

Current Practice of the Advertisement Board on Advertisements Containing Environmental Statements

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On 13.12.2022, the Advertisement Board adopted the Guideline on Advertisements Containing Environmental Statements. The guideline is in line with Consumer Protection Law and the Regulation on Commercial Advertisements and Unfair Commercial Practices. It aims to provide advice and direction to all persons, institutions, and organizations to ensure the environmental claims and the visuals in their commercial advertisements and practices comply with the relevant legislation.

One of the reasons why **the Board** addressed this matter was the recent increase in advertisements highlighting brand owners' concern about the environment and sustainability. Such efforts on the part of the producers are reflective of the burgeoning public awareness about the detrimental impact of climate change and how such awareness increasingly affects the customers' purchasing preferences.

However, it is difficult for consumers to check the veracity of the companies' so-called green claims. This difficulty has given rise to a malpractice called greenwashing, where brands may try to give a misleading impression of the environmental benefits of their products and services through their advertisements.

On 09.01.2024, the Advertisement Board weighed in on a company's advertisement, where it had expressed its commitment to make all packaging 100% sustainable, produce zero waste and emissions and reduce water consumption with Jeanologia* and BCI* technologies. [\[1\]](#)

The Advertisement Board argued that:

- The statement "We are committed to making all our packaging 100% sustainable in 2024" did not specify which brand(s)/product(s) it referred to and failed to direct consumers to a website or other medium where they could obtain information on such products.
- The statement "We have made a promise to nature and people on the goals of zero waste and zero emission" was unsubstantiated since the company had failed to present any reports or documents by an accredited organization to corroborate their claims.
- The statement "We pledge to reduce water consumption with Jeanologia* and BCI*" did not specify which brand(s)/product(s) these technologies were applied to or to what extent the products in question used those technologies and once again failed to direct consumers to a website or other medium where they could obtain information on this subject.

The board held that the statements at issue violated the fundamental regulations in advertising, particularly the recommendations in the guideline, and ruled to stop the advertisement.

In short, statements must specify what brand(s)/product(s) they cover and to what extent, provide consumers with links to further information or substantiate their claims with documentation from accredited institutions.

[\[1\]](#) *Jeanologia is a company that claims their technologies provide ethical, ecological, and sustainable textile solutions by minimizing water and energy consumption. *Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is a non-profit group claiming to foster sustainability through better standards in cotton farming.

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