

SUSTAINABILITY

Ralph Lauren outranks luxury peers in accountability: report

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Due to its intersectional approach to environmentalism, the U.S. fashion brand beats out all others in luxury on the list. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

With high-end shoppers increasingly expressing eco-conscious views, incentives continue to pile on for those in the sector to play ball.

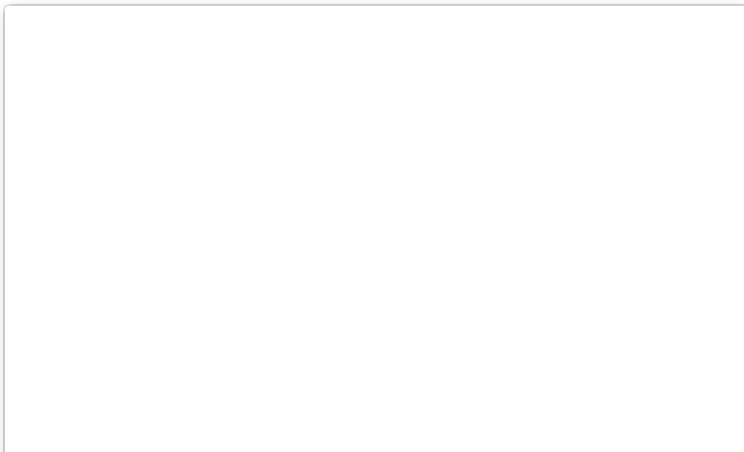
Global fashion advocacy organization Remake is out with its annual [Fashion Accountability Report](#), which evaluates the corporate efforts of the world's 52 largest apparel companies. A few luxury names made the list, with U.S. group Ralph Lauren landing in the top five overall; British label Burberry and Swiss conglomerate Kering also made the top ten.

For the report, the businesses were scored on a scale of zero to 150; to be included, the companies had to be bringing in at least \$100 million in annual revenue. Metrics were made in collaboration with experts in the segments of the environment, human rights, commercial practices, materials and DE&I (diversity, equity and inclusion).

Luxury leaders

Remake focuses on progress rather than commitments or promises made, and does not separate environmental and socially-focused efforts.

The report takes into account issues of wages and well-being, commercial practices, raw materials, traceability, environmental justice and governance. This approach allows for a holistic view of each company.



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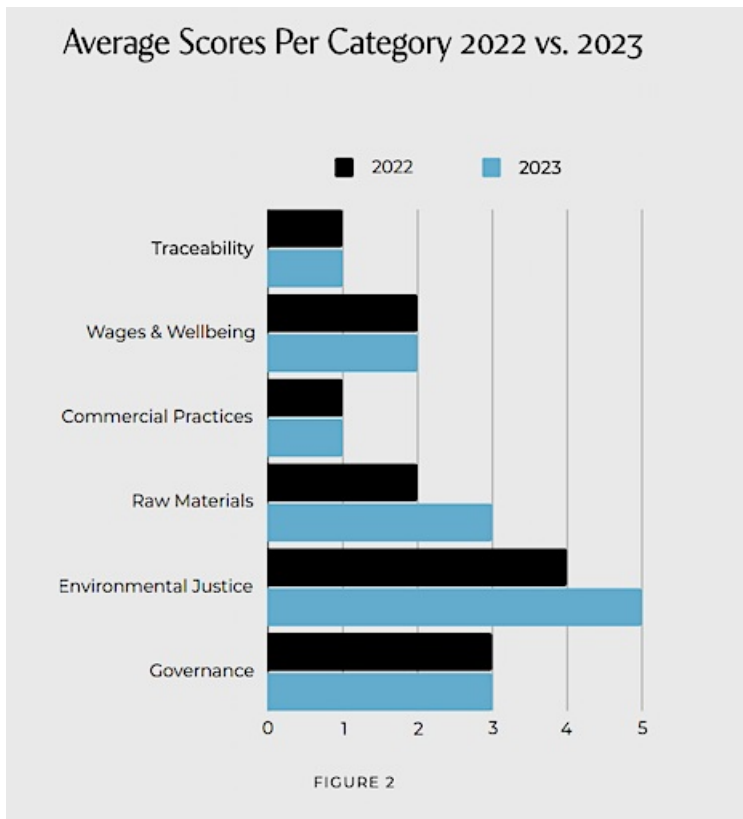
A post shared by Remake (@remakeourworld)

Remake also provides a roadmap and tips for brands wanting to do better and take action for the planet.

