

The Green Paradox: When Sustainable Marketing Undermines Sustainability

Ethan Kim¹

¹Seoul Foreign School

Publication Date: 2025/08/07

Abstract: Corporate sustainability claims have exploded in recent years, often amounting to more spectacle than substance. Eco-certifications such as USDA Organic and Energy Star promise environmental responsibility but conceal gaps in oversight and enforcement. At the same time, brands layer certified credentials with vague buzzwords, “biodegradable,” “natural,” “green,” to tap into emotional appeals that hinge on a limited public understanding. Consumer research shows a willingness to pay premiums, yet real-world impact frequently falls short. Case studies ranging from airline offset schemes to class-action lawsuits against major fashion and beverage companies illustrate how the “green paradox” unfolds: enthusiastic shoppers meet performative marketing. Stronger regulatory frameworks, complete with standardized criteria, harsher penalties, and transparent disclosures, are needed to close loopholes. Educating shoppers to recognize credible labels and fostering independent audits will reinforce genuine eco-commitment across industries. When consumers, industry, and regulators unite around clear standards, authentic sustainability will finally earn the trust it deserves.

How to Cite: Ethan Kim (2025) The Green Paradox: When Sustainable Marketing Undermines Sustainability.

International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology, 10(7), 3100-3106.

<https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25jul1501>

I. INTRODUCTION

In a world driven by value creation—where consumers seek convenience, brands chase profit, and governments strive for public approval—the pursuit of value often blurs the line between genuine action and performative display. This allows appearances to mask authenticity, especially in the realm of sustainability marketing, where companies blatantly use misleading words in order to maximize value addition, often at the expense of real environmental impact. Greenwashing, in this context, becomes a “performance of sincerity,” a strategic display of environmental concern done more for show than for meaningful change.

The term *greenwashing* was coined back in 1986 by American environmentalist Jay Westerveld, who criticized a resort for urging guests to reuse towels in the name of environmentalism while continuing to expand its facilities. He noted the irony, likening it to saying, “We will destroy the environment, but make sure you reuse your towel” (Ford). Since then, the term has become shorthand for corporate hypocrisy, when companies make environmental claims that mislead rather than inform.

The sustainable products market is projected to grow from USD 355.3 billion in 2024 to USD 692 billion by 2033, reflecting a compound annual growth rate of 7.7 percent (Business Research Insights). This growth is fueled by shifting consumer behavior: in 2025, 49 percent of U.S. consumers reported purchasing a sustainable product in the

past month, up from 43 percent in 2024 (Business Research Insights). Globally, 80 percent of global consumers say they are willing to pay more for sustainably produced or sourced goods, accepting an average premium of 9.7 percent for products that meet eco-criteria, such as those made from recycled materials or having a lower carbon footprint (ESG Today).

Yet this booming “green” market has become fertile ground for deception. A screening exercise by the European Commission found that 42 percent of green claims were potentially false or misleading, and regulators estimate up to 40 percent of online green statements risk deceiving consumers (Green Claims). For example, H&M faced a U.S. class-action lawsuit in 2021 over its “Conscious Collection,” accused of “misleading sustainability marketing” over unsubstantiated recycling promises and false environmental profiles (The Sustainable Fashion Forum). Similarly, Coca-Cola revised its “100 percent recycled” and “100 percent recyclable” claims in 2025 after consumer complaints revealed that caps and labels were not, in fact, covered by existing recycling infrastructure (ClientEarth).

These cases reveal a troubling “green paradox,” which is that while 72 percent of global consumers are willing to pay more for sustainability, pervasive exaggeration erodes trust and threatens to undercut genuine sustainability efforts (ESG Today). If shoppers can no longer rely on environmental claims, their readiness to reward authentic green practices will wane, stifling the very market signal that drives real

progress. Throughout this paper, the “green paradox” will highlight the tension between consumer intentions and corporate responsibility.

