



“GREEN” CONSUMPTION

Towards genuine
environmental
transparency?



Research report by the
Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement
(Québec Environmental Law Centre, or CQDE)



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Victor Bonnici

Julie-Christine Denoncourt

Me Sara Eve Levac

Prof. Laure Saulais

AUTHORS

Julien O. Beaulieu and Charles Codère

INTERNAL REVIEW

Marc Bishai and Geneviève Paul

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Camille Cloutier, Leïla Lopez-Proulx,
Camille Péloquin and Lisa Say

**COMMUNICATIONS
AND GRAPHIC DESIGN**

Sophie Turri and Bleu forêt coop
de communication responsable

TRANSLATION

Abaca Traduction Inc.

ALSO
CONTRIBUTED :





1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Whether purchasing a car, food, or electronic devices, consumer decisions have environmental repercussions. In order to be aware of these impacts and, when possible, take action to reduce them, consumers need information about the environmental footprint of the products¹ offered to them.²

However, most advertisements, packaging, and other commercial communications provide no information about the environmental impact of the products they promote. In some cases, companies voluntarily disclose certain information for this purpose, **but the information provided is not always accurate, comprehensible, comparable, timely, complete, or verifiable**, preventing consumers from making informed decisions. In a 2023 survey, 23% of Canadian consumers said they were frustrated by the complexity of distinguishing between true and false environmental claims, and 46% refused to pay a higher price for “sustainable” products because they found it difficult to understand certain claims.³

Without this information, it is often difficult for consumers to assess the environmental footprint of a given product. This is because the environmental impacts of products often relate to activities that occur during transportation, production, or at the end of a product’s life, far from the public eye. For example, without a label in the store, it is impossible to distinguish a “fair trade” coffee bean from a traditional coffee bean. In such cases, consumers must rely on the companies that manufacture, distribute, or market a product, or on third parties, for information about the environmental footprint of that product.

This situation has two main consequences.

First, this lack of information means that consumers have a **low level of knowledge** about the environmental footprint of the products they consume. For example, according to a 2024 study, only 23% of Québec consumers are able to correctly identify which stage of a food product’s life cycle (production, transportation, packaging, etc.) emits the most greenhouse gases.⁴ This lack of knowledge risks reducing consumer awareness of the impacts of their choices and preventing those who wish to reduce their ecological footprint from choosing products with a lower impact.

Second, consumers’ dependence on information voluntarily provided by companies makes them **particularly vulnerable to greenwashing practices**, i.e., the communication of false, misleading, or unsubstantiated information by an organization about its environmental performance in order to create a more positive impression than is actually the case.⁵

As a result, according to a recent Deloitte survey, **48% of Canadian consumers have doubts about the veracity of companies’ environmental claims**.⁶ Furthermore, according to a 2023 study, less than 40% of Québec consumers believe that claims about environmentally friendly food production practices, such as “organic” certifications, are trustworthy.⁷

1. We include the supply of goods and services in the concept of “product.”

2. Saulais and Espougne (2024).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Montgomery et al. (2024).

6. Deloitte Canada (2023).

7. Marcellis-Warin et al. (2023).



Fortunately, it is possible to reverse this trend through better regulatory oversight of corporate communications regarding the environmental impact of consumer goods.

The current framework already provides for certain obligations. For example, corporate environmental communications are already **generally regulated by misleading advertising laws**, such as the federal *Competition Act* and the *Québec Consumer Protection Act*, which prohibit false, misleading, or speculative claims. However, **these laws apply mainly to statements made voluntarily** by companies to promote the benefits of their products.⁸ Thus, they do not require companies to disclose the negative environmental impacts of their products and do not establish specific standards on how to communicate information to consumers. For example, these laws do not impose rules on how to indicate whether a product can be recycled after use, nor on the methods to be used to calculate a product's carbon footprint.

Numerous voluntary environmental certification programs have emerged in recent decades to make it easier for consumers to identify products with beneficial environmental characteristics. These initiatives are also subject to general rules on misleading advertising, but they are not regulated by specific rules. Although many of them may have credible methodologies, **some private eco-labelling systems do not take into account all of a product's significant environmental impacts throughout its life cycle**. Furthermore, the coexistence of several hundred certification programs can create confusion among consumers. Finally, these initiatives usually focus on certifying products that are better than average and **therefore do not aim to disclose information about the negative impacts of products**. In other words, consumers learn that a product is better than others, but without knowing whether it is “good” or simply “less bad.”

To ensure that consumers have access to appropriate information about the environmental impacts of the products they buy, **we propose five measures**.

In the context of a multi-faceted environmental crisis, these measures alone will not be sufficient to ensure the sustainability of consumer products and the ecological transition as a whole.⁹ Nevertheless, these measures can play an **important role in raising awareness** of the environmental impacts of products and enabling consumers to **make more sustainable consumption choices**. More fundamentally, they are part of the risk management and due diligence measures that companies must implement to ensure environmental compliance in their activities. These measures, combined with other responsible environmental practices by companies, such as source reduction and the integration of circular economy practices, could contribute to a genuine ecological transition in Québec and the rest of Canada.

8. In some cases, the omission of important information can also lead to penalties.

9. Even with complete information on the environmental characteristics of products, several factors can limit the impact of responsible consumption. Therefore, complementary measures must also be considered, such as banning polluting products, establishing minimum environmental standards, and integrating environmental impact into prices through taxes, fees, or subsidies. See Tzilivakis et al. (2012).

1 ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENTAL LABELLING SYSTEM

Governments should establish an environmental labelling system requiring companies to disclose standardized information on the environmental impact of products and the appropriate way to sort them after use in order to promote better management.

This labelling system would be similar to other labelling systems that already exist in Canada, such as nutrition labelling on food products and health warnings on tobacco products. It would complement environmental labelling initiatives already announced by the governments of Québec and Canada, including labelling requirements for the recyclability of certain plastics. Such a system could be implemented by both the federal and provincial governments.

In the short term, this system would include the following targeted labelling requirements:

→ **Mandatory disclosure of targeted environmental impact indicators** for all product categories for which such data exists or could be easily obtained by the companies that market them. This could take the form, for example, **of mandatory eco-labels** indicating the energy performance of appliances, their durability, and their reparability according to a numerical or alphabetical rating. It could also take the form **of indications for products with a high environmental impact**, similar to those found on tobacco products or those that will be required as of 2026 for certain food products with a high sodium, sugar, or saturated fat content.

→ **Mandatory disclosure of sorting instructions** for all products (including packaging) that are likely to be composted, returned, recycled, disposed of, or otherwise managed by consumers. This could be done by requiring **the systematic disclosure of a sorting symbol** that indicates how to sort a product after use, similar to the symbols used in France and the United Kingdom. This disclosure should be separate from that of environmental impacts. Sorting instructions are **not always a good indicator of a product's overall environmental impact**. For example, a product can be both recyclable and have a high environmental impact.

In the longer term, a comprehensive environmental labelling system should be developed by governments to promote the disclosure of the environmental impact of all products marketed to consumers. This system **would go beyond the data that already exists** or could easily be obtained by companies, as it would be based on new data collection requirements and the establishment of public databases on environmental impact, thereby facilitating the combination of primary and secondary data by companies.

The labelling established under this system could **take the form of aggregate ratings** that provide a quick overview of a product's significant environmental impacts throughout its life cycle. For example, the labelling could feature alphabetical or numerical ratings classifying the impact from low to very high for each of the following impact categories: climate, biodiversity, pollution, and natural resource extraction. Impact indicators would **be required to appear in all promotional communications relating to a product**, including packaging and advertising. The rules for presenting sorting instructions would continue to exist alongside this system.

2 RAISE THE BAR FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATIONS

Some companies may use certification bodies to corroborate their environmental claims, although this does not always guarantee that these claims are truthful, non-misleading, and substantiated by evidence.

A certification program may be insufficient if its criteria are not stringent enough or do not cover all of the environmental impacts of a product's life cycle, or if compliance verification is not rigorous and independent. In addition, misleading logos or names can give a false impression of the environmental benefits of certified products.

To address these issues, the government should **impose minimum rules on private environmental certification programs** to ensure their quality. Such rules could be adopted by both the federal and provincial governments, in particular by adopting a dedicated regulatory system or, if necessary, amending existing laws on misleading advertising.

The rules should be based on ISO 14024, which requires that an environmental certification program cover the product life cycle, be independent, conduct regular reviews of criteria, and publicly disclose its specifications. Companies using certification marks should be required to provide evidence of their compliance with the program in question and clearly explain the criteria of the certification program to the public. Finally, the rules should provide guidance on the use of ecological compensation (e.g., planting trees or restoring ecosystems to offset GHG emissions or the destruction of natural environments) and conflicts of interest. To ensure implementation of this initiative, the government could create a **mandatory registration system for private environmental certification programs**, which would both ensure that they meet minimum quality standards and provide a comprehensive database for public education purposes.

Finally, governments should **establish new public environmental certification programs** for certain categories of commonly used claims that frequently raise integrity issues, such as net-zero claims or the use of voluntary carbon offset credits. This measure would ensure that these claims are systematically verified by an independent third party and comply with high and uniform performance criteria. These initiatives could be modelled on existing public certification programs, such as the federal organic food certification system and provincial programs for reserved designations and value-added terms. Such initiatives should include rigorous criteria regarding the specifications to be met and the context in which certified claims may be used.

3 REQUIRE DISCLOSURE OF EVIDENCE SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIMS

Since the amendments to the *Competition Act* in June 2024, organizations that make claims about the environmental benefits of their products, activities, or businesses in order to promote a product or commercial interest **must have evidence** to support those claims. However, **the law does not enable the public to easily access this evidence**, which limits transparency and makes it difficult to identify cases of greenwashing. For example, how can we know if a claim of net-zero is credible without access to evidence to support that claim?