Researchers, academics, labor leaders and worker representatives were all involved in the creation of the report. Together, the team assessed the businesses according to Remake’s accountability criteria using the most up-to-date disclosures available per the reporting period, making the data up-to-date through December 2023.

Beyond needing to make the aforementioned yearly figure, companies were also picked based on their “notoriety.” As a result, every inclusion is either a household name, highly involved in the sustainable fashion conversation or is implicated in “particularly egregious industry issues.”

Each business that made the list had a chance to review its scoresheet before publication, and in many cases, increase final scores by upping publicly available information to boost transparency 24 organizations chose to do so.



Environmental justice is gaining traction in fashion. Image credit: Remake

Ralph Lauren is recognized for its efforts to create a more equitable production system.

Taking the fifth spot on the extensive list, its environmental justice work is a highlight of its profile. This part of its sustainability moves receives the highest score, followed by raw materials and governance.

This was the case overall for the industry, as fashion brands across the board have been hearing the cry for justice-focused

changes.

Ralph Lauren received a total score of 30, lagging just behind the top-place company, which earned a 40.

Burberry and Kering tied in seventh place, both achieving 27.

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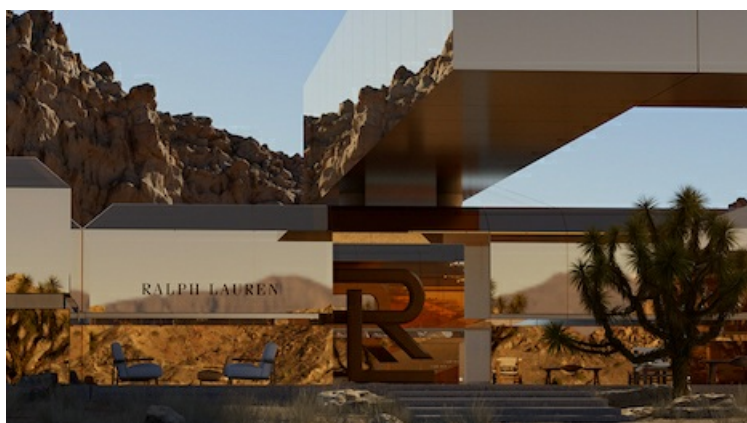
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Each of these three houses has often put the planet at the heart of their marketing efforts, including the British brand's newly-released collections ([see story](#)). Promoting its ReBurberry program, the pieces are circular and inspired by the company's homeland.

Both of these moves are favorite strategies, as the label frames narratives around the United Kingdom frequently through richly told visual stories ([see story](#)). Meanwhile, Burberry has also been encouraging luxury shoppers to embrace secondhand ([see story](#)).

Kering has also been tackling systemic changes, launching a sustainable fashion education course this month ([see story](#)).

This comes just after the announcement of its triple "A" score from the Carbon Disclosure Project. The conglomerate was the sole luxury player to earn the rating this year and is only one of 10 businesses across industries to do so ([see story](#)).



Ralph Lauren has been centering marketing on nature in many of its campaigns over the last few years. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

The top performer on this latest evaluation, Ralph Lauren, has likewise had a busy period of green progress, releasing reports ([see story](#)) and launching recycling programs ([see story](#)).

More recently, the house has championed arguably the most impactful initiative in the space: intersectional environmentalism.

The intersectional effect

Brands that tout climate justice externally and internally tend to rank highly on evaluations, the Remake report included.



The American business celebrated Indigenous artists earlier this year, bringing attention to the struggles they face. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

The top luxury name, Ralph Lauren, is hot off the heels of one of its most memorable plays into intersectionality.

Working with an indigenous designer, the company joined a handful of others in giving a voice to the marginalized community. A heartfelt campaign and multifaceted digital programming celebrated the collaboration ([see story](#)).

Past mistakes were acknowledged, and actionable steps were laid out for Ralph Lauren to honor the First Peoples of the United States.

Since then, the brand has continued with this tone, and it appears to be well-received by the activist populous, luxury customers and environmental organizations such as Remake.

Kering, which also made the top ten on the evaluation, embraced equity long ago.



Kering has been turning to its supply chain, focusing on greening its sourcing practices through education. Image credit: Kering

Last spring, for example, the group turned to South Africa. Bringing attention to the strides being made in gender rights and regenerative agriculture, the company has continued its work to revive green herding practices ([see story](#)).

As those who buy their products build their sustainability knowledge, actions such as these could soon become the expectation, rather than the exception.