



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Greenwashing: tutto il verde che non c'è

2627-BbetweenSDG-06-08

Module description

The module examines the phenomenon of greenwashing and its implications for companies, consumers and markets. It introduces the main principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability, highlighting the differences between genuine sustainable practices, green marketing and misleading environmental communication. Through theoretical lessons, practical examples and case studies, participants will analyse the techniques used to create an apparently sustainable corporate image, including vague environmental claims, selective information, misleading symbols and unreliable certifications. The module will also explore the role of consumers, traditional media, social networks and influencers in shaping perceptions of sustainability.

Particular attention will be devoted to the regulatory framework, consumer protection and the criteria used to assess the reliability and transparency of environmental claims. The module will conclude with a practical workshop in which participants will analyse real communication materials, identify possible examples of greenwashing and develop clearer, more accurate and verifiable sustainability messages.

Learning goals

The learning objectives of the module may include:

- understanding the concept of greenwashing and its main characteristics;
- placing the phenomenon within the broader framework of environmental, social and economic sustainability;
- distinguishing between genuinely sustainable business practices, green marketing and misleading environmental communication;
- recognising the main techniques used by companies to construct an apparently “green” image;
- developing critical skills for analysing advertisements, labels, packaging, websites and content shared on social media;
- assessing the reliability of environmental claims by examining data, sources, certifications and measurable indicators;
- gaining knowledge of the main regulatory instruments and forms of consumer protection against misleading

communication;

- understanding the effects of greenwashing on consumer trust, corporate reputation and competition;
- promoting more informed and responsible consumption behaviours;
- acquiring the skills needed to design sustainability-related communication based on transparency, consistency and verifiability.

General goal

The general objective of the module is to develop participants' ability to recognise, analyse and critically assess greenwashing strategies, distinguishing them from genuine sustainability practices and transparent environmental marketing communication, in order to promote informed consumption behaviours and more accurate, responsible and verifiable forms of marketing communication.

Specific skills and competences

By the end of the module, participants will be able to:

- define and explain the concept of greenwashing and its main characteristics;
- identify the different techniques used in misleading environmental communication;
- distinguish between green marketing, genuine sustainability and greenwashing;
- critically analyse advertising campaigns, labels, packaging, websites and social media content;
- identify vague, ambiguous, irrelevant or unverifiable environmental claims;
- assess the reliability of data, sources, certifications and environmental labels;
- verify the consistency between a company's sustainability claims and its actual practices;
- recognise the main effects of greenwashing on consumers, companies and markets;
- apply criteria for assessing the transparency and fairness of environmental communication;
- use analytical tools and checklists to identify greenwashing;
- reformulate potentially misleading environmental messages in a clearer, more accurate and verifiable way;
- design simple sustainability communication materials based on concrete data, consistency and responsibility.

Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 UN Agenda

In particular, knowledge of the tools covered by the module intends to favor the following SDGs: Objective 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructures, Objective 12: Responsible consumption and production, Objective 13: Climate change.

Breakdown of meetings

The module, lasting 12 hours, is divided as follows: 6 meetings, two hours.

First meeting 2 hours – Sustainability Between Communication and Reality

Second meeting 2 hours – Greenwashing Techniques

Third meeting 2 hours – Green Marketing or Greenwashing?

Fourth meeting 2 hours – Consumers, Media and Social Networks

Fifth meeting 2 hours – Case studies

Sixth meeting 2 hours – Final Workshop: Exposing Greenwashing

Number of participants

There is no limit to the number of participants.
The module is delivered remotely.

Language used in meetings

Italian

Delivery period of the module

Methods of assessing the outcomes of the learning process

Participants will be provided with materials on the topics covered. At the end of month, it will be possible to agree on an in-depth study for an oral discussion at the end of the month. Quizzes, open-ended questions, incentives for interactive participation, drafting of short assignment during the course of the various modules may also be provided.

Department of affiliation of the teacher

Department of Economics, Management and Statistics (DEMS)

Sustainable Development Goals

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION |
CLIMATE ACTION
