



## GREENWASHING: DARKER FACE OF GREEN MARKETING

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### Abstract

Last decade has seen everything go green, from automobile technology to smartphones, from air-conditioning to cooking, from transportation to personal care products, from diapers to baby food, everything has either already gone green or they are trying their best to convert into green. This era of business is already being touted as green era and no wonder all the leading companies and even tier two companies have wasted no time and efforts in joining the green bandwagon. It is their perception that consumers and investors look up to them when they declare themselves as green also it gives them a reason to stand up for a social cause, well to some extent they are true also. But do all the companies who call themselves and their products so called green; are really green? It is high time that consumers should wake up to the fact that “everything that glitters is not gold”, on similar lines all products which are claimed to be green are not so. This is “green washing” and it is happening all over the world and India is no exception. Infact with Indian regulatory system and authorities have lack of substantial framework and laws for identification of truly green products there are more chances of green washing to take place here. The present paper attempts to understand the concept of green washing, it tries to identify why organizations have to resort to green washing, factors and reasons are studied to find a way as to how green washing can prove to be a risky business trend and that how it can be minimized and curbed. The paper is a conceptual study based on the secondary data that is available.

**Keywords– Green Washing, Green Washing Sins, Green Marketing, Green Consumers, Green Products, Green Purchasing Etc.**

### Introduction

Green marketing surged with the need for the companies to appear green, suddenly green was everywhere in demand due to proliferation of environmental conservationists and their movements to save the planet and the ecosystem. Till 1960's traditional marketing did not have the “G” word, consumerism proliferated and customer became more and more aware of their rights, desires, and demands and also about how to make sure that the products and services that they consume are good for them in every sense. Initially the consumers only cared about the satisfaction that they received on consuming a particular product, then they started looking for quality, then packaging, then they felt the need to look data the contents, then price, then justification for the price and at one stage they reached a level which was beyond the product paradigm, they felt the need to check whether the product was safer to be consumed i.e safer for them and then further it was felt that the products should be safe for the environment as well, which is where the “Green” came into the marketing affairs.

Green marketing came into existence in mid 1970's and has changed the way in which marketers function. According to the American Marketing Association, **"Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe, involves developing and promoting products and services that satisfy customers want and need for Quality, Performance, Affordable Pricing and Convenience without having a detrimental input on the environment"** Green marketing also ties closely with issues of industrial ecology and environmental sustainability, environmental accounting, green transportation as well as development of core management concepts such as extended producers liability, life-cycle analysis, material use and resource flows, and eco-efficiency. Green marketing since then has been a boon for the corporate and have given them many new ways in which they can be responsible towards the environment. But along with many good things green marketing has also given us a darker aspect of being green, it is greenwashing, greenwashing is the false projection done by many companies claiming to be green which Infact are not green. Green washing is defined as -

“It is a disinformation disseminated by an organization to present an environmentally responsible public image. An unjustified appropriation of environmental virtue by anybody, including an industry, corporation, a politician, a government or a nongovernment organization (NGO), to create a pro-environment image, sell a product, service or a policy, or to try and rehabilitate its standing with the public or decision makers is ‘greenwashing’. The term is used to describe the practice of spending significantly more resource(s) on advertising being green, rather than spending them on environmentally sound practices” (source- *INSIGHT-The Consumer Magazine*, APRIL 2009). Greenwashing thus is a false portrayal of a non-green, polluting organization to be green which creates confusion in the minds of the customer regarding other green claims too. Greenwashing has been going on since the inception and implementation of green marketing.



The term “greenwashing” was first used in print to refer to the hotel industry’s attempts to appear green through the well-publicized encouragement of customer reuse of linens; the resulting reduced washing linen helped the hotels to cut costs and reduced related environmental impacts.

Greenwashing has been defined as “*the expenditure by companies of more money to appear environmentally responsible than to be environmentally responsible*” (<http://www.greenwashingindex.com/what.php>).

Oxford English Dictionary defines greenwash as; “Disinformation disseminated by an organization, etc., so as to present an environmentally responsible public image; a public image of environmental responsibility promulgated by or for an organization, etc., but perceived as being unfounded or intentionally misleading.”