To make it easier to detect cases of greenwashing, the federal government should amend the *Competition Act* **to require that evidence for environmental claims be made publicly available** as soon as such a claim is communicated. This disclosure could be accomplished by including a hyperlink or QR code. The **regulatory burden associated with the measure would be minor**, since companies are already required to maintain evidence to support their environmental claims. It would simply require companies to publicly disclose the evidence they already have in their possession.

Similar measures could be implemented at the provincial level under the *Consumer Protection Act*.

4 STEP UP ENFORCEMENT OF MISLEADING ADVERTISING LAWS

Current laws on false or misleading advertising, such as the *Competition Act* and the *Consumer Protection Act*, apply to companies' environmental claims, including claims based on private certification programs. In recent years, **a number of complaints of greenwashing have been filed** with the Competition Bureau of Canada and the Québec *Office de la protection du consommateur*. In addition, certain enforcement measures have been taken against offending companies. Furthermore, the Competition Bureau of Canada's 2025-2026 Annual Plan mentions its intention to continue the fight against greenwashing,¹⁰ and the agency published guidelines on environmental marketing in June 2025.¹¹ The Québec *Office de la protection du consommateur* should draw inspiration from these guidelines.

That said, the intensity of enforcement activities by public authorities – both federal and provincial – with regard to misleading advertising is difficult to assess, as agencies **do not disclose the number of complaints handled or the number of investigations initiated** in relation to greenwashing. Furthermore, the confidential nature of the authorities' investigations makes it impossible to obtain information on their progress. In fact, neither agency has published a report on its efforts to combat greenwashing. Finally, **neither agency systematically monitors** environmental claims, leaving the public and civil society organizations with a disproportionate role in identifying potential cases of greenwashing.

10. Competition Bureau of Canada (2025b)

11. Competition Bureau of Canada (2025a)

To remedy this situation, the Competition Bureau of Canada and the *Office de la protection du consommateur* should:

→ **Publicly report on their enforcement activities** in relation to greenwashing cases, as is done by the French Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs, and Fraud Control (*Direction générale de la concurrence, de la consommation et de la répression des fraudes*).

→ **Proactively monitor companies' environmental claims.** To do so, agencies could consider adopting automated IT tools to more easily monitor claims made online. In appropriate cases, they could also consider taking extrajudicial enforcement measures, such as sending warning letters, before taking formal action in cases of non-compliance.

→ **Create teams dedicated to environmental issues.** This would enable agencies to improve their ability to identify and address cases of greenwashing to better protect the public. Other law enforcement authorities, such as the Québec *Autorité des marchés financiers*, have recently created such teams.¹²

5 PROHIBIT CERTAIN ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIONS CONSIDERED INHERENTLY MISLEADING

The Québec and Canadian governments should ban certain advertisements that are inconsistent with their environmental commitments, particularly those promoting carbon-intensive products or fossil fuel companies. Such measures are currently the subject of private bills in British Columbia and at the federal level. In addition, the use of misleading and generic terms such as “sustainable” or “environmentally friendly” should be explicitly prohibited, as is the case in Europe. Although we consider these terms to be already implicitly prohibited under the *Competition Act*, this interpretation should be made explicit to avoid any debate.



12. *Autorité des marchés financiers* (undated).



2. INTRODUCTION

Individual consumption choices are often presented as an important lever for the socio-ecological transition. According to this approach, consumers who have the ability to do so should be encouraged to promote the maintenance of a healthy environment by reducing their consumption of environmentally harmful products,¹³ and, when reduction is not possible, by replacing them with substitutes that have a lower environmental footprint.¹⁴

One facet of this approach is based on the assumption that consumers are aware of the environmental impacts of their choices and therefore seek to act to limit these impacts. According to this assumption, in response to consumer preferences, companies will adapt their product offerings to meet consumer demand for more sustainable products.¹⁵ Government data on eco-friendly consumption habits in Canada supports this hypothesis: for example, it indicates that 70% of Canadian consumers say they look for food products that are produced in an environmentally friendly manner.¹⁶ The goal of public policy would then be to raise awareness and encourage consumers to change their attitudes toward the environmental impacts of their consumption choices, as well as to increase the availability of alternatives that consumers can reasonably choose in order to reduce the environmental impacts of their choices.

However, in reality, responsible consumption practices¹⁷ seem to be in the minority in Québec. According to the 2023 Québec Consumer Confidence Barometer on Food (*Baromètre de la confiance des consommateurs québécois à l'égard des aliments*), only 26% of respondents say they often or very often choose to buy “environmentally friendly” products.¹⁸ Furthermore, according to a 2024 study specific to the food sector, only 2.7% of Québec consumers consider environmental impact to be one of the three main factors in selecting a product.¹⁹ Finally, according to the 2023 edition of the Responsible Consumption Barometer (*Baromètre de la consommation responsable*), 36.7% of Québec consumers say they are not willing to “give up certain pleasures to reduce their environmental impact,” and 29.9% say they are not “willing to change their routine to reduce their environmental impact.”²⁰ Several hypotheses may explain these findings. For example, budget constraints may prevent consumers from choosing more sustainable products, especially if these are perceived, often incorrectly, as being more expensive or less effective than their substitutes.

13. In this report, the word “product” includes both goods and services.

14. Hélias et al. (2022). The authors mention both the reduction associated with substitution within the same product category (e.g., opting for lower-emission animal proteins) and substitution between product categories (e.g., opting for plant-based proteins).

15. For a review of these studies, see Hélias et al. (2022).

16. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (2024).

17. The Québec government defines responsible consumption as “a mode of consumption that takes into account the principles of sustainable development, i.e., it is environmentally friendly, beneficial to the economy (particularly the local economy), good for health, and positive for society.” (our translation) See the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (undated).

18. Marcellis-Warin et al. (2023).

19. Saulais and Espougne (2024).

20. Observatory of Responsible Consumption (Observatoire de la consommation responsable, 2023). (our translation) According to the 2022 Barometer of Responsible Consumption, only 52% of Québec consumers say they frequently consider environmental protection when making consumption choices. Similarly, according to the Responsible Consumption Observatory (2023) “41.9% of Quebecers say they are tired of moral lessons about the environment, and 41.3% are tired of seeing so much alarmist information about the environment in the media. The high level of helplessness in the face of climate change means that 36.3% of Québecers do not see what more they could do to reduce their environmental impact (particularly men, those with lower levels of education, and non – or judicious– consumers). This helplessness increases the feeling of decision-making incapacity and loss of control: 30.4% of 18–24-year-olds say that the environmental situation is so bleak that they believe nothing can be done, and 24.6% say that reducing their environmental impact requires too much effort, especially among 18–24-year-olds and Montrealers.” (our translation)



In addition, competitive conditions and product development costs may mean that no substitutes that meet the expectations of consumers who are most concerned about their environmental footprint are available on the market.²¹ Responsible consumption is based on the idea that consumer demand will encourage companies to develop products that are differentiated in terms of their environmental impact in order to increase their market share and profits. However, companies may not make this transition if their estimate of the costs of reducing the environmental impact of their products exceeds the expected gains.

It is also possible that some consumers choose to prioritize other product selection criteria, such as quality and expected useful life, or consider that there are other more appropriate ways to improve the environmental situation than changing their consumption choices.²²

Moreover, it is possible that some consumers feel powerless in the face of the scale of environmental crises, which can translate into disengagement when it comes to making consumption choices.

Finally, some consumers are unable to assess the environmental impacts of the products available to them due to a lack of information and expertise. This gap reduces their awareness of the environmental consequences of their consumption habits and hinders their ability to factor these considerations into their decisions.²³

In fact, consumers often lack credible and comprehensible information about these impacts.²⁴ According to a 2023 Deloitte survey, 23% of Canadian consumers say they are frustrated by the complexity of distinguishing between true and false environmental claims, and 46% refuse to pay a higher price for “sustainable” products because they find it difficult to understand certain claims. In addition, 48% of them have doubts about the veracity of companies’ environmental claims. According to a 2023 study, less than 40% of Québec consumers believe that claims about environmentally friendly food production practices, such as “organic” certification, are trustworthy.²⁵

Our report focuses on this latter limitation. It relies on the assumption that a better understanding of the environmental impacts of products by consumers would help facilitate their consumption choices, as has been demonstrated in some empirical studies.²⁶ In addition, this greater transparency would favour companies that could more easily stand out thanks to their serious efforts, to the detriment of those that rely on rather hollow communication.

21. Pedersen & Neergaard (2006); Gleim & Lawson (2014). See also Hélias et al. (2022).

22. Pedersen & Neergaard (2006).

23. Saulais and Espougne (2024).

24. Pedersen & Neergaard (2006).

25. Marcellis-Warin et al. (2023).

26. Saulais and Espougne (2024).

The objective of this report is to identify measures to improve the quality and quantity of information provided to consumers about the environmental impacts of products and to improve their level of knowledge about these impacts. To achieve this objective, the report:

- **Identifies the main categories of environmental claims made by companies to consumers, as well as the main forms of greenwashing in consumer products.**
- **Makes an inventory of the existing rules governing the communication of information on the environmental characteristics of products at the provincial level in Québec and at the federal level in Canada.**
- **Lists the main regulatory measures that can be implemented to ensure the communication of truthful, intelligible, complete, verifiable, comparable, and relevant information on the environmental impacts of products.**
- **Makes recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the current regulatory framework and promote the communication of sufficient information on the environmental impacts of products.**

This report should not be understood as suggesting that the proposed measures can replace the implementation of additional structural environmental policies, such as banning polluting products, establishing environmental quality standards, and implementing environmental subsidies or ecofiscal tools, like taxes or fees, that incorporate environmental impact into pricing. Such measures are necessary and complementary to the measures proposed herein.

