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# Saving the Environment, Stitch by Stitch

 [Kering Chairman and CEO  
François-Henri Pinault.](#)

Before a packed house at The New School's University Center last Thursday, Simon Collins summed up the [School of Fashion's](#) M.O.: "You can't get through Parsons without knowing about sustainability." Collins made his remarks at "Why Sustainable Fashion is Smart Business," an event highlighting eco-friendly fashion design and manufacturing and attracting such industry heavyweights as *ELLE* editor-in-chief Robbie Myers, *W's* Stefano Tonchi and Style.com's Dirk Standen. Collins, the

creative advisor and member of Parsons board of governors, moderated a panel discussion between Kering Chairman and CEO **François-Henri Pinault**, Natural Resources Defense Council director **Linda Greer**, and Parsons AAS program director **Timo Rissanen**. In the decade since he took the helm of Kering (formerly PPP), Pinault has brought clean design practices to the forefront of the French luxury mega-group. In addition to placing sustainability coordinators in each of the company's brands, he has also invested in new technologies, including leather tanning processes that eliminate heavy metal waste, and supplied 1,500 different sustainable fabrics produced by the company's Material Innovation Lab to its designers across the globe. During the discussion, panelists discussed the extent to which the average consumer is conscious of the environmental and social impact of their wardrobe choices and why the fashion industry is so slow to change. Reflecting on issues of consumption and fast fashion, Rissanen said, "I get so many emails that say things like, 'We're a start up and we're doing this organic cotton T-shirt...' and my first question always is, 'Well, why does it exist?' The fact that it's sustainable and it exists doesn't make it

OK.”Panelists urged consumers to educate themselves on manufacturing processes and designs. Asked what drives her crazy, Greer said the idea that sustainability is a journey for the fashion industry. “It’s perfectly obvious what needs to happen,” she said. “This isn’t a journey; it’s a mission.”Stay tuned to the School of Fashion’s twitter account, @Parsons\_Fashion, and follow the hashtag #PARSONSxKering for videos and updated content from the event.

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*This article originally appeared on [The New School News](#). Photo courtesy of Kering.*



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