This paper will examine the green paradox in three parts. First, it examines how eco-certifications create a framework for verifying sustainability but often leave loopholes. Second, it analyzes how green marketing manipulates these frameworks, blending certified language with vague buzzwords. Third, it explores the consumer psychology that makes these tactics effective, and proposes policy and industry reforms to ensure that sustainability claims reflect reality, restoring both consumer trust and the integrity of the green movement.

II. ECO-CERTIFICATION

Eco-certifications serve as the primary visual shorthand for environmental sustainability. They set the “rules of the game,” in which formal standards assess and approve a specific company’s eco-friendliness and sustainability. These certifications not only set a specific standard for sustainability but also serve as widely recognizable symbols that guide consumer choices in everyday settings. When shoppers go out to supermarkets or retailers, certifications like USDA Organic or Energy Star act as trust signals for consumers, guiding their choices toward goods that align with their environmental values. LEED represents efficient green buildings, FSC conveys high responsibility in forest management, and Fair Trade symbolizes ethical resource management (Target Office Products). As a result, consumers are more likely to trust the brand, as the products align with their environmental values and beliefs, thus supporting and building brand loyalty.

Third-party organizations administer these certifications, each specializing in a particular sector. For instance, Energy Star certifies that “a building operates more efficiently than 75 percent of similar structures nationwide,” while USDA Organic ensures that forestry practices are environmentally sound, socially beneficial, and economically viable via standards and certification for wood and forest products (Swallow). This division of responsibility improves the reliability and efficiency of the certification process.

Eco-certifications are visual proof that these products have a reduced impact on our environment, whether in terms of fewer emissions, less resource use, or reduced environmental damage. However, in practice, many eco-certifications lack transparency. Even well-known certifications have been criticized for weak oversight and inconsistent enforcement. According to the European Commission, over half of sustainability claims in a wide-ranging online screening lacked sufficient evidence to be credible, creating smokescreens that enable companies to appear more sustainable than they actually are (Green Claims). This ambiguity diminishes the importance of eco-certifications as a tool of marketing, leading to weakened accountability for visual marketers of environmental sustainability.

Due to low transparency and inconsistent enforcement, companies can exploit vague terms like “carbon neutral” without providing full authenticity. A 2022 study by Carbon Market Watch found that airlines in eight European countries were advertising “carbon-neutral flights” while relying on low-quality or unverifiable carbon offsets (Bowcock 7). In particular, the Carbon Market Watch has caught a reliance on carbon offsets for “carbon neutral” claims by companies in the aviation industry. Carbon Market Watch’s studies show that many carbon offsetting companies maintain very low-quality projects, often not being able to reach their carbon emissions targets or only temporarily doing so, even leading to “phantom leakage.” CE Delft has shown in their studies how energy-intensive companies create immense profits from free allocations of pollution permits, of windfall profits from the EU carbon market, up to 50 billion euros between 2008 and 2019 (Ruggiero). Thus, companies would reduce the stated amount of carbon emissions and usage without actually changing the actual emissions. This creates “phantom offsets,” in which companies falsely state their carbon emissions without sincerely practicing ethical movements.

Furthermore, beverage brand Keurig began its advertisement in K-Cup coffee pods, explicitly stating that it is recyclable. But it was found that many, in fact, most recycling facilities in the United States and Canada did not accept these cups due to the fact that they are too small to recycle. This led to greenwashing allegations. Consumers in the North County of California have filed lawsuits against Keurig, asking for compensation up to 10 million dollars as a consequence of their misleading statements (Murphy). More recently, in 2024, the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) charged the company with a \$1.5 million penalty for inaccurate statements in public filings, which violated the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Despite this weakened accountability due to some unethical brands, the process of eco-certification approval is very rigorous, aspiring to only pass the most sustainable out of the bunch. In the establishment of eco-certifications, companies seeking credibility undergo meticulous inspections. This begins with the identification of clear criteria, whether through environmental management systems, sustainable practice adoption, or legal compliance. Companies submit an application to a third party, which then conducts a preliminary assessment and appraises the product’s eligibility. Once the product meets the criteria, the third party provides documentation to verify it. Finally, the product undergoes on-site examination to confirm full compliance before certification is granted (EU Ecolabel).