The report is part of research conducted by the *Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement (CQDE)* on the regulation of greenwashing. In the fall of 2022, the CQDE published a report entitled “Climate-washing in Québec and Canada: How to Turn the Tide” on climate-related statements, including corporate net-zero targets and claims. Then, in October 2024, the CQDE published a report entitled “Greenwashing in the Financial Sector: Time for Transparency and Accountability” on environmental claims relating to financial entities, services, and products. This research cycle will conclude with the publication of a fourth research report on communications by governments and public organizations.





3. TYPOLOGY OF GREENWASHING IN A CONSUMER CONTEXT

3.1 Categorization of environmental representations

In order to fully assess the environmental impact of a product, consumers must have access to information that is:

→ **True**

It is important that the information provided is representative of reality. Providing false information can lead consumers to make decisions that do not reflect their preferences.

→ **Comprehensible**

Consumers need information that is easy to understand. Consumers may have limited expertise in assessing the environmental impact of products, so they will not be able to take into account complex or scientific information, such as a product's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.²⁷ In addition, consumers usually have limited time to evaluate a product's characteristics, which may reduce their ability to consider detailed or technical information.

→ **Comparable**

Consumers need information that can be used to compare the environmental impacts of different substitutes. In the absence of regulatory requirements, the information voluntarily provided by companies is usually heterogeneous, making it difficult to compare products. For example, one company may choose to highlight a specific characteristic in which it excels (such as GHG emissions), while another may focus on a different performance indicator (such as water consumption). Two companies may also choose different performance indicators for the same characteristic.

→ **Provided in a timely manner**

Consumers need information as soon as they begin evaluating the possibility of purchasing a product.²⁸

27. For example, a 2014 study tested two label formats providing information on the environmental performance of products as part of an experiment. The first label provided general information on a product's environmental performance using a colour code ranging from red to green, similar to a traffic light. The second label provided raw quantitative information (i.e., not simplified) on various environmental performance indicators. While the first format led to a shift in purchasing decisions in favour of more sustainable products, the second format had no effect whatsoever. See Vlaeminck et al. (2014).

28. Potter et al. (2022).



→ Comprehensive

The information provided to consumers must fully reflect all of the product's environmental impacts, including each stage of its life cycle (extraction and processing of raw materials, production, transportation, storage, use, and end of life) and each relevant category of environmental impact (biodiversity, GHG emissions, air, water, and soil pollution, etc.).²⁹ This information must accurately represent the balance between the various environmental characteristics (for example, it must be possible to distinguish between an imported product with a low carbon footprint but negative impacts on biodiversity and a local product with high emissions but little impact on biodiversity).

→ Based on reliable and verifiable evidence

The information provided to consumers must be based on reliable and recognized scientific evidence and methods. Consumers must be able to validate the reliability of information, in particular by having access to the evidence and documents supporting a claim.

In practice, it can be difficult for consumers to access information that meets each of these criteria. This is because environmental impact is often a “belief” characteristic, i.e., a characteristic that cannot be directly observed by consumers when examining or using a product.³⁰ When faced with a belief characteristic, consumers usually have to rely on the company itself or a third-party expert to obtain the information they need to make their choice.³¹ For example, it would be difficult for a consumer to verify for themselves whether a food product has been produced without chemical fertilizers or to calculate the carbon footprint of an electronic device manufactured abroad. Similarly, it will be difficult for a consumer to verify the accuracy of claims made by a company that purports to have reduced its water consumption, reduced its GHG emissions, or reduced the amount of waste it produces. In such situations, consumers will have to accept the company's own statements or, where applicable, the certification mark issued by an independent organization.

In theory, since the environmental impact of a product is important information for consumers, it would be logical to assume that companies would be inclined to voluntarily disclose quality information on this subject in order to distinguish themselves from their competitors. However, this is not always the case, which can be explained by the following factors:

→ Desire to avoid revealing significant negative impacts

Companies may prefer not to reveal negative environmental impacts that could damage the image of their products. They may prefer to highlight other features and gloss over the environmental aspect, especially if their competitors, whose products have similar or worse impacts, do not disclose this information either.

29. Brown et al. (2020); François-Lecompte and Gentric (2016).

30. Roe and Sheldon (2007) indicate that environmental characteristics are often related to the production process of goods (e.g., the use of renewable energy to power a factory) as opposed to characteristics related to the use of goods (such as taste, efficiency, or texture), which would favour their qualification as belief characteristics. See also Darby and Karni (1973).

31. Ibid.

→ **Perception that the costs of obtaining and/or communicating the information are high**

Companies may be reluctant to disclose the environmental impact of their products if they believe, rightly or wrongly, that such disclosure would entail significant expenses, for example, in relation to the collection and accurate and complete communication of the required data.

→ **Perception that this information is not important to consumers**

Some companies may believe that consumers do not consider environmental impact to be a priority decision-making criterion and therefore choose not to disclose such information.

→ **Fear of accusations of greenwashing**

Some companies may fear that disclosing environmental information will expose them to accusations of greenwashing if their efforts are perceived as insufficient or misleading, a phenomenon known as “greenhushing.”

In many other situations, companies choose to disclose some information about the environmental impact of their products, but highlight features that are difficult to measure or compare.

Figure 1 | Assessing the environmental impact of a product



The environmental impact of the product in question is assessed using various indicators that measure its impact throughout its life cycle and across the entire supply chain of the company that produces it. To get an overview of this impact, consumers need access to information on every relevant aspect.

In order to meet consumers' information needs, companies frequently communicate information aimed at promoting their environmental performance. Figure 2 (page 19) presents a typology that categorizes the different types of information commonly communicated by companies for this purpose.

For example, organizations may **voluntarily** disclose information to promote their environmental performance (e.g., an organization that runs an advertisement promoting the low carbon footprint of its products). Organizations may also be required to disclose information under **their regulatory obligations** (e.g., GHG emissions disclosure requirements under the *Environment Quality Act*).³²

Organizations may communicate about their **environmental impact** (e.g., stating that a product contains 50% less plastic than the industry average) or their exposure to **environmental risks** (e.g., stating that an organization has low exposure to extreme weather events). Organizations may also provide **instructions on the use, repair, or maintenance** of a product, or **its sorting after use** (e.g., stating that a product can be recycled after use).

Organizations may make statements about their **company** (e.g., stating that they have a concrete plan to reduce their GHG emissions by 5% over the next three years); their **activities** (e.g., stating that an industrial process does not involve emissions of a given pollutant); or their **products** (e.g., stating that a product's packaging is recyclable).

Organizations can communicate about different aspects of environmental performance, such as **biodiversity** (e.g., by stating that an organization “has taken a positive stand for nature”); **climate change** (e.g., an organization claiming to have reduced its Scope 1 GHG emissions by 50% since 2005); **pollution** (e.g., stating that a product is non-toxic); and **resource extraction** (e.g., an organization committing to reduce its water consumption by 50% by 2030).

Environmental claims can be **specific** (e.g., determining a product's carbon footprint over its life cycle) or **generic** (e.g., using terms such as “green,” “sustainable,” or “eco-friendly”). Without further qualification, these generic terms have little informational value, as it is impossible for consumers to identify which environmental indicators they refer to.

Organizations can disseminate their environmental claims through various media, such as **advertising** (e.g., a television commercial promoting an organization's GHG emissions reduction plan); **packaging** (e.g., a label on a plastic bottle indicating that it is made from “bio-based” plastic); **corporate reports** (e.g., an organization's annual sustainability report); **regulatory documents** (e.g., the environmental risks section of a publicly traded company's annual information form); **websites and social media** (e.g., the sustainability section of a company's website); **media appearances** (e.g., a media interview); and **many others** (e.g., public speeches, investor presentations, contract negotiations, etc.).

³² *Environment Quality Act*, CQLR c Q-2, s. 46.2.



The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards define three categories of environmental claims. These categories are derived from voluntary standards that are not formally incorporated into federal regulatory frameworks in Canada or provincial regulatory frameworks in Québec, but are sometimes used in documents published by governments, such as the Québec government’s eco-label directory.³³ These categories are:

→ Type I – Certification (Eco-Labels)

Under the voluntary ISO 14024 standard, Type I eco-labelling corresponds to mandatory or voluntary certifications developed by governments or private for-profit or non-profit organizations.³⁴ An example of a certification program is the voluntary standard CAN/BNQ 0413-200 *Organic Soil Conditioners—Composts*, which establishes standards for evaluating the characteristics of composts.³⁵ Compost manufacturers wishing to promote their compliance with this standard can have their products certified by *the Bureau de normalisation du Québec* (Québec standards office, or BNQ). Certification programs are discussed in more detail in section 4.3 of this report.

→ Type II – Self-declared claims

Under the voluntary ISO 14021 standard, Type II eco-labelling corresponds to voluntary environmental claims about a product that are not verified by an independent third party. For example, a company could voluntarily indicate on its product packaging that it is made of compostable material, without this information being certified as compliant with a standard established by a recognized organization. Self-declared claims may be subject to advertising restrictions or rules on misleading advertising. These measures are discussed in more detail in sections 4.1 and 4.4 of this report, respectively.

→ Type III – Environmental declarations

Type III eco-labelling involves providing quantitative information on the environmental impact of a product based on the results of laboratory tests or an environmental life cycle assessment (LCA).³⁶ The voluntary standards ISO 14040 and 14044 recommend certain practices for LCA. Type III declarations are usually made in the context of communication between companies.

Environmental claims may relate to one or more stages of the life cycle of a product or activity, including **extraction, production, transportation, packaging, storage, use or consumption, and end of life**. For example, an organization may claim that the production of its products is “net-zero” or that a product remains net-zero throughout its life cycle, two potentially very different claims.