The ever increasing incidents of greenwashing have profound negative effects on consumer confidence in green products, thereby reducing the off take of green products and services. Similarly, greenwashing can affect investor’s confidence in eco-friendly firms, reducing the investments in socially aware and responsible market. Greenwashing also poses risks for green washing companies when customers, non-government organizations (NGOs) or government representatives raise queries for such green claims. Many organizations have faced legal sanctions for engaging in such false green practices with fake claims be it Honda USA, Coca Cola India Pvt ltd or any other company. Such behavior is fueled by lack of regulations, unclear government norms regarding true green identity, external market factors like competition, market share, position etc and company’s need to identify itself with positive perception in the minds of the customer. Greenwashing is an ever going phenomenon with far more negative impacts that are generally being touted by the green activists and a comprehensive analysis of the reasons for a company’s greenwashing is needed to be done, which would assist the managers in understanding the periphery of greenwashing’s negative impact as well as it would enable others to draft an effective policy against such corrupt practices.

Greenwashing can be defined in the context of intersection of two firm behaviors i.e poor environmental performance and positive communication about environmental performance.

Here we must understand that there are basically two types of firms in terms of their green behavior- True or Green Firms with positive environmental impact and true & transparent green practices, others are False or Brown Firms with negative environmental impact and destructive non-green practices, which are claimed as green practices. Hence Brown firms are those firms which conduct green practices but these practices do not bear green results i.e the claims that are made by the Brown Firms regarding the impact of their green practices are utterly false. But due to competitive pressure, business needs, race for market share and other reasons these firms communicate their environmental performance to be far greater than what it is actually.

#### **Seven Sins of Green washing-**

1. Sin of the Hidden Trade-off: committed by suggesting a products “green” based on an unreasonably narrow set of attributes without attention to other important environmental issues. Paper, for example, is not necessarily environmentally-preferable just because it comes from sustainably-harvested forest. Other important environmental issues in the paper-making process, including energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and water and air pollution, may be equally or more significant.
2. Sin of No Proof: committed by an environmental claim that cannot be substantiated by easily accessible supporting information or by a reliable third-party certification. Common examples are tissue products that claim various percentages of post-consumer recycled content without providing any evidence.
3. Sin of Vagueness :committed by every claim that is so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by the consumer. “All-natural” is an example. Arsenic, uranium, mercury, and formaldehyde are naturally occurring, and poisonous. “All natural” isn’t necessarily “green”.
4. Sin of Irrelevance: committed by making an environmental claim that may be truthful but is unimportant or unhelpful for consumers seeking environmentally preferable products. “CFC-free” is a common example, since it is a frequent claim despite the fact that CFCs are banned by law.
5. Sin of lesser of Two Evils: committed by claims that may be true within the product category, but that risk distracting the consumer from the greater environmental impacts of the category as a whole. Organic cigarettes might be an example of this category, as might be fuel-efficient sport-utility vehicles.
6. Sin of Fibbing: the least frequent Sin, is committed by making environmental claims that are simply false. The most common examples were products falsely claiming to be Energy Star certified or registered.



7. Sin of Worshiping False Labels: The Sin of Worshiping False Labels is committed by a product that, through either words or images, gives the impression of third-party endorsement where no such endorsement actually exists; fake labels, in other words. (source – *Terrachoice-thesinsofgreenwashing.org*)

The above sins of green washing are actually the practices which are followed by the Companies to cheat the customer into perceiving their products or services as the most green and environmental in the market. These sins comprise of the ways in which green washing can be done.

### Ten Signs to identify Green washing

**Terrachoice** ([www.terrachoice.com](http://www.terrachoice.com)) an organization which is a part of **Underwriters Laboratories global green network** and actively involved in conducting research on sustainable development has developed new “SIGNS” for identification of green washing. These signs, though, developed on the basis of “SINS” of green washing but are much more important as they actually enable a layman to identify whether he is being green washed or not – (source – [www.futerra.co.uk](http://www.futerra.co.uk)).

