sustainability in the footwear retail space? Wittner says yes, with two core areas of development around packaging and fabrications. With the product journey, Wittner is joining the Leather

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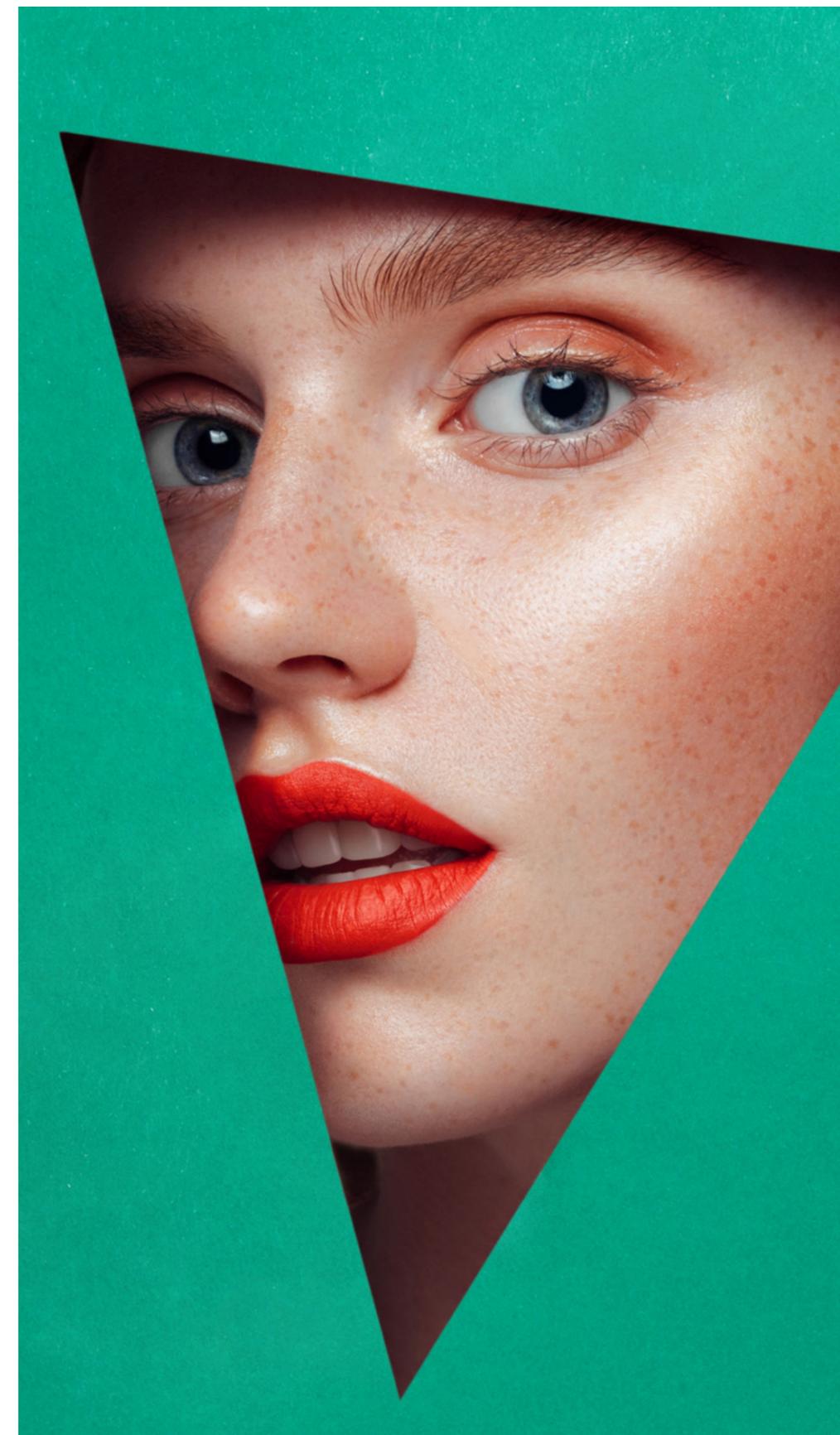
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Working Group, meaning most leather suppliers will be working according to a standard of pollution reduction, energy saving and sustainable water treatment. It is also looking at materials made from recycled bottles for the next spring/summer range. In packaging, Wittner is banning and phasing out all plastics with its new Eco-Shoobox featuring recyclable cardboard and paper. It has also introduced Eco-Paper carry bags in store. “The path to a more sustainable future is a long one but it's a journey we're excited to take,” she says. “We acknowledge that as this journey progresses, new and better environmental practices will be discovered and we promise to keep innovating and evolving to make sure that our customers can always shop Wittner shoes with confidence.”