33. Ministère de l’Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (undated); Industry Canada (2012).

34. Ministère de l’Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (undated a).

35. Bureau de normalisation du Québec (undated).

36. Ibid.

Finally, environmental declarations may relate to an organization's **commitments** (e.g., a promise or target to reduce emissions); its **projections** (e.g., a GHG reduction projection based on the expected results of an investment project); its **concrete actions** (e.g., an organization stating that it has invested \$1 million in a new sustainability initiative); and/or the **results** of these actions (e.g., an organization reporting on its carbon footprint).

Figure 2 | Typology of environmental claims

Typology of information on environmental performance

Disclosure	Mandatory	Voluntary					
Scope	Impact	Risks	Use, repair and end of life				
Object	Entity	Activity	Sector	Products or services	Scientific fact		
Aspect	Climate	Biodiversity	Pollution	Extraction			
Specificity	Generic		Specificity				
Medium	Advertising	Packaging	Corporate reports	Regulatory disclosures	Websites and social media	Media interventions	Others
Type	Self-declaration	Certification	Life cycle analysis				
Life cycle	Extraction	Production	Transport	Packaging	Storage	Use or consumption	End of life and circularity
Timeline	Commitment	Projection	Action	Result			

3.2 Risks of greenwashing in a consumer context

As noted above, in the absence of disclosure requirements and third-party verification, **consumers are dependent on information voluntarily disclosed by companies. This dependence increases the risk of greenwashing.**

Greenwashing can be defined as the communication of false, misleading, or unsubstantiated information by an organization about its environmental performance in order to create a more positive impression than is actually the case.³⁷ Although it is difficult to estimate the extent of greenwashing in Québec or in Canada as a whole, in 2021, **an international study indicated that 40% of environmental claims found online could be misleading.**³⁸

The often-complex nature of environmental impact information and consumers' low level of environmental literacy contribute to the risks of greenwashing. In addition, consumers have limited time and resources to evaluate the information provided by companies. For example, the average consumer is unlikely to know what to make of information about a product's carbon footprint or the amount of water required to produce it, unless this information is simplified and contextualized.

37. Montgomery et al. (2024).

38. International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (2021).



Compounding this problem is the lack of binding standards governing certain environmental claims commonly made by companies to promote their environmental performance. For example, as of January 26, 2026, there was no definition in Canadian or Québec law for terms such as “recyclable,” “biodegradable,” “sustainable,” “bio-based,” or “eco-friendly.” Although some environmental claims are guided by private and voluntary certification standards, the quality of these standards varies. In addition, due to their large number, many of these standards are unknown to the general public, who sometimes struggle to distinguish and understand them. These issues are discussed in section 4.3 of this report.

In addition to hindering the ecological transition in general, greenwashing can have a number of negative consequences for the environment, consumers, and companies alike:

→ **Distortions in decision-making**

When unnoticed, greenwashing leads consumers to choose products with a higher environmental footprint. These distortions harm (i) consumers, who do not get the products they want; (ii) companies that take robust measures but struggle to stand out in the face of unfair competition from falsely “sustainable” products; and (iii) the environment, by leading to higher consumption of environmentally harmful products.

→ **Loss of trust**

Revelations of greenwashing and the fear of being a victim of it contribute to consumers’ loss of trust in companies’ environmental claims. As noted above, nearly half of Canadian consumers do not believe companies’ environmental claims, anticipating the risk of being misled.³⁹ This loss of confidence leads consumers to disregard information about the environmental performance of products and reduces the ability of companies to market such products, or at least to reap the benefits of investments made to improve the environmental performance of the products in question.

Three main categories of greenwashing can be distinguished:

→ **Type A:** false environmental claims.

→ **Type B:** misleading environmental claims, i.e., claims that, while not necessarily false, give an impression that does not reflect reality.

→ **Type C:** speculative environmental claims, i.e., claims that are not supported by sufficient and appropriate evidence, whether true or false.

These three types of greenwashing are not mutually exclusive. For example, a claim can be both speculative and misleading. This would be the case if an organization stated that its products would be net-zero

39. Deloitte Canada (2023).

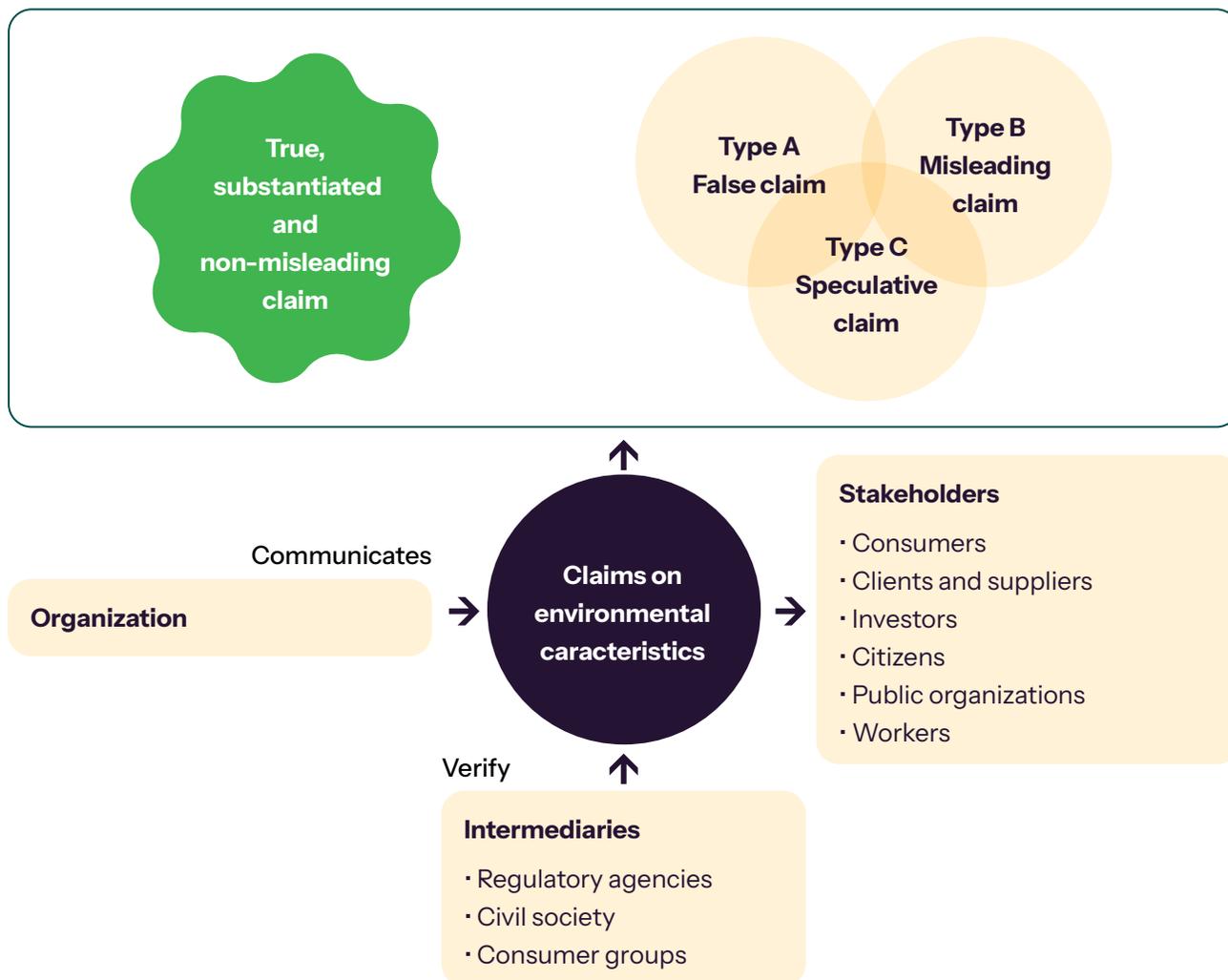


by 2050 without having established a realistic and credible plan to achieve this goal (speculative claim) and without specifying that this goal only applies to GHG emissions associated with the manufacturing of these products (misleading claim).

Similarly, a claim can be both false and speculative. This would be the case if an organization claimed that its products do not contain pollutants, when in fact they contain significant amounts (false claim), and the organization has not conducted any prior testing to substantiate its claim (speculative claim).

Figure 3 below summarizes the phenomenon of greenwashing in a simplified manner. This figure represents an organization that makes environmental claims to stakeholders. Intermediaries, such as the Competition Bureau of Canada (**CB**), the Québec *Office de la protection du consommateur* (Office of Consumer Protection, or **OPC**), and civil society organizations, verify the accuracy of these statements and can alert stakeholders and initiate legal action if they identify problematic communications of types A, B, and/or C.

Figure 3 | Representation of greenwashing⁴⁰



*Greenwashing can apply to any form of environmental claim. Furthermore, in a consumer context, greenwashing can take place through a variety of tactics, which are summarized in **Appendix A**.*

40. Adapted from Montgomery et al. (2024).





4. INFORMATIONAL REGULATORY TOOLS

A number of regulatory measures can be implemented to combat greenwashing. These measures are referred to as “regulatory information tools” in this report. Such tools regulate the disclosure of information by companies in order to reduce the information asymmetries that exist between them and consumers. In doing so, they aim to facilitate informed decision-making by consumers by ensuring:

- **the accuracy of the information disclosed**, for example by requiring the information to be audited by an independent third party or by prohibiting the disclosure of false information.
- **the intelligibility and comparability of the information disclosed**, for example by requiring that the information provided by a company on its water consumption comply with a certain format.
- **the disclosure of complete and relevant information at the time of purchase**, for example by requiring environmental performance indicators to be presented on product packaging.
- **the verifiability of information**, for example by requiring that the information disclosed be supported by specific corroborating evidence.