When used ethically, eco-certifications can offer meaningful benefits, including stronger product appeal, justification for higher prices, and competitive differentiation. As a marketing strategy, they are highly effective. A long-term study by Tully and Winer found that 60% of respondents were willing to pay 16.8% more for high-premium green products, proving that trustworthy certification can build real economic value (Tully and Winer 236).

III. GREEN MARKETING

If eco-certifications were the “rules of a game,” then green marketing is a playbook in and of itself. It's a detailed strategy manual that includes both honest and deceptive plays for marketing. Based on its needs and situation, a company chooses to utilize green marketing, complying with or without the rules. Specifically, green marketing is a strategy. It is the deliberate promotion of products or services according to their authentic or perceived environmental benefits, done to build brand reputation and consumer loyalty (Suh). Green marketing is the communication of an environmentally friendly product to its consumers. It is the accentuation of fragments of effort that go into building the product, such as sustainable asset usage, responsible supply chain management, and transparent marketing of the product. Green marketing is generally used to advocate genuine environmental sustainability within a company for consumer attraction, underscoring the quality of the product as well as its ethicality (Reuben).

Marketing *within* the rules— which is the ethical tactic of highlighting real certifications or certified materials— is an example of positive green marketing. This type of green marketing emphasizes transparency and accountability in terms of the company's environmental impact. Companies that practice positive green marketing usually buttress their claims with supporting evidence, with certifications usually being the medium. Rather than making vague and broad promises, the brand communicates its products honestly to ensure that environmental values align with its eco-friendly product ranges. For instance, Patagonia, an outdoor apparel company, underscores its commitment to sustainability through Fair Trade Certified and Global Organic Textile Standard certifications (Patagonia). Specifically, they detail their environmental and social impacts on society on the official website, providing essential information about how they manage supply chains and labor practices in order to minimize environmental harm. This authenticity enhances trust and verification, ensuring that consumers can make informed decisions based on their environmental values. Rather than simply positing unsubstantiated claims, they prove their sustainability and commitment to this discipline.

Similarly, Seventh Generation—a household and personal care production company—centers its marketing around sustainability and its authentic and measurable eco-friendliness. Their core value, transparency, is explicitly shown on their homepage, including an ingredient glossary page, an impact analysis page, and an innovation tracking page. With an unusual level of transparency— including all their materials and sources— Seventh Generation carries Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act CPSIA certifications, reinforcing their environmental sustainability (Seventh Generation). Ultimately, they were named the “largest eco-friendly cleaning supplies seller in the United States” according to Forbes, successfully operating as a large, influential, and trusted eco-friendly brand (Forbes). The brand proves that both moral standards and market advantages can exist simultaneously, underscoring a potential solution to the green paradox: companies can embed material

disclosure and certifications based on measurable standards to build ethical and economic sustainability.

However, green marketing can also be used unethically to emotionally manipulate consumers, exploiting their environmental values in order to sell more products. This practice, named *greenwashing*, is a deceptive marketing strategy that makes exaggerated claims about a product's sustainability or eco-friendliness. They go “around the rules,” making false claims based on vague word choices as if they support environmental sustainability.

Greenwashing isn't always easily noticeable, as it is done in a subtle manner to persuade consumers. Greenwashing can range from unethical and misleading environment-harming packaging to an entire company faking its eco-friendliness to build false brand perception (Robinson). Sometimes, it can be very easily observable due to its unsubstantiated claims. For example, plastic water bottle companies such as Poland Spring, Evian, and Deer Park all have nature on their labels, which is quite the opposite of what consumers expect from companies that run based on plastic-based products, which are “designed for single-use and contribute to the massive plastic waste crisis around the world” (Robinson). Additionally, companies like H&M have shown uncertified eco-friendliness and a synthetic care for the environment through their green-marketing campaign, “Conscious Collection.” Their insincere actions—marketing themselves as eco-friendly despite only partially producing clothes made of green materials— have raised concerns not only to the general consumer base, but also to their long-term loyal customers. This caused widespread backlash, as a New York resident, Plaintiff Chelsea Commodore, sued the company for its insincere marketing. She posited that the company's products were “designed to mislead consumers through the use of false environmental sustainability profiles,” calling out the fact that “recycling solutions either do not exist or are not commercially available at scale for the vast majority of H&M's products” (Sierra).

