

Israel bans sale of fur to fashion industry, first country to do so: Gamliel: "Animal fur coats cannot cover the brutal murder industry that makes them."

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FULL TEXT

Israel has banned the sale of fur to the fashion industry on Wednesday, becoming the first country in the world to do so.

"The fur industry causes the deaths of hundreds of millions of animals worldwide, and inflicts indescribable cruelty and suffering," Environmental Protection Minister Gila Gamliel said in a statement after signing the amendment, which goes into effect in six months.

"Using the skin and fur of wildlife for the fashion industry is immoral and is certainly unnecessary. Animal fur coats cannot cover the brutal murder industry that makes them. Signing these regulations will make the Israeli fashion market more environmentally friendly and far kinder to animals."

The decision was welcomed by the animal rights NGO Animals Now, who praised it as a "historic milestone" that will "save countless animals from the hell of the fur industry."

In a statement, the NGO added: "We have been fighting for years to ban the sale of furs to the fashion industry, and from the start, 86% of the Israeli public supported this.

"We thank Minister Gamliel and Tal Gilboa, the prime minister's adviser on animal rights, and our partners in the struggle over years, Let The Animals Live and the International Anti-Fur Coalition (IAFC)."

"The IAFC has promoted a bill to ban the sale of fur in Israel since 2009, and we applaud the Israeli government for finally taking the historic leap towards making fur for fashion history," IAFC founder Jane Halevy said in a statement.

"All animals suffer horrifically at the hands of this cruel and backwards industry," added Halevy, whose organization has been working towards this for over a decade. "Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come. Killing animals for fur should become illegal everywhere –it is high time that governments worldwide ban the sale of fur."

The animal rights organization PETA also hailed the move as a "historic victory," writing on Twitter that it "will protect countless foxes, minks, rabbits, and other animals from being violently killed for their skin."

Taking to Twitter, Gamliel also wrote that she was proud for Israel to be the first country to ban the sale of fur.

The move to ban fur trade makes Israel the first country in the world to do so, though the US state of California had banned the sale of fur to the fashion industry in 2019.

Back in October, when the plans were first announced by Gamliel, it was made clear that future permits for the fur trade would still be given out, but only in certain cases. These permits are issued by the Nature and Parks Authority, but these new criteria would limit them to being given out only in cases of "scientific research, education, for instruction and religious purposes and tradition."

The latter category has the potential to be particularly contentious due to the role fur plays in the traditions of haredi Jews, who often wear fur hats called *shtrimeles*, though it is possible that they will get an exception.

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