Daniele Barbone

SUSTAINABILITY: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Nature 9 February 2024

nature climate change

Article

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-024-01925-3

Globally representative evidence on the actual and perceived support for climate action

Would you be willing to contribute at least 1% of your household income every month to tackle global warming?

64%

Said YES

GREENWASHING

Some exemples

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Green claim

When a company's marketing campaign suggests that a product or service has less environmental impact than a competitor's.

Greenwashing

Communication that focuses on a company's green reputation or sustainable product/service characteristics that are untrue. This misrepresentation of sustainable virtues is designed to create a green, therefore positive, image of the company, so it can obtain a better market position on the basis of non-existent, but well-publicised, environmental sustainability.

EU Ecolabel
www.ecolabel.eu

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Legislation

Empowering consumers for the green transition.
On March 6 Directive 2024/825/EU on empowering consumers for the green transition was issued, which sets out restrictions and obligations of transparency to prevent (and potentially punish) greenwashing practices.

The EU list of prohibited business practices includes:

- The use of generic environmental claims (e.g. respects the environment, green, eco, zero-impact etc.) not supported with evidence.
- The use of sustainability symbols not approved/created by public authorities or based on recognised certification systems;
- Claiming zero impact or reduced impact on the environment on the basis of greenhouse gas offsetting mechanisms;
- Unfounded claims regarding the lifetime and repairability of a product, encouragement to replace goods before it is necessary.

Member states must adopt this directive by 27 September 2026.

International legislation and recommendations that protect against greenwashing and unreliable green claims:

- Compliance Criteria on Environmental Claim;
- ICC Framework for Responsible Environmental Marketing Communication;
- Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive;
- Standard ISO 17033/2019 on ethical claims.

Green Claim Directive

Rules that enable companies and professionals to make green claims that are not misleading, and therefore to operate under the presumption of compliance.

It is a directive dedicated to standards to be met to validate green claims used to promote goods and services.

A green claim can be considered as substantiated if:

- It is based on independent, solid, recognised, verifiable scientific evidence;
- It concerns aspects, performance or significant environmental impact on the lifecycle of a product or the overall operations of a business, and not just secondary data and information;
- It considers all significant environmental impact and aspects;
- It doesn't just claim that the products/services or activity of the professional meet the requirements of legislation (already prohibited in unfair business practices);
- It is checked and endorsed by third-party organisations;

The draft outline was first read and approved by the EU Parliament on 12 March 2024. The procedure for the directive in question will not impact the effectiveness of the other directive mentioned, 2024/825/EU, on preventing greenwashing.

Green Claim Directive

Companies must provide information relating to:

- Environmental impact, performance or aspects within the claim;
- Relevant EU or international standards;
- Studies, methods or calculations used to evaluate, measure or monitor environmental performance, impact or aspects;
- Certificate of compliance regarding the validity and proper communication of the claim, and the contact details for the accreditation body;
- A description of the monitoring and evaluation system available to the environmental labelling system;
- Any information on the correct use or disposal of the product to achieve the expected environmental performance;
- The professional's commitment, based on a measurable scientific approach, to improve operations and the value chain within a set timescale if the claim relates to the future environmental performance of a product/service.

The Directive in question must be considered with the rules already introduced under the cited directive on empowering consumers for the green transition.

The role of loyalty schemes

The activity specified must

ACTUALLY BE SUSTAINABLE

The activity specified must be part of the

COMPANY'S STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Initiatives must be

CERTIFIED AND QUANTIFIED

ACTUALLY SUSTAINABLE COMPANY CERTIFIED QUANTIFIED

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10 Desert | 4 Forest

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Link to video Amazonia

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DANIELE BARBONE
db@bpsec.it
PROMOTICA
PEOPLE DRIVEN COMPANY
people | sustainability | innovation
PROTAGONIST

people | sustainability | innovation

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