



## Chanel unveils new recycling platform

Bruno Pavlovsky, president of fashion at Chanel and Chanel SAS, explains why the French house is determined to develop recycled materials at scale.

By Yiling Pan



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Chanel has announced the creation of a new standalone entity dedicated to developing recycled materials at scale — a strategic response to the growing scarcity of high-quality, traceable raw fibres.

Nevold — short for “never old” — is not a marketing campaign nor a sustainability report. It represents what Bruno Pavlovsky, president of fashion at Chanel and Chanel SAS, calls a “third activity” within Chanel’s structure, sitting alongside its fashion unit and the famed Métiers d’Art division. While the brand has been working quietly on closed-loop experiments for years — introducing recycled threads into its iconic tweed or replacing plastic reinforcements in shoes and bags with processed leather waste — the launch of Nevold formalises this effort.

“We started by asking ourselves what happens to the materials that don’t make it into a final product, or those that reach the end of their first life,” Pavlovsky tells *Vogue Business*. “At Chanel, we didn’t destroy unsold products. But we also didn’t yet have a real system to understand their full potential. Nevold is that system.”

Nevold is led by Sophie Brocart, the former CEO of LVMH-owned French luxury house Patou and a trained engineer, who joined Chanel in January 2025. Under her leadership, Nevold will expand beyond Chanel, operating as a business-to-business open platform. One of its key operations is L’Atelier des Matières, a separate Chanel-initiated company that dismantles end-of-life products and sorts materials by type. Initially created to deal with the maison’s own waste, the atelier now services outside brands across the fashion spectrum. Nevold will also work with French yarn manufacturer Filatures du Parc, materials innovator Authentic Material and academic institutions such as the University of Cambridge and Politecnico di Milano.

“Chanel is too small on its own to build the scale this requires,” says Pavlovsky. “That’s why we created a separate, open platform that can bring others in.”





Nevold arrives at a moment of inflection for the global luxury industry. Amid softening demand in China and mounting environmental expectations from younger consumers, brands are grappling with a dual imperative: reduce environmental impact while defending craftsmanship and desirability.

Critics point out that investment in circularity and recycling will do little to reduce fashion's environmental footprint if brands continue to overproduce — it may even enable that overproduction.

For Chanel, Nevold is a strategic response to a looming materials crisis, says Pavlovsky. Five key raw materials — cotton, wool, cashmere, silk and leather — represent 80 per cent of Chanel's materials volume. All are under increasing strain, whether due to environmental degradation, limited traceability or geopolitical tensions. (LVMH Group has also spoken about the scarcity of fine materials.)

"We are not trying to replace what nature gives us," Pavlovsky insists. "But the ability to get the best quality with full transparency and traceability is becoming more difficult. Nevold is how we explore long-term alternatives — not for next season, but for the next generation."

Unlike circularity programmes that are focused on resale or finished-product upcycling, Nevold operates deep in the supply chain. Its work centres on components, not products, developing hybrid materials that combine recycled and virgin content to meet the technical standards of luxury manufacturing. For example, tweeds made with recycled threads are already used in Chanel's collections. In another case, waste leather is transformed into structural parts for bags and shoes, displacing previously used plastic components in up to 50 per cent of certain footwear lines. The heels of its iconic slingback pumps, for example, are no longer made of plastic but of a recycled component.

Pavlovsky is clear-eyed about expectations. Nevold is not designed to deliver an immediate ROI nor to transform Chanel's identity (the creative dream remains the house's core currency). The maison will not set hard KPIs for how much recycled content goes into its collections. The real return lies in knowledge, capability and resilience, he says.

"It's not about saying 50 [per cent] of our materials will be recycled tomorrow," he says. "What's mandatory at Chanel is to create a dream. Nevold gives us the ability to continue doing that, because if we don't try now, we'll never be ready for what comes next."

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