Collective Fashion Justice welcomes and supports City of Sydney’s new policy, prohibiting the sale of animal fur and exotic skins in markets on council land. It’s great the City is showing leadership in addressing the needlessly cruel exploitation and killing of wild animals for fashion, and the environmental implications of this, too.

We would like to see a clear definition of both ‘fur’ and ‘exotic skins’ included in this policy, to ensure complete clarity, and thus total protection of all wild animals killed and skinned by the fashion industry. We suggest the phrasing ‘a prohibition on the marketing, exhibition and sale of all animal fur, skin with attached fur, or skin from all animals excluding cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.’ While acknowledging the inherent cruelty involved in the use of these farmed animals in fashion, too, using this phrasing ensures the policy is specific to wild rather than domestic animals, as is likely intended.

Further, we urge the City to consider expanding its policy to include exotic feathers, such as feathers from peacocks and ostriches – regardless of whether these wild animals are farmed or wild-caught. As shown in our recent report, Cruelty is Out of Fashion, the ostrich feather industry, which makes up most exotic feathers on the market, is a cruel slaughter industry. In fact, ostrich skin and feathers come from the same industry which confines these mighty birds to small, barren feedlots until they are killed, plucked and skinned specifically for fashion. In order for the City’s policy to be consistent, it must ban not only ostrich skin as an exotic, but ostrich feathers, and other such wild animal feathers obtained through exploitation, too.

Lastly, we encourage the City to extend this policy to all City sponsored activities consistent with its stance against wild animal exploitation and the consequences of this for animals, people and the planet. This would include the assurance of a similar policy at the 2023 AfterPay Australian Fashion Week which the City sponsors and markets.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emma Hakansson
Founding Director
Collective Fashion Justice