1. Use of fluffy language or words in the advertisement or marketing of a product such as “ecofriendly”, “green”, “less polluting” etc without any substantial evidence or proof.
2. Green or partially green products that have been produced or marketed by Non green company, such as “efficient light bulbs or cars with lesser carbon emission” made by a company dumping its pollutants in a river or water body.
3. False suggestive pictures which really do not make any sense, such as flowers coming out of the emission pipe of a car.
4. Irrelevant and unjustified green claims, such as “60% less electricity consumption”, “3/4<sup>th</sup> lesser carbon emission”, “releases less fumes” etc. In such cases only a tiny part of that product is green, rest majority of its assemblies might be non green but the advertiser tries to attract attention towards that tiny green bit to prove greenness of the said product.
5. Declaring that you are the “Best in the Class” i.e trying to convince the customer that you are slightly greener than the others, even if the others are completely non green or worst pollutants in the market.
6. Some products being green does not gets digested easily, for eg. One cigarette company in UK claimed its cigarettes to be greener, which obviously was not accepted by the consumers; such practices can be out rightly called as green washing as they clearly lack any credibility.
7. “Gobbledygook”, i.e using technical jargons and high level scientific facts to prove that your products are green, these facts are mostly neither proven nor tested and the purpose of using jargons is done simply to confuse the masses.
8. Unclear green label that looks like a third party endorsement and avoids making straight forward green claims, such labels are simply used to green wash the customers by non green companies.
9. Lack of written, documented or visible evidences and proofs of your green claims is also a green wash.
10. Outright lying is also done by companies who use totally fabricated data to prove their green claims, such cases have been largely identified in European countries.

### Drivers for Greenwashing

There are three broadly identified drivers of green washing i.e., External drivers, Organizational drivers and the Individual drivers. External drivers include pressures from non –market forces i.e regulatory laws & framework and NGOs and market forces such as investors, competitors and customers. In India the current regulatory environment is the key driver of greenwashing by companies.. Regulation of green washing is extremely limited in India moreover any implementation or enforcement of such regulations is of highly uncertain nature. In addition, regulation across different countries differs on greenwashing and as such complexity of different degrees of jurisdiction across countries make a very complex and uncertain greenwashing regulatory environment overall for MNC’s.

The regulatory environment is a very critical driver of greenwashing due to the limited punitive Incidences in greenwashing cases handled so far .In addition , the regulatory environment for greenwashing also influences the externalmarket, organizational and individual drivers of greenwashing, thus acting as an catalyst for greenwashing. The external market drivers of greenwashing include customer pressures, investor pressure and market position.

Consumer and investor demand for green products, services and firms is influenced by information about firm greenwashing and environmental practices, and uncertain regulatory environment contributes to the availability of this company information. Organizational-level drivers of greenwashing include organizational structure, decision making structure , communication strategies, competitive approaches etc, these organizational level drivers become more prominent in



Uncertain regulatory environment .Individual-level drivers include optimistic inclination to highlight even small green feature into a grand one and unrealistic positioning of Infact a non green product. These drivers thus influence the organizations on all three frontsi.e.external, organizational and individual level of marketing communication to make it vulnerable to greenwashing. Given these challenges it could be advised that more stringent regulations and punitive actions should be imposed to bring about a reduction in greenwashing actions and claims.In the same light alignment of an organization’s structures, processes and resources towards reduction of greenwashing would be really helpful especially if it is done in tune with existing regulatory environment.

### Objectives

1. To understand the Concept & nature of greenwashing.
2. To identify reasons for occurrence of greenwashing incidences in Maharashtra & India.
3. To identify measures to curb greenwashing incidences.

