

What is greenwashing and why is it a problem?

All kinds of businesses and brands are starting to use the word 'sustainable' in their marketing. Whether it's a t-shirt made of ethical cotton, or an 'eco' car-companies are increasingly eager to show their green credentials (=certificate). On the surface, this is good news. The climate crisis is the biggest threat to our existence. So if companies are

5 pledging to reduce their carbon footprints, surely we should be celebrating?

Well, yes and no. We absolutely want to see meaningful engagement from companies when it comes to the environment, but how can we tell the difference between real, positive commitments to change and greenwashing?

Where did greenwashing come from?

10 The term arose in the 1980s after American environmentalist Jay Westervelt noted how at a hotel he visited, there were signs asking guests to reuse their towels in order to "save the environment." Westervelt saw the huge amount of wastage he had encountered throughout the rest of the hotel, where there were no obvious efforts being made towards sustainability. Instead the hotel was simply trying to reduce costs

15 by not having to wash towels as much but were trying to market this cost-cutting method as eco-friendly behaviour.

Nowadays, greenwashing is taken to mean two main things. It can be when companies - sometimes politicians - try to hide or cover up their less-than-stellar (=alles andere als herausragend) environmental impact with a grand, public gesture towards green

20 awareness. In an age of social media, these big PR campaigns are often criticized pretty quickly.

But the other type of greenwashing can be a bit harder to spot and is far more insidious. This is where companies and brands use words like 'green', 'sustainable', 'eco-friendly', or 'vegan' simply as a marketing ploy (=Trick). And crucially - without any accountability

25 for their actions.

Being seen as ethical is profitable

There's no universally accepted definition of what terms like 'sustainable' actually mean. This means big brands can market an article as 'green', often at a marked-up price, without sticking to a clear definition of that term.

30 This is happening more and more because being socially conscious sells. McKinsey found that Gen Z (people born roughly between 1995 and 2010) are more likely to spend money on companies and brands that seem to be ethical. „More than any other generation that came before, Generation Z is more prepared to open their wallets for a brand that promotes causes about social impacts, such as climate, LGBTQ, racial or

35 social justice," says Sertac Yeltekin, the COO of Insitor Partners, a Singapore-based, socially focused venture capital fund.

„This gives them power to shape the success or downfall of companies. They are aware that they can drive this change." Companies, therefore, have a financial interest to appear socially conscious. This has led to the similar phenomenon of 'pinkwashing',

40 where businesses push their public commitment to LGBTQ+ topics, usually around Pride month (month in which people show their support for LGBTQ community) and often in the form of a rainbow logo.

Norway's Consumer Authority ruled last year that fast fashion brand H&M was under investigation for its supposedly ethical 'Conscious' collection. "H&M are not being clear

45 or specific enough in explaining how the clothes in the Conscious collection are more 'sustainable' than other products they sell," concluded the deputy director Bente Øverli.

"As H&M are not giving the consumer precise information about why these clothes are labelled Conscious, we conclude that consumers are being given the impression that these products are more 'sustainable' than they actually are."

- 50 Companies like H&M exploit the vagueness of green terms to both appear environmentally conscious and sell more clothes. This is a problem, because fast fashion is one of the biggest polluters on the planet, with more than £140 million worth of clothing ending up in UK landfills every year.

New York-based zero-waste campaigner Lauren Singer runs Package Free, a company
55 which claims to have "kept hundreds of millions of pieces of trash out of landfills." But as TikTok and YouTuber Robert Tolppi highlights, there is no evidence of how these figures come about (=entstehen). Package Free sells numerous 'green' products, including a three-pack of condoms in a metal tin for \$9, not including delivery. There may be less plastic packaging involved, but shipping a metal tin containing just three
60 condoms is enormously wasteful. So while online shops like Package Free may appear to be a greener option on the surface, the facts just don't add up (=ergeben keinen Sinn).

What are the alternatives?

It can feel exhausting trying to check every eco-credentials a brand is pushing. Fortunately, there are some brilliant online tools and search engines, such as Project
65 Cece, Ethical Made Easy and STAIY, which help do the hard work for you.

Bramley, for example, is a British skin and haircare brand with green values at the center of its operation. The company is transparent about its journey to sustainability and is innovative in its approach (=Herangehensweise). Everything Bramley sells is refillable.

- 70 Another company doing sustainability differently is Roar Gill, a biodegradable alternative to Nespresso coffee pods. As well as producing excellent coffee, the team at Roar Gill is committed not just to carbon dioxide neutrality, but to continual improvement.

It may feel overwhelming as one individual trying to make a difference, but if consumers keep putting pressure on businesses to be transparent around their practices, we will

- 75 continue to head in an authentically green direction.

1 Circle the word on the right that matches the best to the word in **bold** on the left.

sustainable (l. 1)	high quality - emission free - long-lasting
companies are pledging to reduce their carbon footprints (l. 5)	to compete - to refuse - to try hard - to promise
the vast amount of wastage he had encountered throughout the rest of the hotel (l. 12)	to meet - to pay - to produce
there were no obvious efforts being made towards sustainability (l. 13)	movements - attempts - investment
the other type of greenwashing can be a bit harder to spot and is far more insidious (l. 22)	stealthy - hidden - invisible
And crucially - without any accountability for their actions (l. 24)	decisively - importantly - crossing financial losses - responsibility
big brands can market an item as 'green', often at a marked-up price (l. 28)	regular price - discounted price - expensive price
being socially conscious sells (l. 30)	clueless - aware - dangerous
This gives them power to shape the success or downfall of companies (l. 37)	to form - to influence - to produce
H&M was under investigation for its supposedly ethical 'Conscious' collection (l. 44)	successful - seemingly - suspicious
Companies like H&M exploit the vagueness of green terms to both appear environmentally conscious, and sell more clothes (l. 50)	to abuse - to experience - to manipulate lack of clarity - in vogue - ambiguity
there is no evidence of how these figures come about (l. 56)	residence - proof - guarantee form - numbers - weight
we will continue to head in an authentically green direction (l. 74)	to turn away - to go - to put pressure

- 2 Read the text and complete the table with the relevant information in German. Write notes (Stichpunkte).