Informational regulatory tools do not require companies to change their business practices or product offerings. For example, a standard that requires companies to disclose the recycled content of their products regulates the information disclosed by these companies, but does not prevent them from using plastics that do not contain any recycled material.

Furthermore, these measures do not provide any fiscal incentives to change business practices beyond information disclosure. For example, rules on misleading advertising prevent a company from falsely claiming that its products are compostable, but do not provide any fiscal incentives to encourage companies to offer this type of product. Because of these distinctions, informational regulatory measures are usually referred to as third-generation environmental policy tools, as opposed to bans, performance standards, and environmental standards (first generation) and environmental taxes and subsidies (second generation).⁴¹

The main limitation of informational tools is their inability to directly compel behavioural changes on the part of economic agents. For example, a requirement to highlight a product’s sustainability may force companies to disclose the average lifespan of their products to consumers, but it does not guarantee that consumers will change their consumption habits or that companies will modify their production processes, especially if such changes are costly. To fill this gap, informational regulatory tools must be combined with first- or second-generation tools, i.e., legislative, regulatory, and fiscal measures aimed at promoting compliance with climate change and ecosystem protection obligations and targets (biodiversity protection, pollution reduction, increased circularity, etc.).

41. Tietenberg (1997).



For example, on November 15, 2023, the Québec government published a consultation document presenting its draft “Strategy for the Reduction and Responsible Management of Plastics (2024–2029).” This draft strategy, which was the subject of a public consultation from November 15 to December 15, 2023, proposes both to ban certain single-use plastics (**SUPs**) and those that do not meet minimum recycled content requirements (first-generation measure); to provide financial support to organizations that use reusable products (second-generation measure); and to require eco-labelling of certain plastic products (third-generation measure).⁴² As of January 26, 2026, the final version of the draft strategy was yet to be adopted.

Table 1 below summarizes the characteristics of the main categories of informational regulatory tools and lists some concrete examples.⁴³

Table 1 | Comparison of the main regulatory information tools

Category	Characteristics	Advantages/disadvantages	Examples
Advertising restrictions	Prohibit certain specific advertising messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Easy to understand and apply - Must meet certain criteria to avoid unduly restricting freedom of expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition of “lifestyle” advertising for tobacco products under the <i>Tobacco Control Act</i> (Québec) • Ban on advertising aimed at persons below the age of 13 under the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) (Québec)
Posting and disclosure rules	Require the disclosure of specific information in a given format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promote the disclosure of complete, comprehensible, and comparable information - Do not guarantee that the information will be incorporated into the decisions of those targeted by the posting and disclosure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory disclosure of nutritional information on prepackaged foods under the Food and Drug Regulations (Canada) • Mandatory disclosure of the composition of consumer textile items under the <i>Textile Labelling Act</i> (Canada) • Mandatory disclosure of health risks on tobacco product packaging under the <i>Tobacco Products Appearance, Packaging and Labelling Regulations</i> (Canada)

42. Gouvernement du Québec (2023a).

43. Two other categories of tools are worth mentioning: (i) the definition of performance standards for certain environmental claims; and (ii) voluntary environmental programs. First, performance standards consist of establishing official definitions that allow companies that meet a given standard to publicly claim a specific characteristic. This type of instrument is similar to certification programs in that it sets specific performance criteria. However, this type of tool does not provide for any mandatory third-party verification mechanism. These standards are binding in that a company wishing to make a claim covered by the standard must comply with its criteria. Federal rules on health claims on food labels are an example of such measures. Second, voluntary environmental programs are programs established by public authorities to encourage companies to adopt certain practices deemed beneficial. These programs usually allow participating companies to promote their participation in the program and benefit from support services and financial assistance related to the program’s objectives. Examples of such programs include Recyc-Québec’s ICI on recycle + knowledge program and the Government of Canada’s Net-Zero Challenge. These two categories of tools are not discussed further in this report.



Certification programs	Certify that entities or products meet specific performance criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promote the quality and comparability of information, especially if it is verified - Can create confusion if multiple certifications coexist; can promote selective claims if only certain environmental aspects are measured or if certification criteria are not very demanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic certification system under the <i>Canadian Food Agency Inspection Act</i> (Canada) • Certification system for products with a reserved designation or promotional term under the <i>Act respecting reserved designations and added-value claims</i> (Québec)
Laws and guidelines on misleading advertising	Prohibit false or misleading claims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Flexible and evolving - Limited to voluntarily disclosed information; do not establish a common language unless guidelines are issued; effectiveness depends on enforcement mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition of false or misleading advertising under the <i>Competition Act (CA)</i> (Canada) and the CPA (Québec)

4.1 Advertising restrictions

A. DESCRIPTION

Advertising restrictions are measures that prohibit certain categories of promotional messages based on their content, target audience, or context of dissemination.⁴⁴ Such measures may be designed to:

→ **Prevent the communication of messages considered to be inherently false or misleading.**

For example, some jurisdictions, including Canada, have prohibited companies marketing tobacco products from using the terms “light” or “mild” in reference to cigarettes, as such terms could give the false impression that certain cigarettes are less harmful to health.⁴⁵

→ **Reduce the appeal of a product whose use or production is considered harmful,** in particular by preventing associations that give a falsely positive image of a product and by changing the public image of a product or behaviour. For example, section 22 of the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act* (Canada) prohibits “lifestyle” advertising and advertising that could be appealing to young people.⁴⁶ Similarly, sections 24 and 25 of the same Act prohibit the association of tobacco products with cultural or sports events.⁴⁷

44. For a detailed report on the issue of advertising and overconsumption, see Équiterre (2025).

45. Info Tabac (2001).

46. Similarly, section 24 of the *Tobacco Control Act* (Québec) prohibits tobacco advertising directed at minors, advertising that associates tobacco with a particular lifestyle, uses a slogan, or creates an erroneous impression about the health effects or health hazards of tobacco. For more information on the history of tobacco product regulation in Québec and Canada as a whole, see Tremblay (2024).

47. Similar restrictions are provided for in sections 22 and 23 of the *Tobacco Control Act* (Québec).

→ **Protect vulnerable customers** who are less able to identify false or misleading representations. For example, in Québec, section 248 of the *Consumer Protection Act (CPA)* prohibits advertising messages aimed at persons under the age of 13. Similarly, section 22 of the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Act (Canada)* prohibits the advertising of tobacco products, except in publications that are addressed and sent to adults and on posters placed in locations that are off-limits to young people.

Internationally, other jurisdictions have so far mainly used advertising restrictions on tobacco products, drugs, health products, alcohol, foods considered harmful to health, illegal activities, products intended for children and, more recently, products with a high environmental impact.⁴⁸ For example, in 2025, the city of The Hague in the Netherlands passed a law banning “fossil fuel” advertising, including advertisements for air travel, cruises, combustion cars, oil, and diesel fuels.⁴⁹ Other cities in Europe and the United Kingdom, such as Stockholm and Edinburgh, have adopted similar measures.⁵⁰ In June 2024, the UN Secretary-General publicly encouraged the implementation of advertising restrictions on fossil fuel producers due to the risks of greenwashing and obstruction of climate progress raised by such advertisements.⁵¹

Although we have not conducted an exhaustive review of the literature on the subject, a number of studies have established a causal link between the imposition of severe advertising restrictions on tobacco products and a reduction in the consumption rate of these products.⁵² Based on these findings, it is possible to postulate that advertising restrictions on polluting products could have an impact on the total demand for these products. However, these measures may also limit consumers’ ability to choose between a more harmful and a less harmful product within the same category. For this reason, such measures are more appropriate for products with particularly harmful impacts.

B. ENFORCEMENT

To date, advertising restrictions have been used only sparingly to regulate the communication of information related to the environmental impact of consumer products in Québec and the rest of Canada.

In 2024, some municipal organizations adopted measures to restrict the dissemination of advertisements deemed incompatible with their mission. For example, in September 2024, the Société de transport de Montréal announced that it had implemented measures to ensure that all advertising posted in its public transit network was “free of messages that would discredit the STM’s mission or that would be disparaging to public transit.”⁵³ These measures include the implementation of a complaint mechanism that allows citizens to request that an advertisement be removed.⁵⁴

48. See, for example, the United Kingdom Advertising Standards Authority (2024) and United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (2023).

49. Zarachowicz (2024).

50. For an up-to-date registry of municipal, regional, and national initiatives to ban fossil fuel advertising, see World Without Fossil Ads (2025).

51. McGrath and Poynting (2024).

52. Saffer and Chaloupka (2000); Quentin et al. (2007).

53. Ouellette-Vézina (2024).

54. Ibid.



Similarly, in September 2024, the Toronto Transit Commission passed a motion requiring that all advertisements posted on its public transit network promoting fossil fuels, particularly those from certain targeted lobbying groups, be subject to specific verification, in particular to ensure their compliance with the *Competition Act* (CA)'s corroboration requirements and their compatibility with the municipal GHG emissions reduction strategy.⁵⁵ In October, a similar motion was passed by Toronto City Council in relation to advertising on all municipal assets.⁵⁶

In 2023, the Government of Canada announced the development of new plastic product labelling rules that would restrict, among other things, claims of degradability.⁵⁷ The proposed framework would prohibit the terms “biodegradable” or “degradable” and any statement suggesting that a product will “decompose, fragment, or biodegrade in the environment” on plastic packaging and SUPs. The proposed framework would also prohibit the use of “green coloured labelling, striping, or tinting of non-compostable plastic items that are associated with organic wastes” and the terms “home” or “backyard” compostable.⁵⁸ In addition, these rules would also establish a mandatory recyclability labelling system (described in section 4.2) and a public certification plan for compostability (described in section 4.3).

