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Kering, IUCN and ITC form partnership to improve python trade

The 'Python Conservation Partnership', a collaboration between Kering, the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN SSC Boa & Python Specialist Group) has been launched today with the aim of contributing to the improved sustainability of the python trade and helping facilitate industry-wide change.

The programme of research over the next three years will focus on the analysis and recommendations around sustainability, transparency, animal welfare and local livelihoods for the python trade. The data and findings will contribute to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) process, which supports a framework for countries to manage their trade in endangered species such that it contributes to local livelihoods and does not threaten the survival of species in the wild. Results and recommendations from the 'Python Conservation Partnership' will be made available as public reports and peer-reviewed scientific articles to stakeholders to improve management across the trade. The research will cover five key areas:

- Monitoring wild capture to improve sustainable sourcing
- Differentiating between captive-bred and wild animals through innovative technology
- Developing and promoting the highest standards of animal health and welfare
- Exploring ways to improve captive breeding
- Better understanding the impacts of the python trade on local livelihoods

The program will be managed by a Steering Committee comprising experts from Kering and one of its largest luxury brands Gucci, the IUCN SSC Boa & Python Specialist Group and ITC, together with external expert advisors.

"Collaboration between the private sector, NGO's, IGO's and governmental agencies is an important step forward for stakeholders to explore different ways of overcoming the various challenges the python trade faces," said Marie-Claire Daveu, Chief Sustainability Officer and Head of international institutional affairs, Kering, "Sustainable sourcing and traceability of the trade is of utmost importance to us, and the insights that the 'Python Conservation Partnership' will provide us, as well as our industry peers, will be invaluable and contribute to defining best practices to help drive an improved trade that all stakeholders agree is urgently needed."

"Supporting this collaboration with our expertise and experience to help improve the conditions and practices of the python trade is a priority as part of Gucci's continued commitment to sustainability and quality," said Karlheinz Hofer, GUCCI WW Operations and Supply Chain Director, "We look forward to participating in the Steering Committee of the 'Python Conservation Partnership' to ensure that it makes an important contribution to develop a more sustainable trade."

"We hope that this initiative will positively impact the conservation of the two biggest python species of South East Asia which are affected by the python skin trade - the Burmese and the Reticulated Python," said Tomas Waller, Chair IUCN SSC Boa & Python Specialist Group. "We aim to address fundamental concerns related to sustainability and livelihoods while supporting the recent decisions taken by the

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to improve sustainability and compliance of Asian snakes trade.”

“Ensuring that trade, livelihoods and sustainable development go hand in hand is a priority for ITC. The trade in biodiversity-based products such as python skins is a source of cash income to impoverished rural families in South East Asia. Communities also have an important role in ensuring the sustainability of trade in these products. ITC will work closely with Kering, Gucci and IUCN to research the benefits of the trade to low income groups and how they can contribute more effectively to the sustainable management and trade of these resources,” said Arancha González, ITC’s Executive Director.

About Kering

A world leader in apparel and accessories, Kering develops an ensemble of powerful Luxury and Sport & Lifestyle brands: Gucci, Bottega Veneta, Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Brioni, Christopher Kane, McQ, Stella McCartney, Sergio Rossi, Boucheron, Dodo, Girard-Perregaux, JeanRichard, Pomellato, Qeelin, Puma, Volcom, Cobra, Electric and Tretorn. By ‘empowering imagination’ in the fullest sense, Kering encourages its brands to reach their potential, in the most sustainable manner. Present in more than 120 countries, the Group generated revenues of €9.7 billion in 2012 and had 33,000 employees at year end. The Kering (previously PPR) share is listed on Euronext Paris (FR 0000121485, KER.PA Website : www.kering.com)

About IUCN

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges by supporting scientific research; managing field projects all over the world; and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN, international conventions and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice. The world’s oldest and largest global environmental network, IUCN is a democratic membership union with more than 1,000 government and NGO member organizations, and almost 11,000 volunteer scientists and experts in some 160 countries. IUCN’s work is supported by over 1,000 professional staff in 60 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. IUCN’s headquarters are located in Gland, near Geneva, in Switzerland. www.iucn.org

About the Species Survival Commission

The Species Survival Commission (SSC) is the largest of IUCN’s six volunteer commissions with a global membership of around 7,500 experts. SSC advises IUCN and its members on the wide range of technical and scientific aspects of species conservation, and is dedicated to securing a future for biodiversity. SSC has significant input into the international agreements dealing with biodiversity conservation.

About Boa and Python Specialist Group (BPSG)

The Boa and Python Specialist Group (BPSG) is a global network of volunteer experts, part of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC). The BPSG is the world leading authority on boas and pythons. Its mission is to provide expert opinion and scientific advice to IUCN and other conservation organizations, government and non-government agencies, applicable to the conservation of boas and pythons.

About ITC

ITC is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations. ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the [Aid-for-Trade agenda](#) and the [Millennium Development Goals](#).

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