1. Grund weshalb Westervelt das Hotel nicht gefällt, welches Gästen empfiehlt die Handtücher wieder zu benutzen.	
2. Welche Arten von greenwashing gibt es? Nennen Sie zwei.	
3. Probleme mit dem Begriff „nachhaltig“ und seine Folgen. Nenne Sie zwei.	
4. Eigenschaften der jungen Menschen (Gen Z) und Auswirkungen auf Unternehmen. Nenne Sie zwei.	
5. Grund, weshalb Unternehmen Interesse haben sozial- und umweltfreundlich aufzutreten?	
6. Gründe weshalb H&M und Package Free kritisiert werden. Nennen Sie zwei.	
7. Fakten über die britische Haut- und Haarpflegemarke Bramley. Nennen Sie zwei.	

- 3 Summarise the text in English in no more than 200 words.
One point (BE) will be deducted for every 10 words that you are over the word limit.
Count your words in groups of 10.
Hinweis:
Eine Überschreitung von weniger als zehn Wörtern führt zu keinem Abzug. (Beispiel:
209 Wörter führen zu keinem Abzug, ab 210 Wörtern wird eine Bewertungseinheit
(BE) abgezogen, ab 220 Wörtern werden zwei BE abgezogen).

Ruanda macht's vor

Wer auf dem Flughafen in Ruandas Hauptstadt Kigali ankommt, sollte besser keine Plastiktüte dabei haben. Das wird im Flieger durchgesagt. Das ostafrikanische Land hat die Tüten bereits vor elf Jahren verboten. Es war nicht einfach, das Gesetz damals durchzusetzen, erinnert sich Rose Mukankomeje, die frühere Vorsitzende der Umweltschutzbehörde: "Jeder hat gesagt, soll das ein Witz sein? Schließlich nutzen alle auf der ganzen Welt Plastik."

Erst belächelt, wurde Ruanda dann schnell zum Vorreiter. Andere ostafrikanische Länder wollten nachziehen. Kenia versuchte sich mehrmals an einem Verbot und führte es endgültig vor zwei Jahren ein: das strengste Anti-Plastiktütengesetz der Welt. Wer die Tüten weiterhin vertreibt, muss mit hohen Geldstrafen oder bis zu vier Jahren Gefängnis rechnen.

Die Gemüseverkäufer entlang der Straßen in der Hauptstadt Nairobi mussten sich umstellen. "Wir haben normalerweise alles in eine Plastiktüte gepackt", erklärt eine Obstverkäuferin. Die dünnen Tüten waren danach überall. Am Straßenrand, in den Flüssen und sogar in den Bäumen. "African Flowers" - afrikanische Blüten - wurde der eher stinkende als duftende Schmuck spöttisch genannt. Jetzt werden die Plastiktüten in der Landschaft langsam weniger. Aber es wird noch dauern, bis sie verschwinden, sagt Sam Barratt von der Umweltbehörde der Vereinten Nationen in Nairobi.

Ob durch das Tütenverbot der Plastikverbrauch insgesamt zurückgeht, steht auf einem anderen Blatt. Viele Supermärkte packen das Obst jetzt in Plastikboxen - eher ein Rückschritt. Doch die Politik diskutiert bereits über weitere Einschränkungen. Barratt hofft, dass es dabei bald Fortschritte gibt: "Wir müssen jetzt auch gegen Plastikflaschen vorgehen. Positiv ist, dass die Industrie anfängt zu verstehen, dass sie dafür verantwortlich ist. Das ist nicht Anti-Plastik, sondern Anti-Plastik-Müll."

Auch in der Bevölkerung setzt sich langsam ein Umweltbewusstsein durch. Selbst die Gemüseverkäuferinnen haben sich mit dem Aus für Plastiktüten abgefunden und wickeln ihre Ware stattdessen in alte Zeitungen, wie eine Verkäuferin bestätigt: "Jetzt sieht es hier sehr nett aus. Die Plastiktüten haben unsere ganze Umgebung zerstört." Das Verbot zieht in Ostafrika noch weitere Kreise: Seit einem Vierteljahr sind auch in Tansania die Tüten verboten.

/(333 Wörter)/

Quelle: Antje Diekhans, tagesschau.de, 06.09.2019

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Friendly reminder:
Bitte am Ende die
Wörter zählen

09.01.2023

[illegible]

Klasse:**Wörter (summary):**

BE	BE max
	28

Tab. 1 — reading

Kriterium	Gewichtung	Notenpunkte
Inhalt	40%	
Ausdruck	20%	
Fehlerindex	40%	

Tab. 1 — summary

reading + vocabulary + summary	

Tab. 2 — **Final grade**

Reading + Vocabulary

Summary

FINALE GRADE

Prozent	<20	ab 20	ab 27	ab 34	ab 41	ab 46	ab 51	ab 56	ab 61	ab 66	ab 71	ab 76	ab 81	ab 86	ab 91	ab 96
Notenpunkte	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15

Bewertungsskala

Fehlerindex	> 6,5	bis 6,5	bis 6,1	bis 5,7	bis 5,3	bis 4,9	bis 4,5	bis 4,1	bis 3,7	bis 3,3	bis 2,9	bis 2,5	bis 2,1	bis 1,7	bis 1,3	bis 0,9
Notenpunkte	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15

Fehlerindizes Fach Englisch