Other global companies, such as IKEA, a furniture retailer, have also had a scandal due to illegal logging. Despite self-stating that their logging sources are “renewable and possible to recycle, [coming] from responsibly managed forests,” they were reported to be involved in problems of illegally logged wood. Popular furniture products were found to have originated from preserved Siberian forests, where millions of trees were illegally taken down for the production of furniture. They stated that it was “sanitary feeling,” but had reported to exploit “2.16 million cubic meters of wood from protected forests” (Lehren).

In other cases, companies use vague terms such as “bio,” “green” packaging, and “natural,” without any validation, misleading consumers who truly care about the environment into thinking this product helps, while in fact, it does not (Schröder). Consequently, these misleading claims make it much more difficult to distinguish between candid sustainability efforts and clever exploitations, ultimately

emphasizing the importance of transparency and authenticity in businesses.

IV. CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY AND ITS EFFECTS ON BUSINESSES

“Consumer psychology examines consumers’ perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and thoughts and considers all of them when examining purchasing behavior” (USCDornsife). It is the underlying force that determines what individuals are drawn to, and ultimately, what they purchase. Often referred to as marketing psychology, this field is actively used by brands to study and influence consumer decisions to increase revenue. One powerful angle companies exploit is eco-friendliness, a quality that has become increasingly associated with positive brand identity. Many companies attempt to foster a positive brand image by emphasizing their environmental initiatives. This strategy is effective due to the widespread support and emotional positivity associated with green marketing. Studies show that businesses using green marketing experience growth 2.7 times faster than competitors who do not. Additionally, a publication by the Marine Biodiversity and Sustainability Learning Center found that 73% of consumers would be willing to change their habits to adopt a more environmentally friendly diet. Despite sustainable products accounting for just 16.6% of the entire market, they were responsible for 50% of the consumer packaged goods growth from 2013 to 2018 (Singh). However, “the majority of consumers said they have no, or a low, understanding of companies’ climate-related marketing,” with 80 percent of the respondents responding that they do not understand or have a low understanding of the documentation for green claims (Danish Competition). This substantially low comprehension of the business sustainability standards reveals a critical vulnerability of consumers. The paradox can be explained by the emotional and moral appeal made by green marketing, as consumers may not completely understand the technical details of sustainability claims. Thus, consumers are emotionally guided to follow their purchase behavior, being easily manipulated by such advertisements.

In terms of market influence, sustainable products accounted for 41% of market growth and 23.8% of the consumer packaged goods market. Furthermore, a 2019 study by the National Science Foundation revealed that 85% of consumers trusted independent third-party certifications, showing just how influential certifications can be in driving purchasing decisions. Consumers often purchase eco-friendly products for a sense of moral satisfaction, a feeling that brands are increasingly adept at manipulating. The Journal of Cleaner Production conducted a study on the influence of green marketing on a brand’s advertisement, in which it was said that “self-reference and strong argument have the best advertising effect.” The study showed how advertisements that elicit feelings related to guilt and moral obligation increase the likelihood of purchase by making consumers feel good not about the product, but about themselves (Kao). This strategy, known as affective conditioning, exploits emotional shortcuts in decision-making, making greenwashing

particularly effective. It is a term that describes the translation of our minds from one set of items to another, which is similar to what brands do—advertising their products in alignment with what society has a positive perception about (Baker). Companies exploit this by aligning their products with popular environmental narratives, even if the product lacks a substantial environmental benefit. Buzzwords such as “biodegradable” and “natural” are often used without scientific backing, further confusing consumers. This is especially harmful for low-income shoppers, who often prioritize affordability. These demographics may lack access to detailed information or time to research claims, making them more susceptible to deceptive but low-cost “green” products.