### Greenwashing – Conceptual Framework

A perfect litmus test for greenwash seems to be impossible. The *Greenpeace* has devised a four-point checklist, also called“CARE”. A company which fails on any of the four CARE tests, may be in the greenwash list that includes:

- **Core Business:** If it is based on an activity which is environmentally hazardous any assertion that it supports environmentally sustainable development is greenwash, e.g. coal and oil companies, whose products are identified source of manmade greenhouse gases.
- **Advertising Practice:** Using the media to make environmental claims about its cleaner product(s), while continuing practice(s) that negatively impact the environment, e.g. production or release of toxic matters.
- **Research and Development (R&D):** The extent to which the R&D budget of the company is utilized to develop environmentally sustainable practice is a measurement of greenwash, e.g. if a thermal power utility spends its R&D budget on reducing pollutant such as sulfur, ignoring the fact that any combustion of coal results in the emission of greenhouse gases, its R&D is not for sustainable ends. Development of renewable energy would do.
- **Environmental Lobbying Record:** Double-speak of companies on environmental issues, e.g. a company that advocates the cause of pollution reduction on one hand and lobbies against the policies meant to reduce pollution on the other accused.
- Let us look at some instances of original green practices implemented by the organizations and incidents of greenwashing , in order to understand more prominently the negative impacts of greenwashing.

### Original Corporate Green Practices

**Suzlon Energy Ltd.** is amongst the world’s largest wind turbine manufacturers. It has been already ranked as one of the efficient manufacturers with compatible green image. The company has already won in convincing the people of the strength of Wind Power and has in place its Pondicherry plant running entirely on the wind power. It even boasts of the most energy efficient building ever constructed in India.

**Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** is an urban metro rail project serving across NCR (National Capital Region), it has proved itself as the most modern, reliable, fastest and comfortable public transportation system. According to a recent study it is estimated that Metro railway has helped save 33,000 tons of fuel and has prevented creation of over 2,283 tons of poisonous gases (*source – Centra Road Research Institute, (CRRI)*). Not only has that it had lead to reduction in number of road accidents and average fuel consumption in transportation.

**Indian Green Building Council, IGBC** was formed in 2001 by C.I.I, it has been the pioneer in adaptation of greener ways of construction and has already launched the green building concept. C.I.I’s<sup>1</sup> Hyderabad based office is a good example of green marketing and green building concepts. It has LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system installed which is the first of its kind in India in any commercial or residential establishment. The main highlights of a green building are water saving, energy efficiency, sustainable site development, indoor environmental quality and eco-friendly material selection.

**Central Pollution Board of India**, often called Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is an independent body under the Ministry of Environment & Forest of the government of India, it has formed an alliance with German Technology Corporation and Swiss Federal Laboratories for e – waste management and e-waste recycling, this recycling will be

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<sup>1</sup>Confederation of Indian Industries



environmentally sound and will be done with strict adherence to guidelines and advises drafted by CPCB. The e-waste recycling guidelines place the major responsibility of recycling on the producer of electronic goods termed as “Extended Producer Responsibility” (EPR).

**Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** has introduced paperless office by converting their documents in digital form which ultimately saves money, saves valuable time of printing and processing, renders the documents easily transferable online, boosts productivity, saves space, makes document management easier and most importantly contributes to the environment by saving paper, customers are already using e-tickets, e-coupons commonly.

**ITC Limited** is already a pro-environment company, it further substantiated its claim by the introduction of eco-friendly bleaching technology called “Elemental Chlorine Free Bleaching”. As a consequence we have an entirely new range of high quality green products and green solutions.eg. Eco-friendly multipurpose paper which is 62% less polluting than its traditional substitute.

**HCL Technologies** is already a pioneer in green technology and green initiatives as a result of its “go green” project with reference to toxic waste and e-waste in electronics and IT industry. HCL has also proposed phasing hazardous vinyl plastic and bromine-based flame retardants from its products, moreover the company has proposed and called for “Restriction of hazardous substances”, RoHS Legislation in India.

**Hero Honda Motors** is the largest two-wheeler manufacturer in India, as also one of the responsible green firm. The organization continuously strives for the innovation in green products and processes which enables in striking balance between company’s business practices, human beings and environment.

**Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**, India’s largest oil manufacturer is all set to make it to the list of top ten green companies with the advent of energy efficient green crematoriums, these will soon replace traditional wood pyre across the country, it is estimated ONGC’s Mokshada green crematoriums will save almost 70% of the wood one-fourth of the burning time per cremation.

