

# Greenwashing

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## Greenwashing

**Context : The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), under the Consumer Affairs Ministry, has issued guidelines titled 'Prevention and Regulation of Greenwashing and Misleading Environmental Claims' to address greenwashing practices in advertisements.**

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### Background

- The guidelines are part of the government's initiative to curb misleading advertisements and promote transparency in environmental claims.
  - Greenwashing undermines genuine efforts to combat climate change by promoting irresponsible behavior while falsely portraying eco-friendliness.
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### Key Takeaways

#### What is Greenwashing?

- The act of making dubious, unverifiable, or exaggerated claims about being environment-friendly or climate-friendly.
- Misleads consumers and rewards entities for irresponsible practices.
- **Example:** The 2015 Volkswagen emissions scandal, where the company cheated on emissions tests for its "green" diesel vehicles. Other companies like Shell, BP, and Coca-Cola have faced similar accusations.

#### Types of Greenwashing

1. **Greenhushing:** Withholding information about sustainability goals and progress.
  2. **Green-crowding:** Hiding unsustainable practices within a group to avoid detection.
  3. **Greenshifting:** Shifting the responsibility for sustainability onto consumers instead of corporate action.
  4. **Greenlighting:** Highlighting minor sustainability efforts to distract from damaging practices.
  5. **Greenlabelling:** Labeling products as green or sustainable without substantial evidence.
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## Guidelines to Prevent Greenwashing

### 1. Misleading Claims:

- Using false or deceptive words, symbols, or imagery to exaggerate positive environmental attributes while hiding negative aspects constitutes greenwashing.

### 2. Substantiation of Claims:

- Terms like “eco-friendly,” “organic,” or “sustainable” must be backed by evidence and disclosed with adequate and accurate qualifiers in advertisements.

### 3. Technical Terms:

- Phrases like “environment impact assessment” or “greenhouse gas emissions” must be explained in simple, consumer-friendly language.

### 4. Applicability:

- The guidelines apply to all manufacturers, service providers, advertisers, and endorsers making environmental claims about goods or services.

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## Significance

These guidelines aim to ensure transparency, protect consumer interests, and hold companies accountable for their environmental claims, encouraging authentic and responsible sustainability practices.



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