Outside the environmental context, advertising restrictions have been widely used at the federal and provincial levels to restrict the promotion of tobacco products and advertising aimed at persons under the age of thirteen. Advertising restrictions also exist for the promotion of cannabis⁵⁹ and alcoholic beverages. For example, section 2 of the *Regulation* respecting the promotion, advertising and educational programs relating to alcoholic beverages (Québec) prohibits, among other things, advertisements for alcoholic beverages that (i) are directed at minors; (ii) present these beverages as a factor in self-worth, social prestige, or success; or (iii) present these beverages as an aid in surmounting personal difficulties.

In some cases, the implementation of advertising restrictions has been challenged in court on the grounds that they violate the freedom of expression guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The use of these measures has been reviewed three times by the Supreme Court of Canada following constitutional challenges:

→ Irwin Toy (1989)

In 1989, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the constitutional validity of sections 248 and 249 of the CPA, which restrict advertising aimed at children under thirteen years of age.⁶⁰ According to the Court's ruling, although the contested sections infringe on freedom of expression, this infringement is reasonable and justified by an urgent and real objective, namely the protection of a group in society that is highly vulnerable to commercial manipulation. The infringement on freedom of expression was deemed minimal.

55. Toronto Transit Commission (2024).

56. Toronto City Council (2024).

57. Government of Canada (2023a).

58. As stated in the proposed framework, “In public consultations, stakeholders indicated broad support for this proposal, recognizing public confusion with these terms, and the fact that these items are known contaminants in organic waste and recycling systems.” See Government of Canada (2023a).

59. For example, section 17 of the Cannabis Act (Canada) prohibits, among other things, the promotion of cannabis “in a manner that there are reasonable grounds to believe could be appealing to young persons “and “ by presenting it or any of its brand elements in a manner that associates it or the brand element with, or evokes a positive or negative emotion about or image of, a way of life such as one that includes glamour, recreation, excitement, vitality, risk or daring.” As with tobacco products, section 18 of the Cannabis Act (Canada) prohibits “[promoting] cannabis in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive about its characteristics, value, quantity, composition, strength, concentration, potency, purity, quality, merit, safety, health effects, or the health risks.”

60. Irwin Toy Ltd. v. Québec (Attorney General), 1989 CanLII 87.



→ **RJR-MacDonald Inc. (1995)**

In 1995, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down a first set of advertising restrictions adopted in 1988 relating to tobacco products. These restrictions prohibited all tobacco advertising and required manufacturers to include health warnings on their product packaging. Although the Court recognized the importance of discouraging tobacco use for health reasons, the causal link between absolute bans and reduced smoking had not been sufficiently established at that time.⁶¹ In addition, the Court ruled that other less restrictive measures could have been implemented by the legislature.⁶²

→ **JTI-Macdonald Corp (2007)**

Following the invalidation of the *Tobacco Products Control Act* in 1995, the federal government adopted a second set of more targeted advertising restrictions, such as a ban on lifestyle advertising and advertising aimed at young people. Under the new rules, certain informational advertisements aimed at adults remain permissible. Challenged all the way to the Supreme Court, the restrictions were ultimately upheld. According to the country's highest court, the measures are justified by a real and urgent objective, there is a causal link between the proposed measures and the desired objective, and the infringement on freedom of expression is minimal.⁶³

In short, according to the Court's decisions, an advertising restriction that infringes on freedom of expression can be upheld if it can be demonstrated, on a balance of probabilities, (i) that there is an urgent and real objective; (ii) a causal link between the measure and that objective; and (iii) that no other less restrictive measures could have been implemented to achieve the objective.

Canadian courts have already recognized that protecting the environment is an urgent and real objective. For example, in a 2023 decision, the Québec Court of Appeal ruled that a municipal bylaw restricting the distribution of advertising flyers infringed on freedom of expression, but that this infringement, which was intended to protect the environment and reduce the amount of waste produced, was minimal and served an urgent and real purpose.⁶⁴

As in France (see box below), **advertising restrictions could be used at the federal or provincial level to regulate the communication of information related to the environmental impact of consumer products.** In February 2024, a private member's bill was introduced in the Canadian House of Commons to restrict certain advertisements related to fossil fuels. The *Act respecting fossil fuel advertising* (Bill C-372) sought to prohibit the promotion of "a fossil fuel or the production of a fossil fuel" in a manner that states or suggests that the fossil fuel or its production is beneficial "to the environment, the health of Canadians, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, or the Canadian or global economy," or that "its emissions are less harmful than another fossil fuels." The bill also proposed to allow the prohibition of expressions, logos, symbols, or figures by regulation. Violation of these prohibitions would have led to criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. However, with the federal Parliament prorogued on January 6, 2025, this bill is no longer under consideration.

61. *RJR-MacDonald Inc. v. Canada (Attorney General)*, [1995] 3 SCR 199.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Canada (Attorney General) v. JTI-Macdonald Corp.*, 2007 SCC 30.

64. *Médias Transcontinentale v. City of Mirabel*, 2023 QCCA 863.



Box 1 | Advertising restrictions: France*

Act No. 2021-1104 of August 22, 2021, on combating climate change and strengthening resilience to its effects (commonly known as the **Loi Climat et résilience, or in English the Climate and Resilience Act**) is one of the main legislative measures enacted in France in recent years to regulate companies' environmental claims.⁶⁵ The legislation amended the Environmental Code to prohibit the advertising of certain products considered to have an “excessive impact on the climate.”

This includes:

- Since 2022, “advertising relating to the marketing or promotion of fossil fuels,” with the exception of fuels with a minimum renewable energy content of 50% and
- From 2028, “advertising relating to the sale or promotion of the purchase of new passenger cars.”

In the event of a violation of these prohibitions, a legal entity is liable to a fine of £100,000 or the value of the expenses incurred in the prohibited practice. However, although the Climate and Resilience Act has already come into force, the implementation of the ban on fossil fuel advertising remains partial. The text of the Act provides for the publication of a decree describing the terms and conditions for applying the prohibitions, including a list of the fossil fuels concerned. However, as of January 26, 2026, this decree had still not been published, creating, according to some observers, uncertainty as to the legal effect of the ban.⁶⁶

In addition to the Climate and Resilience Law, the French legislature adopted *Act No. 2020-105 of February 10, 2020, on waste reduction and the circular economy* (referred to herein as the **AGEC Act**), which creates additional restrictions on environmental advertising. For example, article 13 of the Act prohibits the disclosure of certain statements deemed inherently misleading or generic on a product or packaging, including the terms “biodegradable,” “environmentally friendly,” and other similar claims.

In 2024, a bill aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the textile industry was submitted to the French National Assembly.⁶⁷ This proposal aims to regulate fast fashion and includes a ban on advertising promoting these products as well as a ban on promoting them electronically through influencers. As of December 5, 2025, this bill was still under consideration by the French National Assembly.⁶⁸

**Please note that all quotations and names of legislation included in this box are our translations.*

65. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2023a).

66. Public Sénat (2023).

67. Assemblée nationale française (2025).

68. Sénat français (2025).

4.2 Mandatory labelling and disclosure rules

A. DESCRIPTION

Companies often do not disclose any information about the environmental characteristics of their products, or they disclose information that is incomplete or difficult to understand and compare. Mandatory labelling and disclosure rules aim to prevent this type of situation by requiring companies to disclose information in a specific format. Such measures have two main effects:

→ **First, they standardize the way certain information is communicated by companies, making it easier to understand and compare;**

→ **Second, they force the disclosure of information that companies might not otherwise make public.**

Labelling and disclosure rules exist in many sectors of activity, such as the mandatory disclosure of ingredients and nutritional value of food products, or of fibres in textile products.⁶⁹ Similarly, under securities legislation, reporting issuers are required to disclose certain information to investors.⁷⁰ Another example is the *Tobacco Products Appearance, Packaging and Labelling Regulations* (federal legislation in force across Canada, including in Québec), which requires tobacco product manufacturers to disclose health warnings and toxicity information directly on the packaging of these products.⁷¹

Some studies have evaluated the effectiveness of these labelling and disclosure programs and concluded that they can influence consumer decisions under certain conditions. For example, studies on labelling requirements related to the health effects of foods have found that these requirements lead to changes in consumption habits in favour of products with health benefits.⁷²

Labelling rules may require the disclosure of information on a specific characteristic, such as a health risk warning or the mandatory labelling of geographical origin. However, a disclosure requirement limited to certain indicators or types of impacts may encourage performance only on the indicators for which disclosure is mandatory, at the expense of others. For example, an environmental impact labelling system that focuses exclusively on the carbon footprint of products could lead companies to neglect other environmental aspects, such as biodiversity.

Disclosure may also cover a series of quantitative or qualitative indicators (e.g., a nutrition fact label) or the disclosure of an aggregate score (e.g., the disclosure of a nutrition score). The latter category, known as “omni-labelling,” aims to convey information on a range of aggregate impact indicators in an easy-to-understand format.⁷³ Indeed, raw quantitative data, such as the number of tons of GHGs emitted during the production of a product, are sometimes difficult for consumers to understand.⁷⁴

69. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (2024a); Competition Bureau of Canada (2022).