Cotton Tags & recycled paper bags by Reebok, Nike, Adidas & Lotto are a part of green marketing and green promotion initiatives of these leading brands, besides cotton tags and recycled packing bags these brands are also going for eco-friendly raw materials and Life Cycle Analysis (end-to-end product use) of their products. Even such small steps are having big environmental impacts.

**Tata Metaliks (TML)** is encouraging environmental cause by Daylight Savings in energy and discouraging work at the corporate office on Saturdays. During day time company works on sunlight by switching off all electrical gadgets.

**Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC)** operates the world’s largest fleet of CNG powered buses. Delhi government has also launched CNG operated Auto rickshaws and eco-friendly rickshaws for promoting eco-friendly transportation. Besides CNG, Delhi government and Indian Oil is also focusing on Auto gas (LPG), Ethanol-blended Petrol, Hydrogen energy and bio-diesel as alternative fuel resources.

**Gujarat Power Corporation Limited (GPCL)** has played the key part in the development of “Solar Park” in Gujrat, the state government has been proactive in harnessing Clean & green energy and renewable energy projects initiative. GPCL commissioned the “Solar Park” with a view of environment protection and climate change impact reduction.

**Tamilnadu Newsprint & Papers Ltd, (TNPL)** was awarded the green business leadership award in 2009-10 for the pulp & paper sector, they undertook two clean developments projects and a wind power project that generated an estimated of 2,30,323 carbon emission reductions leading to an earning of Rs. 17 Crores 40 lakhs to the company.

**M & M’s Mahindra Reva** is the first Indian electric car. Consumers are increasingly influenced by “clean” and green technology. Clean technology will be deciding the foot prints of the product use in its entire life cycle i.e from its manufacturing to its recycling and green technology will be its use of green fuel and materials. The electric car promises the rise of an entirely new era of cost effective, replaceable, energy efficient, light weight and convenient transport equipment.



### **Greenwashing Incidents**

**IBM Corporation** under its “Green Corporate Initiatives” has been running advertisements that claim replacement of computers and other electronic devices which have been reported problematic or erroneous, but these claims have been found to be deceiving as such collected computers and other equipments are not disposed off properly and such discarded electronic goods have become a serious threat when it comes to e-waste management.

**COMCAST Corporation** under its COMCAST Ecobill is using a slogan to suggest environmentally friendly business activity, the slogan “PAPERLESS IS MORE” is misleading as COMCAST is actually using large amounts of paper for its direct marketing activities. Airbus A380 is described as “A better environment inside & out” though actually its travel has been registered to have a high negative environmental cost.

**Walmart Inc.** has its own sustainability campaign, however according to the Institute for Local Reliance (ILRS), “Walmart’s Sustainability Campaign has done more to improve the company’s image rather than improving the environment”. Walmart generates only 2% of total U.S electricity from wind and solar resources though its capacity is rated much higher.

**Kimberley Clarke Corporation’s** claim of “pure & natural” diapers in green packaging is false and being touted as a greenwash as the product has organic cotton on the outside but uses the old petrochemical gel inside also the company claims that “Dry Max” Pampers reduce landfill waste by reducing the amount of paper fluff in the diapers, it has identified, infact as a way for the company to save money.

**SOUTHERN COMPANY** is a US based Coal Company, in 2010 it ran advertisements promoting “Clean Coal”, infact the entire concept of Clean Coal is false as also the company is known for high Carbon-di-oxide emissions leading to intense pollution and global warming.

**Sara Lee Corporation** came into the limelight when one of its advertisements claimed that their new “ECO GRAIN” is sustainable than the traditional organic grain. An organic industry audit agency proved them false and asked them to take back their words, proving this to be a greenwash practice.

**BP Global** have spend large sums of money to establish themselves as green technology leader though infact they are the company responsible for one of the most destructive oil spills in the global environmental history.

**Lexus Corporation** claimed that its range of new hybrid cars have the lowest carbon-di-oxide emissions in their class, which proved to be entirely false information. Although the hybrid cars was a right decision but Lexus’s hybrid cars had the worst fuel economy in its class and as compared to non-hybrid cars also.