7 Jaana Quaintance-James

The Iconic chief sustainability officer

The Iconic has a rich history in meeting time-bound sustainability targets, with its 2022 Sustainability Strategy no exception. At the time of announcing the strategy, The Iconic launched a fully recycled delivery satchel to lower the footprint of the millions of parcels it delivers around Australia annually. It has been working towards a more sustainable solution after becoming a signatory for the Australian Packaging Covenant (APCO) since 2018. “As Australia and New Zealand's leading fashion and sports destination, we are wholeheartedly focused on our continued commitment to drive positive sustainability and environmental outcomes via our mantra of ‘progress, over perfection,’” Quaintance-James says. The Iconic's strategy is based on three key pillars: ethical sourcing, environment and community.



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8 Elizabeth Abegg
Spell & The Gypsy Collective
co-founder

“What started as an emboldened mission to trace our supply chain and begin implementing sustainable fibres into our collections, has become a business-wide quest to always operate with people and planet at the forefront of our minds. Today, sustainability is at the core of every decision we make. Every day we ask, ‘are we walking lighter? Is this a force for good? Will it drive change?’” Those are the words of Abegg, as the womenswear designer throttles towards the brand’s



2025 Sustainability Plan. The program includes targets across supply chain transparency, sustainable fibre use and environmentally conscious dye and printing practices. In 2019, Spell hit its target of 40% garments being produced using sustainable fibres. In addition to using organic cotton where possible, it also partners with Canopy, an organisation set up to ensure brand’s cellulose-based fibres (viscose, rayon, Tencel, modal) are not contributing to the deforestation of ancient or endangered forests.

9 Dane O’Shanassy
Patagonia ANZ country director

At Patagonia, the key supply chain resource for consumers and sustainability advocates is The Footprint Chronicles. On its web portal, the brand details where products are sourced and the resources required to create them; sharing clear maps, data and short films. “At the other end of a product’s life, we’re seeing circular fashion initiatives pop-up to combat waste problems,” O’Shanassy says. ‘Rethink, Reuse, Repair, Recycle’ is making inroads on the consumerism mentalities of the past. Patagonia’s ‘Don’t Buy This Jacket’ campaign spoke to Rethink and Reuse, as well as highlighted the value of purchasing quality over quantity. Repairing clothes is not a new idea

for Patagonia; it has had repair services for clothing since the 1970s and its Worn Wear program started in 2005. Locally, it gave the Big Oil Don’t Surf movement a platform with its 2018 film ‘Never Town’ and later supported campaigners from The Wilderness Society, the Great Australian Bight Alliance, and Surfrider Foundation Australia. Patagonia Australia also uses its local store network to encourage events and conversations around sustainability.

10 Pauline Su
The Teen Age founder

Sydney-based mother-of-three Pauline Su is part of the next wave of sustainability pioneers: that is, leading the charge for the next generation of consumers. After noticing a gap in the market for fashionable and sustainable tween garments, Su launched The Teen Age this year. With no formal qualifications in design or production, she has pushed on to create a classic staples collection priced under \$100. All garments are produced using materials from a sustainably run mill in Japan, such as cotton, linen and Lenzing modal. These are dyed without the use of toxic chemicals and packaged in reusable fabric bags. Key items include a cotton-linen dress in minimalist shades like vanilla and sage, as well as elasticised shorts in navy and cream. ■