70. Beaulieu (2024).

71. Government of Canada (2023b).

72. For a review of these studies, see Potter et al. (2022).

73. Tzilivakis et al. (2012).

74. François-Lecompte and Gentric (2016). Muller et al. (2019), citing Gadema and Oglethorpe (2011).

A number of studies have shown that the use of simple colour codes and symbols, such as a system of logos rating a product from green to red, similar to a traffic light, are more likely to be seen and understood by consumers.⁷⁵ In addition, some studies have suggested that the use of negative indicators (e.g., using a red logo to identify products with a higher environmental footprint) has a greater effect than the use of positive indicators (e.g., using a green logo to identify products with a lower environmental footprint).⁷⁶

The development of an omni-label environmental labelling system for consumer products raises several issues:

→ Visibility

In order to be taken into account by consumers, the information disclosed must be visible.⁷⁷ Consumers often have limited time to make purchasing decisions, and environmental characteristics are only one of the aspects they need to evaluate when making a choice (price, efficiency, aesthetics, flavour, etc.).⁷⁸ For this reason, the labelling system may require information to be provided on the front of products and may require the use of colours and symbols that are easy to see.

→ Use of appropriate data

An important issue related to environmental labelling requirements is the availability and accuracy of the data used, particularly from a geographic perspective. A labelling system may require the disclosure of information specific to the product being marketed or allow the use of standardized databases on the environmental impact of certain products, ingredients, components, or activities. For example, Canadian rules on food nutrition labelling give companies the choice of using data specific to their products, obtained through testing that meets minimum standards, or using the Canadian Nutrient File, a database containing standardized information for thousands of commonly used products and ingredients. While the first option involves a higher degree of accuracy, the second option is often much less costly (especially for small and medium-sized businesses, which have to spread their labelling costs over a smaller sales volume) and sometimes necessary when certain data is unavailable.⁷⁹ An additional challenge is the ability for companies to choose the type of data they use, which can penalize those that do not have the resources to collect more accurate data. For example, a company with significant resources could compare the environmental impact of its products using standardized data and actual data, and choose to disclose the most favorable data. A company with fewer resources would have no choice but to disclose standardized data, creating an unfair advantage for companies with more resources. Conversely, imposing standardized data may prevent companies from highlighting the comparative advantage of their products and reduce their incentives to perform.⁸⁰ To address these issues, some authors have proposed a semi-specific approach that would involve combining standardized data with specific data for high-impact indicators.⁸¹

75. For a review of these studies, see Muller et al. (2019). See also Engels et al. (2010).

76. Biel et al. (2005).

77. François-Lecompte and Gentric (2016).

78. Hélias et al. (2022).

79. Pedersen and Remmen (2022).

80. Ibid.

81. Hélias et al. (2022).

→ Consideration of significant impacts

In order to provide a comprehensive overview of a product's environmental footprint, it is important for the labelling system to take into account all of the product's significant environmental impacts (climate, biodiversity, pollution, etc.) and each stage of its life cycle.⁸²

→ Inter- and intra-category comparability

In order to encourage the substitution of polluting products with products that have lower impacts, a labelling system should allow consumers to compare the environmental impact of various substitute products within the same category (e.g., comparing the environmental footprint of two packages of pasta from competing producers) as well as between categories of substitutes (e.g., comparing the environmental footprint of a package of pasta and an equivalent amount of a substitute, such as rice or couscous).⁸³ This objective involves establishing units of comparison. For example, in the case of food products, some products may have a higher nutritional value relative to their weight, which means that it is possible to consume a smaller quantity. To be useful, the bases for comparison should reflect the value of use of the products and not their mass or volume.⁸⁴

Administration and compliance costs: Implementing a labelling system involves compliance costs for businesses (data collection, evaluation, verification, labelling) and for the government (implementation of the system, development of standardized databases, updating of standards, verification of compliance, penalties).⁸⁵ These costs must be proportionate to the objectives to be achieved, namely informing the public and replacing polluting products with more environmentally friendly ones, particularly in light of the other environmental policy tools available to public authorities (bans on certain products, environmental subsidies and taxes, etc.).⁸⁶

→ Aggregation and weighting of indicators

As indicated above, several studies have shown that the use of simple, aggregated colour codes makes it easier for consumers to compare products.⁸⁷ However, such codes involve aggregating different performance indicators into one or more ratings or symbols that can be quickly and easily understood by the average consumer.⁸⁸ However, aggregating indicators raises a number of methodological issues. First, some indicators cannot be easily added or combined while retaining their informative value.⁸⁹ For example, how can the dozens of indicators that measure a product's impact on biodiversity be aggregated into a single score?

82. Tzilivakis (2012).

83. François-Lecompte and Gentric (2016); Engels et al. (2010).

84. Pedersen and Remmen (2022). The authors give the following example for pasta: the relevant unit of measurement should be the amount needed to meet a person's nutritional needs for a period of four hours.

85. Tzilivakis et al. (2012).

86. Tzilivakis et al. (2012).

87. Hélias et al. (2022).

88. Engels et al. (2010).

89. Tzilivakis (2012).

Second, aggregation is sometimes an exercise that requires subjective choices for which science has few answers. For example, what respective weights should be assigned to water protection, biodiversity, climate change prevention, etc.?⁹⁰ Moreover, the weight assigned to certain indicators can create distortions by encouraging companies to favour certain environmental aspects at the expense of others.⁹¹

→ Verification of information

The existence of a reporting system does not necessarily guarantee the accuracy of the information provided. It is still possible for the companies concerned to use low-quality data or to fail to comply with the system's procedural rules. To prevent this, a system may require verification by an independent third party, the establishment of an inspection mechanism, and penalties for non-compliance. For example, following the introduction of the mandatory reparability index in France, investigations revealed that many stores were not complying with the requirement to present the index on certain products. In addition, checks were carried out on the ratings themselves, since it is the manufacturers who perform the calculations based on a predefined grid. Consumer protection associations redid these calculations and obtained significantly lower ratings than those of the manufacturers, calling into question the reliability of the indices presented.⁹²

→ Intelligibility

The format in which the selected indicators are presented must provide a reference point that consumers can understand and use to distinguish between different alternatives and measure the environmental impact of their consumption habits. For example, consumers may find it difficult to assess the concrete environmental impacts of a product that scores 8/10 overall unless the meaning of this score is explained.⁹³ To achieve this goal, the implementation of a labelling system can be accompanied by an educational campaign explaining how the system works.

These issues illustrate the fact that methods for assessing and disclosing environmental impacts are evolving and vary in maturity depending on the product and industry. That said, these issues are not insurmountable. Indeed, some jurisdictions, notably France, have undertaken to develop omni-labels aimed at measuring the environmental footprint of consumer products, in particular by standardizing the disclosure of products' carbon footprint, their environmental impacts throughout their life cycle, and their reparability. These measures are discussed in more detail at the end of this section.

90. Pedersen and Remmen (2022).

91. Ibid.

92. For more information, see Côté et al. (2024).

93. To address this issue, the Nutrition Facts table required under the Food and Drug Regulations (Canada) provides an interpretive statement of the percentage of the Daily Value: "5% or less is low, 15% or more is high."

B. ENFORCEMENT

As with advertising restrictions, labelling and disclosure rules have so far been little used at the provincial or federal level to regulate environmental claims on products. However, such measures have been considered in the past, and some are currently being developed.

i. Canada

At the federal level, the Government of Canada has announced the implementation of new labelling rules for plastic products aimed at establishing (i) a labelling system for recyclability; (ii) a certification system for compostability (described in more detail in [section 4.3](#)); and (iii) advertising restrictions on claims of degradability (described in more detail in [section 4.1](#)).⁹⁴

Companies' claims about recyclability, compostability, and degradability inform consumers about the proper way to sort a product after use (recycling bin, compost, deposit, eco-centre, trash, etc.). These claims can also be an indicator of a product's environmental footprint at the end of its life cycle (see [Box 2](#) for more on this topic).

The measures proposed by the Government of Canada are part of its goal of zero plastic waste by 2030 and complement several first-generation regulatory measures, such as bans on certain SUPs and minimum recycled content requirements, as well as second-generation measures, such as innovation grants.⁹⁵

These measures were the subject of a public consultation conducted from July to October 2022.⁹⁶ In February 2023, the federal government released a report summarizing the comments received.⁹⁷ Then, on April 18, 2023, the government published a document outlining a future regulatory framework titled "Recycled Content and Labelling for Plastic Products Regulations" to be adopted under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999.⁹⁸

The proposed framework would cover primary and secondary plastic packaging⁹⁹ (including "finished" packaging sold as such, i.e. plastic bags) intended for consumers (as opposed to institutional, commercial, or industrial packaging) as well as SUPs. The companies covered would be those using a registered trademark¹⁰⁰ that market or import plastic packaging or SUPs.

The proposed recyclability labelling system is described below. The proposed compostability certification system is described in [section 4.3](#), which deals with certification programs.

94. Government of Canada (2023a).

95. Government of Canada (2024a).

96. Government of Canada (2023c).

97. Government of Canada (2023d).

98. Government of Canada (2023a).

99. The proposed framework defines packaging as "anything used for the containment, protection, handling, delivery, storage, transport and presentation of goods, from raw materials to processed goods, from the producer to the user or consumer, including the processor, assembler or other intermediary." See Government of Canada (2023a).

100. Under the proposed framework, "brand owners are identified as the preferred "producers" to fund and operate recycling systems." This framework would cover primary packaging (which comes into contact with a product); secondary packaging (which comes into contact with primary packaging and/or protective materials); and e-commerce packaging. However, it would not cover certain tertiary packaging (packaging designed for the transport of goods); packaging intended for export; goods in transit and packaging that is already at the waste stage; and reusable packaging that can be "used many times in a reuse or refill system." Certain items would also be exempt in the same way that certain items are exempt from food labelling rules under the Food and Drug Regulations, such as packaging for products sold at a farmers' market. See Government of Canada (2023a).

In order to establish the recyclability of an item, the proposed framework sets out three cumulative criteria, which are reproduced below:

→ **Collection**

Is the item accepted for collection by a no-fee-to-use collection system¹⁰¹ easily accessible to at least 80% of the population of a province or territory?