**Shell Corporation** through its advertising campaign “Lets go” intended to reposition itself as a green company stating in detail its investment in green technology which infact proved to be a greenwash as it was soon established that they continue to drill for oil at an increasing pace thereby reducing environmental resources at an increasing rate.

**Nestle India Pvt. Ltd.** was charged with greenwashing in 2012, as the company was involved in promoting infant milk substitute by using a “casuse –related marketing strategy” wherein it took help of celebrity brand endorsers in claiming that their Breast-milk-substitute was better than the mother’s milk for infants, thereby violating Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Food Act, 1992. Nestle was also charged with violation of Labeling rules in India. It is well known that the mother’s milk has been proved to be the best food for an infant till minimum 3 yrs of age.

**McDonald's** changed the colour of their logos from yellow and red to yellow and green in 2009; a spokesman for the company explained that the change was to show their responsibility for the preservation of natural resources whereas it had nothing to do with the preservation or protection of environment.

### **. Reasons for increasing greenwashing incidences in India & Maharashtra**

First of all we should assess as to why greenwashing happens, in a country like India there are masses who are not highly educated nor they are aware of their rights and are not committed to their duties towards the society and country. Hence in



such an environment it is easy for the Organizations to get away with questionable business practices , moreover the Organizations are powerful enough to influence the legislation if any query is raised regarding the correctness of their green claims and practices.

The social and legislative structure in India and Maharashtra is such that it is really difficult for an individual customer or a group of customers to bring any greenwashing organization to justice. Widespread corruption , political and beaurocratic dominance , negligence of State and Central government representatives and institutions towards green development issues and overall negligence of common man as a “Customer” towards greenwashing , all these factors contribute to increasing greenwashing in Indian landscape and organizations in Maharashtra state are not far behind. Moreover such “absence” of regulatory framework makes it a cakewalk for the companies who have been indulging in greenwashing and entices new organizations to follow the band as they have nothing to lose.

Major reasons for occurrence of greenwashing can be broadly listed as-

1. Absence of strict business regulation at both central and state level to analyze the accuracy of green claims being made by various organizations regarding their so called green products.
2. Absence of any punitive occurrence in any of the past cases that have been reported for the violation of green norms or for greenwashing, such companies are let away with a warning and some fine, which itself shows how serious the authorities are regarding the sustainability and greenness; which in turn entices new companies and their marketing heads to indulge in greenwashing.
3. Absence of any such law or advertising regulation punishing false green claims made by the organization.
4. Absence of any legislative mechanism to identify and evaluate the accuracy of green claims made by greenwashing organizations.
5. Lack of interest of public institutions, consumer forums and all such organizations which call themselves “consumer friends” and take a vow to fight for the consumers.
6. It is clearly seen that an individual customer or a group of customer fighting against a giant organization are no match for it and the organization on the other hand has number of ways to tackle this issue and turn it in their own favour.
7. Lack of general awareness amongst the public regarding actual greenness and norms of being green, which makes it difficult for them to identify true green from non green.
8. Lack of public interest in greenways of life although the percentage of people believing in green is increasing constantly still it is very scarce as compared with the non green population in India or Maharashtra , hence green and sustainability are issues that have not been taken up very seriously yet.
9. Lack of quick response and follow up from the authorities even if any such greenwashing incidence is reported , by the time authorities gear up for the any action the organization gets enough time to cover up the matter and present themselves as innocent.
10. Lack of trust of consumers and general public on the legal system and rules and regulations in India , due to which many greenwashing incidences go unreported and un-noticed or are simply neglected.

### **Measures to Curb Greenwashing**

In a developing country like India , we do not have a sound, structured and rigid legal framework in place to give out appropriate punishments to the defaulters. Mitigation and alliance between politicians, businessman and local goons make it impossible to impose and implement any such actions on the greenwashing company even when its false and unjustified claims are brought out in open to the public. With nexus and liaisons between all pillars of democracy for all wrong reasons it is still a long way for our country and state before we will see justice being done to the public by taking stringent punitive actions against the greenwashing organizations. Following suggestions might help in curbing the greenwashing incidents-

