

SPECIAL REPORT

Marketing & Education Commission



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CIBJO's CSR and climate change initiatives promote jewellery industry's ability to serve humanity

**By Jonathan Kendall, President
CIBJO Marketing & Education Commission**

Research has shown that consumers make choices between product categories, and today the jewellery industry's competition comes from products such as smart phones, computers and holidays. All these industries have made significant progress with regards to the environment. We do not wish to see our

industry left behind, and on the wrong side of history.

The World Jewellery Confederation Education Foundation (WJCEF) launched its six-lesson certificate course in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), in association with Branded Trust of Australia. The course provides a clear understanding of key terms and concepts, and insight into the CSR world.

The course provides practical CSR solutions,



strategies, and approaches for jewellery professionals to apply to their businesses, by connecting in better ways with customers, suppliers and stakeholders. This is an exciting development from CIBJO, showing where we can add real educational value.

The CIBJO climate change initiative has been the other key activity the Commission has focused on over the past 12 months. As a reminder to us all, CIBJO set up the Jewellery Industry Greenhouse Gas Measurement Initiative in 2012 to help all businesses in our industry understand their environmental impact, reduce it, and ready ourselves for the future challenges we know we will have to meet, such as government legislation and consumer demands.

Climate change as a critical pressing challenge

Climate change is clearly one of the most important issues that everyone will face in the coming years, and we at CIBJO are very aware the jewellery industry must be ready to face those challenges head on.

Over the past year the significance of this challenge has become more and more evident. It is likely that many of you will have experienced a climate in your countries that is clearly shifting, and not for the better. In Milan, at our CIBJO head office, we have had storms like never before, floods, wind and continuous weather patterns have simply been horrific.

Of course our experiences are nothing compared to other parts of the world. The recent events in the State of Louisiana, in the United States, has been described as a flood that occurs every 1,000 years.

Many scientists are horrified by the scale of the situation. Unprecedented temperature levels mean more heatwaves, flooding, wildfires and hurricanes. Climate records are being shattered every year and 2016 will be no exception. Global temperatures have broken records every single month, precipitating the vanishing Arctic ice cap, searing drought in India, and the vast bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. In the United States, as California has remained dry for months on end, leading to raging wildfires up the western



Jonathan Kendall, President of the CIBJO Marketing & Education Commission.

seaboard, there has been severe flooding in Texas, Louisiana and other southern states. Throw into that mix the strongest recorded hurricanes in both the northern and southern hemispheres.

Industry as an instigator of positive change

At CIBJO we expect the impact and realisation of these climate changes to start affecting more people directly, and this will come to including their purchasing habits. Electric cars are beginning to take off, and green energy is developing fast. There have been some really encouraging statistics concerning energy usage, such as the growth in percentage of renewable energy. Wind and solar alternatives are growing exponentially and we expect this to continue.

"The impacts of human-caused climate change are no longer subtle – they are playing out before us," says Professor Michael Mann from Penn State University. "They serve as a constant reminder now of how critical it is that we engage in the actions necessary to avert ever-more dangerous warming of the planet."

So for all of us in the jewellery industry, it is clear, as a significant global business we must play our part. That is exactly why CIBJO launched its climate change initiative, and why it is central to our strategy over the coming years.



From left: Jonathan Kendall, President of CIBJO's Marketing & Education Commission; Gaetano Cavaliere, CIBJO President; and Moya McKeown, CIBJO's official carbon consultant, holding certificates attesting to CIBJO's achieving carbon neutrality in 2013 and 2014, during the 2015 CIBJO Congress in Brazil, which was the first ever major jewellery industry event to be carbon neutral.

The growth of CIBJO's climate change initiative

So what have we achieved to date? Since 2012 CIBJO itself has been a carbon neutral organisation, offsetting our carbon footprint with carbon credits. Our congresses are now carbon neutral events.

We are working very hard to encourage our members to join our initiative and start to do what is right when it comes to the future sustainability of the planet.

It has been a successful year in terms of member engagement. Today we have more than 20 organisations fully measuring their carbon footprints and working towards carbon neutrality. They range from trade bodies, to manufacturers, to grading laboratories, to watch companies, to equipment manufacturers, to wholesalers, to retailers and brands.

The whole pipeline is waking up to this critical requirement, and the early adopters, who we suggest have the most vision, are fully on board. We have a further 40-plus organisations who are

close to joining, and we encourage every member of CIBJO, and the jewellery sector in general, to sign up.

Our industry, by its very nature, is global. It is a large family, and as such we do have the potential to actually make a difference. We can set ourselves up as a beacon for supporting the planet, and we have the ability to deliver.

The CIBJO initiative has been designed to be as simple as possible, from planning to implementation. We are here to help, and we believe it is critical that we take the initiative on this issue before we give consumers a reason to reduce their purchasing of the wonderful products we develop and sell.

At the congress we will be asking one of the participants in this programme to describe their experiences, and our experts will be there to answer questions and encourage you to sign up.

Sustainability is at the heart of our mission, and CIBJO's relationship with the United Nations has been built on this. We hope that you will all join us.

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