

## **A Manifesto by Ana Khouri with Fairmined**

*As the consequences and the costs of our environmental crisis come into stark focus, sustainability has become something of a buzzword. Despite this newfound relevance, our understanding of what it means and what it demands of us has been clouded.*

*In a very real sense, the planet is a gift that has been bestowed on us—one that must be nurtured, protected and passed on from generation to generation. Sustaining that gift involves a fundamental realignment of our relationship with it. It means finding balance above all else. And it hinges on our ability to stop the depletion of the earth's natural resources. The question now is whether we're up to the task of changing course and altering those actions that led to the situation we now face.*

*Sustainability is defined by the same elements that are found in all great work—quality, care, delicate craft and timelessness. It is the desire for lasting value; to know where things are sourced and how they are made; and, to know that the companies we place our trust in are doing things responsibly as opposed to doing them without conscience. That should be the only measure of a product or an industry.*

*Given the fragile state of the planet, our ability to live within its biological capacity must be our priority from here on out. As individuals and artists, each of us has a unique obligation to these principles. Every aspect of our lives and our work depends on the precious resources the earth has shaped for us over the span of time.*

*Despite the increasing awareness of what needs to be done, many of us still feel powerless to affect real change. This sense of helplessness—that the scale of the crisis is so large, we as individuals can't possibly solve it—is widespread. But it is in fact not the case. It has become all too clear that change will not come from the top. Too much of global decision-making has been geared by individuals who care only for short-term gains. In essence, they are sacrificing the long-term health of our future for their own financial gain. But I believe our awareness of both can actually be a powerful force for action.*

*We can no longer wait for them to act, nor do we need to. Each of us has the power to alter our future. We need to bring that awareness to our lives, our businesses and our communities, and help align our industries with a global manifesto for change. The only way forward is to collectively scale back our environmental footprint. That entails nothing less than a fundamental change in the way we live and what choices we make—which fuels we use, which food we eat and how it is raised, even what we wear and how it is made.*

*Few companies have tackled sustainability with as much conviction as this moment demands. For our part as a company, partnering with Fairmined has meant empowering the forces for change in the industry I've called home my entire life. It is a way of ensuring that the gold on which we rely is mined and processed in ways that are socially and environmentally responsible. Above all, it means that our work generates a positive impact in the world, not as a gimmick, but as a long-term strategy.*

*Growing up surrounded by nature, I know firsthand the lands, people and wildlife so often devastated by thoughtless development. Working with initiatives like Fairmined, who are transparent about the steps they undergo to ensure responsible sourcing and mining of gold, is not going to solve the problem by itself. And I am under no illusion about its impact in the grand scheme of things. Fairmined is part of a vanguard redefining the industry. But it is a watershed only if its standards become widespread and persistent. My hope is that such decisions, big and small, by each of us will lead to a sea of change.*

*We can't deny that there is a lot of work to be done, but we must start. Now. Our good intentions are not enough. Raising money in the wake of catastrophes is not enough. We must act now to stem those actions that threaten every single one of us and every living thing. Francis Bacon wrote that human knowledge and human power meet in one; for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. If, as I believe, the root of this crisis is the loss of our connection to the natural world, let us work together to reestablish that bond. Let us re-imagine a sustainable existence with the only place that will ever be our home.*