



# **Consumers' Perception of Greenwashing in the Food Industry**

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Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree  
Bachelor of Science in International Management

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## **Abstract**

Greenwashing is a deceptive marketing strategy employed by firms that deliberately mislead consumers. This tactic, also known as green image washing, involves selectively disclosing positive information about a company's environmental or social performance while not disclosing any negative information. This selective disclosure aims to create a positive corporate image. Given the various consequences greenwashing poses to consumers and society, it is crucial to explore this concept and understand the extent to which consumers are exposed to such deceptive tactics.

This thesis investigates consumers' perceptions of greenwashing in the food industry. In detail, the researcher aims to explore to what extent consumers are aware of and perceive greenwashing in the food industry, how consumers' perception of greenwashing in the food industry influences their purchasing decisions and behaviours, and what criteria consumers use to evaluate and identify greenwashing in the food industry.

An online survey was conducted employing a qualitative research approach with an exploratory research design. The literature review of the thesis involved reviewing and analysing secondary data to gain deeper insights into greenwashing and its implications in the food industry. Primary data was obtained through an online questionnaire, in which a total of 57 participants aged between 21 and 72 engaged in the study. The collected data was subsequently analysed using inductive content analysis. The data gathered from the online survey suggests that consumers are aware of and perceive greenwashing in the food industry. Furthermore, findings show that consumer perception of greenwashing influences purchasing decisions by consumers and that consumers seek criteria to evaluate and identify greenwashing in the food industry.

It is recommended that further studies are conducted in the field of greenwashing, as consumers' understanding and education are advised. Such efforts have the potential to enhance transparency in the food industry, encourage more informed consumer choices and promote sustainable practices. Moreover, further research could

empower regulatory bodies to devise more effective measures, ensuring a market that combats deceptive marketing practices and provides a platform for genuinely environmentally sustainable brands to be prominently recognised.