

Best practices to communicate your sustainability efforts

In January 2021, the European Commission conducted a screening of websites on 344 seemingly dubious sustainability claims and concluded that:

37%

Claims used vague terminologies

42%

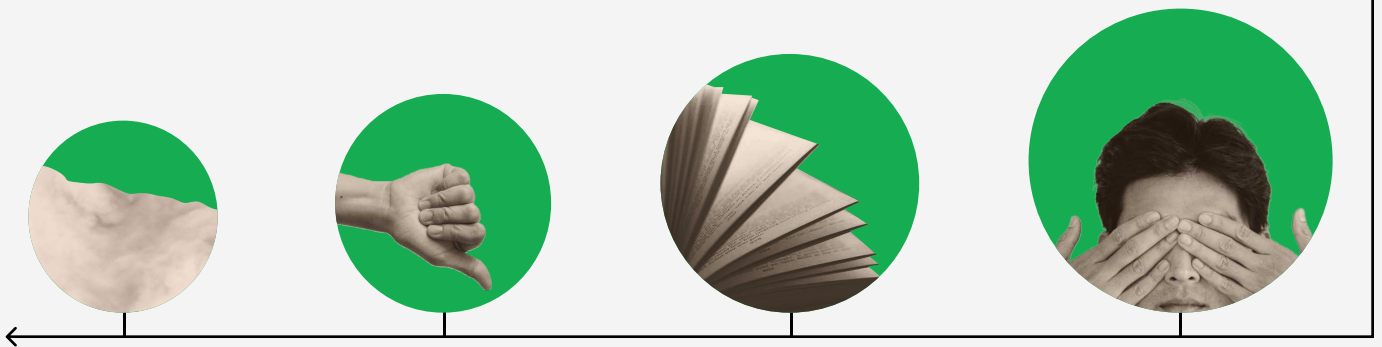
Claims were false or misleading

50%

Claims were insufficiently supported by information

59%

Claims were supported by not easily accessible evidence



Avoid products & services related greenwashing

Checklist

- 1 **Be mindful of the claims you make**
Make sure to consider how potential claims can be perceived by outsiders. Then, objectively determine whether the claim is reliable and unambiguous.
- 2 **Back up your claims with real evidence**
Provide easily accessible information to substantiate your claims. **Example:** QR codes can be used to easily direct consumers to more relevant information on your organisation's website.

- ✓ Make clear and nuanced claims on the exact sustainability advantage of the product/service offered considering the environmental, social and ethical impact of the product.
- ✓ Back your claims with information on the full lifecycle of the product (incl. information on guaranteed durability).
- ✓ Ensure your claims are substantiated with facts and make sure to review the facts from time to time to ensure accuracy.
- ✓ Make sure your claims are fair and meaningful when you compare it with similar products and services.
- ✓ Support your claims with clear visuals. Avoid what is called 'stock photo sustainability' by using imagery that is proprietary to your organisation or supports the content. The photos or images should not be confusing or deceiving.

Avoid organisational greenwashing as a whole

Checklist

1 Assess & mitigate greenwashing risks
Do this whenever you communicate on your sustainability progress. Mitigating measures can be adopted in a formal working procedure.
Example: an operational risk management assessment of your marketing and buyer activities. Identify where the potential greenwashing hotspots are by having honest and open conversations with your employees.

2 Align to reporting frameworks
Disclose your progress in line with internationally acclaimed reporting frameworks such as the GRI standards and SASB. By doing so, your organisation is guided by renowned standards to warrant transparent, specific, comparable and frequent reporting.

Set clear ESG goals by:

- ✓ Involving internal and external stakeholders in meaningful engagement.
- ✓ Using necessary data to establish a baseline.
- ✓ Identifying and implementing the necessary measures to reach those goals.