In the status quo, a genuine care about eco-friendliness and sustainability doesn’t make that much of a difference in company marketing, as it is usually the last factor of consideration for general customers. A great example of this is Etee (Everything Touches Everything Else), a Canadian company emphasizing transparent sourcing and sustainable packaging. Despite its genuine commitment to sustainability, Etee struggles to gain market traction due to its higher prices. Creating truly sustainable products often requires more labor and incurs greater costs. In contrast, Procter & Gamble is a global consumer goods company that is known for its immense plastic waste despite its marketing as an “eco-friendly” brand. According to the Break Free From Plastic 2022 report, Procter & Gamble has ranked 3rd place among the top plastic polluters worldwide due to their vast amounts of single-use plastic packaging. These so-called “green” products that Procter & Gamble produces receive priority shelf space with much more popularity compared to transparent companies such as Etee, with the backing of global distributors. As a result, greatly environmentally conscious brands get outcompeted by unethical major retailers, due to the differences in pricing strategies, reflecting deeper issues with consumer psychology and market structure.

V. GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Greenwashing remains effective largely because governments have not yet enforced robust regulations to curb it. As green marketing and eco-certifications proliferate, the need for stronger regulatory oversight becomes more urgent. Companies continue to exploit vague, feel-good language to appeal to consumers while skirting genuine accountability.

In response, both the European Union and the United States government recently introduced a Green Claims Directive and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Green Guide, respectively. The European Union’s Green Claims Directive, proposed in 2023, was made to ensure that green claims were made with scientific evidence and backed up by claims. Based on their study, “more than half of green claims by companies in the EU were vague or misleading, and 40% were completely unsubstantiated” (Segal). Also, the European Union’s screenings showed that 57.5% out of 344 claims used vague terms such as “eco,” or “green” without

“providing sufficient elements” to help increase the accuracy of the evaluation for whether the product is sustainable or not (Brussels). Such explicit data claims, showing how companies increasingly capitalize on sustainability, evoked the European Union to introduce the Green Claim Directive. The Green Claims Directive mandates that environmental claims must be backed by third-party assessments, protecting consumers from greenwashing and establishing a standard to which a company can call a product “sustainable.” The EU Green Claims Directive ensured that environmental claims should be backed up by widely recognized third-party assessments and criteria, targeting the core issue of unverifiable green claims. To make the criteria more strict, the Green Claim Directives suggested and enforced penalties for non-compliance, including consequences such as heavy fines, bans on advertising, or even product withdrawal from public offering. Particularly, there would be maximum fines of 4% annual turnover for large-scale violations, revenue confiscations for misleading claims, and operational consequences based on the levels of violations (Schwarz). These measures are intended to close loopholes and restore consumer trust.

The Federal Trade Commission has also worked its way to becoming a reliable guide that serves to prevent deceptive green marketing. The guide, similar to the Green Claims Directive, warns companies to avoid using vague terms in describing their “eco-friendly” products without empirical evidence. It emphasizes the importance of qualities such as being truthful, accurate, and, when appropriate, validated by scientific evidence (FTC). For instance, if a company states that its products are “biodegradable,” the Federal Trade Commission requires proof that shows the material will decompose in a short period of time after disposal. Such regulations disallow the utilization of sustainability buzzwords and make businesses more responsible and trustworthy.