1. Stringent regulations and punitive actions to be set in place by both the state & central government of Maharashtra & India respectively for each and every kind of greenwashing incidents & false green claims.
2. To install the above structure , a detailed study of types and varieties of greenwashing should be done for eg. product-based greenwashing , false projection regarding performance, falsified environmental claim etc.i.e sins of greenwashing need to be understood in details and punishment should be based on its impact on the society & the environment.
3. Different categories of punitive actions should be framed depending on the extent of the harmful impact on the environment and public as a whole.
4. Organizations should be given a framework and do’s & dont’s list for making any kind of green claims or any kind of green advertising or green marketing campaigns. It should be clearly mentioned in the framework as to what



kinds of tests and analysis would be done to establish authenticity of their green claim, as also the framework should clearly mention the legal action that can be taken if the claim turns out to be a greenwash.

5. It is a common observation in India that many organizations get away with their greenwash easily due to customer negligence or government lethargy and unwillingness to take actions against them, moreover those organizations which get caught also get lucky due to the longer legal battles that the government and social activists have to fight against them, the period is so long that finally all the active parties give up. Hence all greenwashing cases should be run in fast track courts to bring about quicker and effective justice.
6. Consumer awareness regarding greenwashing should be increased through government sponsored advertising, exhibitions, posters, inserts and other print media and electronic media advertisements.
7. We should learn from different legal and social frameworks that have been established to identify and control greenwashing incidents across the globe. Hence the researcher has included a detailed list of International websites and organizations who are actively involved in identification and curbing of global greenwashing practices.

### Conclusion

It has been seen that some of the Indian companies and government agencies like Mahindra & Mahindra limited, Addidas India, Reebok India, McDonald, HCL, Indian Green Building Council, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Delhi Government, Central Pollution Control Board, Gujarat Power Corporation Limited and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation, Suzlon energy limited, ITC limited, Tata Metaliks, TNPL, ONGC, Hero Honda Motors etc. are very much active and are contributing towards green marketing and environmental protection.

These organizations have made a global mark for themselves and have certainly established themselves as leading green companies. Whereas in greenwashing a company tends to promote a so-called green product or image but actually operates in a way that is damaging or deteriorating to the environment. Greenwashing includes misleading customers about the green characteristics and benefits of the product or service as also it includes making false or unjustified claims about environment protection and conservation. It is commonly seen that greenwashing ultimately has a single prime motive i.e establishing green image and earning profits for itself through falsified green projections. McDonalds, Comcast, Kimberly Clark, Walmart, BP Global, IBM, Sara Lee, Southern Company, Shell Global and Lexus corporations etc. have been charged with greenwashing. These leading organizations also could not overcome the alluring opportunity of earning bucks by throwing dirt in the eyes of the customers, but this has damaged their image worldwide; certainly having negative impact on their business operations globally. This research paper tries to bring it to the notice of all large & small, national & international organizations to continue using green marketing but by being realistic, whatever small effort they are making towards being green, if they feel that its worth to tell the public about it, then be very very authentic and realistic, prevent making any unjustified and tall green claims as that will definitely backfire. Green marketing is imperative but it has to be used with utmost caution. In India, green marketing is still in infancy stage and it has yet to embark on a journey to be fully accepted and exploited in terms of its potential. One most important aspect that the researcher learned in this concern is that there are still very few and very ambiguous laws and regulations for punishing greenwashers which is an alarming state of affairs, quick and effective actions need to be taken in this regard. In green marketing, consumers are willing to pay more to maintain a cleaner and greener environment and hence it is more so important that instead of misleading them a more prominent and dedicated service needs to be given. Green washing incidents will increase in India unless of course the government takes a more broader and integrated action plan in terms of greenwashing regulations, green certifications, green technology identification and green marketing charters.

All said and done the researcher felt the need to supplement the paper with enough information on websites and global greenwashing analyzing companies. Lets be green, not only green but authentic green.

