

## Proposal for an EU Green Claims Directive

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Claiming to be “green” and “sustainable” has become a competitiveness perimeter in the EU, with green products registering greater growth than other products. However, not all products on the EU market are as environmentally friendly as presented by the companies and thus may be misleading to the consumers in relation to their environmental impact. Such practices, known as “greenwashing”, may hamper the reduction of negative environmental impact and ultimately thwart the green transition. An [EU Commission study dating from 2020](#) found that approx. 53% of the claims examined were vague, misleading, or unfounded and 40% lacked sufficient supporting evidence.

To prevent greenwashing, the EU Commission proposed a new [Green Claims Directive](#) on March 22, 2023. Pursuant to the proposal, the Directive will address greenwashing risk by (i) tackling false environmental claims made towards consumers and (ii) stopping the proliferation of public and private environmental labels. The Directive’s key objective is to protect the customers and ensure that green claims across the EU are reliable, comparable and verifiable. The Directive is thus to facilitate creation of the green, circular economy, based on well-informed decisions of the customers.

Together with the March 30, 2022 proposal for an [EU Directive on empowering consumers for the green transition](#), the new rules would establish a clear regime for environmental claims and labels. They aim to ensure that consumers receive trustworthy information about the environmental credentials of the products they buy. To achieve this aim, new rules will, in particular: (i) establish clear criteria on how to prove such claims, (ii) set a requirement for the claims and labels to be checked by the independent and accredited verifier, and (iii) set rules for the governance of environmental labeling systems to ensure they are solid, transparent and reliable.

The Green Claims Directive targets claims made explicitly and voluntarily by business to the customers, where such claims relate to environmental aspects of a product or the trader itself. The proposed directive only concerns claims that other EU rules do not currently cover. This means that if an EU instrument establishes more specific rules on environmental claims for a particular sector or product category, such as the energy efficiency label, those rules will prevail over those of the proposed Directive.

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