While regulatory frameworks like the Green Claims Directive and FTC Green Guides represent progress, their effectiveness ultimately depends on consistent enforcement and legal follow-through. A major challenge remains in the enforcement of these regulations. Despite existing guidelines to decrease the number of false green-marketing cases, weak penalties and poor oversight have allowed large firms to repeat offenses with minimal consequence, assisting large corporations to find their way back to greenwashing without much backlash. This disparity between large and small companies decreases the chance for equity, making it harder for small companies to sustain profit among their market competition, regardless of how ethically just they are or how sustainable they really are. Our governments need to strengthen their regulation enforcement through initiatives such as stricter penalties and transparent customer-to-brand communication.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE CONCERNS

In the current market landscape, green marketing and eco-certifications act as ambivalent strategies. While the two practices can advocate for education for consumers about environmental sustainability and sustainable business practices, they have also become mediums of green-washing, employing false and exaggerated claims to undermine the hard work businesses put into being genuinely environmentally sustainable. As such, the current market shows an intolerable inequity between business greenwashing activities and their profits due to the current lack of transparency and strong regulations. While consumer demand for higher-quality products increases, the mechanisms that validate the qualities of products still remain inconsistent and weak. Thus, in the status quo, genuine transparency has become an exception rather than a norm.

Greenwashing can definitely bring benefits to companies, with immediate short-term effects using ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) claims. Companies that do so have shown an average of around 28% cumulative growth over five years, which surpasses the companies that don't (McKinsey). This shows the inherent growth that comes with greenwashing, but fails to represent the fragility and significant long-term risks. Brand reputations, customer satisfaction, and financial losses are just some of the immense negative impacts that come along. Lying in order to maximize profit leads to a negative community perception, eroding consumer trust. Continuous greenwashing scandals have become deeply ingrained in consumers' minds, which makes it much more difficult for companies with genuine green effects to thrive. This erosion of trust makes it harder for ethical companies to differentiate themselves, discouraging them from investing in honest green marketing that consumers may no longer believe. It can lead to the disengagement of the holistic community from environmental sustainability, prioritizing convenience over ethics.

Starting from the near future, government bodies need to strengthen their enforcement, with extensive research and care towards the eco-friendliness of their country's products. This way, we will close the door for deceptive green marketing and open opportunities for small businesses that are genuinely interested in helping the environment, making the world a better place overall. Marketing and businesses should not solely focus on profitability. They should care about improving the community that surrounds them.

There should be international communication and help in order to make a universally well-defined standard for eco-sustainability, with consumer education that helps evaluate environment-related claims. This shift from weak regulations to powerful and demanding policies will not only increase satisfaction within the consumer community but also make a positive change to the environment overall.

Regulatory reforms must be paired with third-party organizations that are globally trusted. Independent organizations and companies must be able to challenge and ask for improvements in a company's misleading claims. But overall, it is a collective effort. Business is about relationships, not just profits. In order to build relationships, companies must earn consumer trust through transparency and authenticity. Public databases and open-source certifications are one great way to announce and truthfully show the company's contributions towards the environment. Making their efforts visible, companies can signal a deeper commitment to sustainability.