### Additional Information on Greenwashing-

<b>Some important websites for greenwashing information:</b>
<i>Greenpeace.org, greenwashingindex.com, stopgreenwash.org, corpwatch.org, thesietch.org, indiaenvironmentportal.org.in</i>
<b>10 Worst Global Greenwashing Companies-</b>
<i>British Petroleum, American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, General Motors, ExxonMobil, Monsanto, Malaysian Palm Oil Council, American Electric Power, Dow Chemical (dioxin polluter), Fur Council of Canada, Fiji Water.</i>





**Greenwashing versus certification:** TerraChoice documents for 11 credible environmental certifications whether the certification is based on the product lifecycle, whether the certification process is based on publicly available standards, and whether that standard development process is transparent (<http://sinsofgreenwashing.org/findings/greenwashing-report-2009/>). This information, plus product categories, label images and website links are provided for:

- EcoCert
- EcoLogo
- Energy Star
- EPEAT
- U.S. EPA's Design for Environment
- Forest Stewardship Council
- GreenSeal
- GreenGuard
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative
- USDA Organic
- U.S. EPA's WaterSense.

**Greenwashing watchdogs**

Table below lists organizations which provide information about companies' greenwashing claims; also listed are the organizational websites and contributions to the greenwashing education effort.

Analyzing Green Marketing Organization	Contributions to Greenwashing Detection
EcoLogo Program <a href="http://www.ecologo.org">www.ecologo.org</a>	<b>Identity:</b> Type I eco-labeling program (ISO designation based on scientific-based intra-category comparison of products), audited by the Global Eco-labeling Network (see below) as meeting ISO 14024 standards for eco-labeling. <b>Contributions:</b> Online search feature for EcoLogo within 140 product/ service categories or by manufacturer
EnviroMedia <a href="http://www.greenwashingindex.com/criteria.php">http://www.greenwashingindex.com/criteria.php</a>	<b>Identity:</b> Joint project of EnviroMedia Social Marketing and University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication <b>Contribution:</b> Interactive Greenwashing Index, Seven Sins of Greenwashing report
Federal Trade Commission <a href="http://www.ftc.gov/">http://www.ftc.gov/</a>	<b>Identity:</b> This Federal agency includes the Bureau of Consumer Protection, protecting consumers against unfair, deceptive or fraudulent practices <b>Contributions:</b> Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims, 1992, 1996, 1998, now under revision
Global Eco-labelling Network (GEN) <a href="http://www.globalecolabelling.net/">http://www.globalecolabelling.net/</a>	<b>Identity:</b> International non-profit association of third-party labeling organizations founded in 1994 to improve, promote and develop eco-labeling. GEN includes 24 member organizations, including GreenSeal in North America (USA) and TerraChoice (North America Canada).
Green Life <a href="http://www.thegreenlifeonline.org">http://www.thegreenlifeonline.org</a>	<b>Identity:</b> [formerly Earth Day Resources for Living Green] <b>Contributions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In concert with EcoPledge.com, issued annual report "Don't Be Fooled" which named 10 worst greenwashers, last published 2005</li> <li>• Greenwash 101, online primer</li> </ul>
Greenpeace <a href="http://www.stopgreenwash.org">http://www.stopgreenwash.org</a>	<b>Identity:</b> International nongovernmental entity whose mission is to "ensure the ability of the earth to nurture life in all its diversity" through direct action, lobbying and research <b>Contribution:</b> Stop Greenwashing website presents (and accepts from users) greenwashing video and print ads from



	oil, auto, electricity, coal, nuclear forest industries.
GreenSeal <a href="http://www.green seal.org">http://www.green seal.org</a>	<b>Identity:</b> Develops science-based environmental certification standards and uses those standards in the certification assessment of a wide range of products. <b>Contribution:</b> “Find a Certified Product” supports ad hoc consumer inquiries into certified products and services in various categories.
Greenwash Brigade <a href="http://www.publicradio.org/columns/sustainability/greenwash/">http://www.publicradio.org/columns/sustainability/greenwash/</a>	<b>Identity:</b> Public Radio group of environmental analysts <b>Contribution:</b> series of articles examining green claims
TerraChoice <a href="http://www.terrachoice.com/">http://www.terrachoice.com/</a>	<b>Identity:</b> For-profit marketing firm <b>Contribution:</b> Greenwashing Index (discussed in this article)

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