Ultimately, with government regulatory assistance and business collaboration, local and global businesses should emphasize their core values on long-term sustainability rather than short-term profits and gains. With new technologies and more efficient supply chains, companies can and will need to adopt ethical and verifiable production practices that customers can trust. Green marketing should change from an emotional advertisement tool to a means of measuring business honesty and social impact. Only through coordinated reform can we move toward a more credible and effective green marketplace. Green marketing will be an instrument of accountability, not exploitation, only if governments, consumers, and businesses all collectively want the change based on real environmental responsibility.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Baker, William E. "When Can Affective Conditioning and Mere Exposure Directly Influence Brand Choice?" *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 28, no. 4, Dec. 1999, pp. 31-46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1999.10673594>. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [2]. Bekeridis, Antonios. "Affective Conditioning - The Psychology of Advertising." *Event Branding and Sponsorship Development*, 17 Dec. 2013, sponsorshiptaken.wordpress.com/2013/12/17/affective-conditioning-the-psychology-of-advertising/. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [3]. Bowcock, Gemma. "European Airlines Misleading Customers with Claims of 'Carbon-neutral' Flights? Study." *Carbon Market Watch*, 10 Oct. 2022, carbonmarketwatch.org/2022/10/10/european-airlines-misleading-customers-with-claims-of-carbon-neutral-flights-study/#:~:text=The%20EU%20should%20also%20ban,gemma.bowcock@carbonmarketwatch.org. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [4]. Brussels. "Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Substantiation and Communication of Explicit Environmental Claims (Green Claims Directive)." *European Commission*, 22 Mar. 2023, eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A52023PC0166. Accessed 3 July 2025.
- [5]. "Coca-Cola to Revise 'Misleading' Recycling Claims following Legal Complaint." *ClientEarth*, 6 May 2025, www.clientearth.org/latest/press-office/press-releases/coca-cola-to-revise-misleading-recycling-claims-following-legal-complaint/. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [6]. "Consumers and Companies Benefit from Transparent Green Consumers Increasingly Encounter Product Marketing." *Danish Competition and Consumer Authority*, Jan. 2024, en.kfst.dk/media/4tldd0co/20240116-consumers-and-companies-benefit-from-transparent-green-marketing.pdf. Accessed 3 July 2025.
- [7]. "Consumers Care about Sustainability and Back It up with Their Wallets." *McKinsey and Company*, 6 Feb. 2023, www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/consumers-care-about-sustainability-and-back-it-up-with-their-wallets. Accessed 14 July 2025.
- [8]. "CPSIA Certifications." *Seventh Generation*, www.seventhgeneration.com/CPSIA-certifications. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [9]. "Ethical Sourcing Efforts of Patagonia." *Dragon Sourcing*, www.dragonsourcing.com/ethical-sourcing-of-patagonia/. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [10]. "Fair Trade USA?" *Patagonia*, www.patagonia.com/our-footprint/fair-trade.html. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [11]. "Five Ways Certifications Connect with Consumers." *National Science Foundation*, 18 Sept. 2020, www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/five-ways-certifications-connect-consumers.
- [12]. Ford, Joss. "When Did Greenwash Start and What Does It Mean Now?" *Enviral*, 29 Apr. 2020, enviral.co.uk/when-did-greenwash-start-and-what-does-it-mean-now/. Accessed 14 July 2025.
- [13]. "Global Sweep Finds 40% of Firms' Green Claims Could Be Misleading." *GOV.UK, Competition and Markets Authority*, 28 Jan. 2021, www.gov.uk/government/news/global-sweep-finds-40-of-firms-green-claims-could-be-misleading. Accessed 4 July 2025.
- [14]. "Green Claims." *European Commission*, environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/circular-economy/green-claims_en. Accessed 30 June 2025.
- [15]. Kao, Tsai-Feng, and Yi-Zhan Du. "A Study on the Influence of Green Advertising Design and Environmental Emotion on Advertising Effect." *Journal of Cleaner Production*, vol. 242, Jan. 2020, p. 118294, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118294>. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [16]. Lehren, Andrew W., et al. "Ikea Likely to Have Sold Furniture Linked to Illegal Logging in Forests Crucial to Earth's Climate, Report Says." *NBC News*, 15 July 2021, www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/ikea-likely-sold-furniture-linked-illegal-logging-forests-crucial-earth-n1273745. Accessed 4 July 2025.

- [17]. Mainwaring, Simon. "Purpose at Work: How Seventh Generation Accelerates Sustainable Growth." *Forbes*, 30 Apr. 2019, www.forbes.com/sites/simonmainwaring/2019/04/30/purpose-at-work-how-seventh-generation-accelerates-sustainable-growth/. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [18]. Murphy, Tim. "7 Biggest Examples of Greenwashing." *TechTarget Sustainability and ESG*, 1 Nov. 2024, www.techtarget.com/sustainability/feature/Examples-of-greenwashing-claims. Accessed 14 July 2025.
- [19]. Reuben, Gerald Vijay, et al. *Green Marketing. Research Gate, Paradox*, Dec. 2023, www.researchgate.net/publication/385711320_Green_Marketing. Accessed 16 June 2025.
- [20]. Robinson, Deena. "10 Companies Called out for Greenwashing." *Earth.org*, 17 July 2022, earth.org/greenwashing-companies-corporations/. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [21]. Ruggiero, Agnese. "The Phantom Leakage." *Carbon Market Watch*, June 2021, carbonmarketwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Phantom_leakage_WEB.pdf. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [22]. Schröder, Patricia. "Greenwashing? How Companies Mislead Consumers with False Environmental Claims." *Brief*, 11 May 2023, www.bbrief.co.za/2023/05/11/greenwashing-how-companies-mislead-consumers-with-false-environmental-claims/. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [23]. Schwarz, Alexander. "EU Green Claims Penalties Explained." *Devera*, www.devera.ai/resources/eu-green-claims-penalties-explained. Accessed 30 June 2025.
- [24]. "SEC Charges Keurig with Making Inaccurate Statements regarding Recyclability of K-Cup Beverage Pod." *United States Securities and Exchange Commission*, United States Government, 10 Sept. 2024, www.sec.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2024-122. Accessed 14 July 2025.
- [25]. Segal, Mark. "European Commission to Withdraw Anti-Greenwashing Regulation." *ESGToday*, 20 June 2025, www.esgtoday.com/european-commission-to-withdraw-anti-greenwashing-regulation/. Accessed 24 June 2025.
- [26]. Sierra, Brittany. "H&M Is Being Sued for 'Misleading' Sustainability Marketing. What Does This Mean for the Future of Greenwashing?" *The Sustainable Fashion Forum*, 17 Aug. 2024, www.thesustainablefashionforum.com/pages/hm-is-being-sued-for-misleading-sustainability-marketing-what-does-this-mean-for-the-future-of-greenwashing. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [27]. Singh, Ava. "Eco-friendly Consumers: 10 Eye-Opening Statistics How You Can Join the Green Revolution." *Marine Biodiversity and Sustainability Learning Center*, www.marinebiodiversity.ca/eco-friendly-consumers-10-eye-opening-statistics-how-you-can-join-the-green-revolution/. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [28]. "Step-by-step Plan for Certification." *EU EcoLabel*, www.eu-ecolabel.nl/en/business/certify/step-by-step-plan/. Accessed 24 July 2025.
- [29]. "A Study on the Influence of Green Advertising Design and Environmental Emotion on Advertising Effect." *Research Gate*, Sept. 2019, www.researchgate.net/publication/335646081_A_Study_on_the_Influence_of_Green_Advertising_Design_and_Environmental_Emotion_on_Advertising_Effect. Accessed 29 June 2025.
- [30]. SUH Junhyuck. "A Study on the Relationship between Green Marketing Strategy and CSR Policy." *??????*, vol. 14, no. 2, 28 Feb. 2023, pp. 11-19, <https://doi.org/10.13106/JIDB.2023.VOL14.NO2.11>. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [31]. Swallow, Tom. "Top 10: Sustainability Certifications." *Sustainability Magazine*, 14 Feb. 2024, sustainabilmag.com/top10/top-10-sustainability-certifications. Accessed 30 June 2025.
- [32]. "Truth in Advertising." *Federal Trade Commission*, www.ftc.gov/news-events/topics/truth-advertising. Accessed 24 June 2025.
- [33]. Tully, Stephanie M., and Russell S. Winer. "Are People Willing to Pay More for Socially Responsible Products: A Meta-Analysis." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2240535>. Accessed 24 July 2025.
- [34]. "Understanding Eco-certifications: What Do They Really Mean?" *Target Office Products*, 30 Apr. 2024, targetoffice.com/understanding-eco-certifications/. Accessed 22 July 2025.
- [35]. "What Is Consumer Psychology?" *USC Dornsife*, 18 Nov. 2023, appliedpsychologydegree.usc.edu/blog/what-is-consumer-psychology. Accessed 17 June 2025.
- [36]. "Wood and Forestry." *IKEA*, www.ikea.com/global/en/our-business/sustainability/wood-forestry/. Accessed 4 July 2025.