→ **Sorting**

Can the item be sorted into bales with a sorting yield of at least 80% for North American recovery companies for recycling purposes?

→ **Recycling**

Will at least 80% of the bales from the item entering North American recycling facilities come out as material that can replace the primary resin from which the item was made?

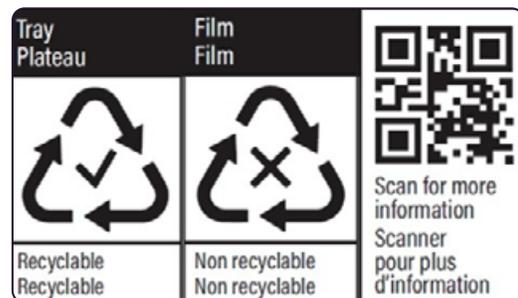
A company marketing an item that meets each of these criteria would be required to label it as “recyclable.” If only the first criterion is met, the item would be labelled as “collected for recycling.” However, this labelling category would no longer be permitted after 2030. In other cases, the item would be labelled as “non-recyclable.” Thus, all products subject to the labelling requirement would include a label, including those that are not recyclable.

An item consisting of recyclable and non-recyclable components would have a label for each component, as shown in Figure 5. The format and content of the label would be determined through regulation.

Figure 4 | Symbols proposed by the federal government for highlighting recyclability¹⁰²



Figure 5 | Example of a recyclability label proposed by the federal government¹⁰³



101. The proposed framework would also impose minimum requirements for collection frequency and the number of collection sites operated by the collection system. See Government of Canada (2023a).

102. Government of Canada (2023a).

103. Ibid.

In addition to the label, affected companies would be required to affix a QR code linking to a website providing additional information about the product, such as instructions on preparing it for recycling.¹⁰⁴

The labels, which would be mandatory for plastic and SUP packaging, could also be used for non-plastics, but this use would not be regulated (other than the general rules applicable to misleading advertising under the CA and CPA).¹⁰⁵

Finally, the proposed framework would prohibit the use of the “curved arrows” symbol for identifying plastic resins and would impose minimum requirements for the use of the “Mobius loop” and recyclability claims.¹⁰⁶

According to the document initially published by the government in April 2023, the proposed labelling rules were to be phased in between 2026 and 2030.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the government indicated that it would develop technical guidelines to explain how the new regulatory system would work.¹⁰⁸ However, although the government initially indicated that the proposed regulations would be published before the end of 2023, they had still not been made public as of January 26, 2026, raising questions about their implementation.¹⁰⁹ It should also be noted that no rules on recyclability labelling for materials other than plastics appear to be in the works at the federal level.



104. Ibid.
105. Ibid.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid.

Box 2 | Recyclable, recycled... and good for the environment?

Sometimes the only information about a product's environmental impact communicated to consumers is that its packaging or contents are recyclable or made from recycled materials. However, this information is rarely a good indicator of a product's overall environmental impact. Admittedly, recycling a product after use can avoid the extraction of new raw materials and help reduce the resulting environmental impacts. However, recyclability is not always synonymous with a low or non-existing environmental footprint. In fact :

- Recyclability is an indication of a product's impact after use, which is sometimes not representative of the overall impact of a product throughout its life cycle on all environmental aspects.
- It is possible that a recyclable product, even if it is placed in the recycling bin, may not ultimately be recycled, for example, due to contamination of materials at the sorting centre or the lack of commercial outlets for such materials. According to Recyc-Québec, only 62% of the materials sorted by Quebecers through municipal collection in 2021 were sent to sorting centres.¹¹⁰ Once these materials were sent to sorting centres, 24% of them were rejected or stored.¹¹¹
- Recycling itself has its own environmental impacts, particularly when it involves transporting materials over long distances and using polluting industrial processes.¹¹²
- Many materials cannot be recycled indefinitely, and recycling them requires the integration of new raw materials into production chains. As a result, only 10% of plastics undergo more than one recycling cycle.¹¹³

This does not mean that the public should stop sorting their waste, nor that recyclability indicators should be removed from consumer products. On the contrary, this information is essential to ensure that materials are sorted. However, the statement that a product is recyclable should not be considered an automatic sign of low environmental impact, but rather as an instruction on how to properly sort a product after use.

To avoid confusion between “sorting instructions” and information on environmental performance, France has set up the *Info-tri program*, which establishes rules for providing sorting instructions.¹¹⁴ Under this program, provided for in article 17 of the AGECE Act and in various similar decrees, approved eco-organizations are responsible for developing sorting methods for different products, by sector. Producers must pay a financial contribution to these approved eco-organizations. Each eco-organization is responsible for establishing its own sorting rules, which come into force at different times depending on the sector.¹¹⁵ This labelling applies to all “products that generate waste or components and materials used in their manufacture” (L541-10, our translation) except for “household glass beverage containers” (L541-9-3, our translation), for which labelling is voluntary but recommended.

110. Shields (2023); Recyc-Québec (2022).

111. Ibid.

112. Singh and Walker (2024).

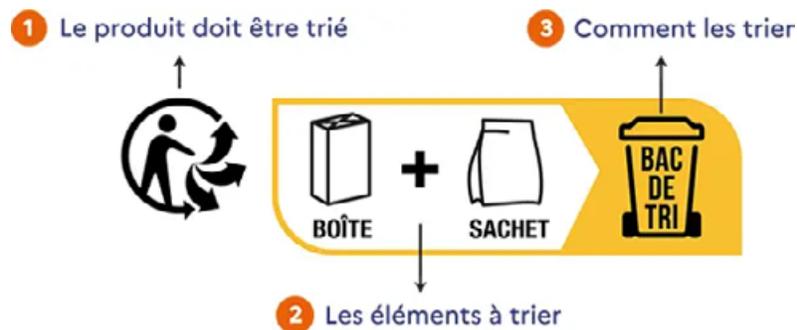
113. Ibid.

114. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2024a); République française (2022); Ministère de la Transition écologique (2023b).

115. Ibid. For an example, see Adelphe (2024). Labelling became mandatory on February 1, 2023, for textiles, household linens, and footwear, and on June 20, 2024, for mineral and synthetic oils. See Refashion (undated); Cyclevia (2023).

Although some variations exist depending on the sector, the form of the sorting information is essentially always the same, namely (i) the Triman logo, which indicates that the product must be sorted; (ii) the items to be sorted; and (iii) instructions on how to sort these items. Each eco-organization must provide examples and instructions that are adapted to the common format but specific to the type of product. For example, **Appendix B** presents excerpts from a simplified guide to sorting instructions for household packaging and graphic paper.

Figure 6 | Example of presenting sorting instructions in France



In 2023, the United Kingdom announced that it planned to introduce a similar system, initially to be integrated into the *UK Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)* initiative to be implemented in 2027.¹¹⁶ However, as of January 26, 2026, the establishment of a mandatory program integrated into the EPR appears to have been abandoned, as the UK government is prioritizing the future development of an integrated program with the European Union.¹¹⁷ The symbols developed by the organization responsible for the UK EPR initiative, On-Pack Recycling, nevertheless remain as optional recommendations and can be found on many packaging items.¹¹⁸ These symbols are described below.¹¹⁹

116. Trigg-Knight (2024). See also Government of the United Kingdom (2025).

117. Ibid.

118. Trimco Group (2025).

119. Recycle Now (undated).

Table 2 | On-pack recycling label sorting symbols in the United Kingdom¹²⁰

Symbol	Meaning
 <p>Recycle</p>	<p>Recycle.</p> <p>Applies to packaging collected by 75% or more of UK local authorities, then sorted, processed, and recycled into new packaging or products.</p>
 <p>Don't Recycle</p>	<p>Don't recycle.</p> <p>Applies to packaging collected by less than 50% of UK local authorities and/or which cannot be sorted, processed, and recycled into new packaging or products.</p>
<p>RINSE</p>  <p>Recycle</p>	<p>Recycle after rinsing.</p> <p>Applies to packaging that meets recyclability criteria but must be rinsed to prevent contamination of other materials.</p>
<p>LID ON</p>  <p>Recycle</p>	<p>Recycle with the lid on.</p> <p>Applies to packaging that meets recyclability criteria but whose caps and lids must be sorted with their packaging because they are too small to be recovered for recycling.</p>
 <p>RECYCLE WITH BAGS AT LARGE SUPERMARKET</p> <p>Don't recycle at home</p>	<p>Recycle at a supermarket recycling point.</p> <p>This label is found on plastic packaging such as bread bags, fruit and vegetable bags, chip bags, and chocolate wrappers, which can be returned to recycling points in certain supermarkets.</p>
<p>CAP ON REMOVE SLEEVE</p>  <p>Recycle Don't Recycle</p>	<p>Recycle only certain components.</p> <p>This label is found on packaging where only one component meets the criteria for recyclability.</p>

120. Ibid.

ii. Québec

There are currently very few environmental labelling requirements in Québec for consumer products. However, there are a handful of notable exceptions. One of these is the *Act to protect consumers from planned obsolescence and to promote the durability, repairability and maintenance of goods*, adopted on October 3rd, 2022. This legislation incorporates various obligations related to the repairability of goods into the CPA. In particular, it requires merchants selling certain new goods to present the duration of the warranty of proper functioning applicable to these goods near their advertised price.¹²¹ The Regulation respecting the application of the *Consumer Protection Act*, as amended in 2025, specifies in sections 79.17 to 79.20 certain disclosure obligations regarding these goods, in particular with regard to the guarantee of availability of replacement parts, repair services, and information necessary for the maintenance or repair of these goods. However, the adoption of this legislation has been criticized by civil society organizations, which would have preferred the implementation of a repairability or sustainability index, as in France (described in Box 3).¹²²

Another important example is the building rating system provided for in the *Act respecting the environmental performance of buildings (AEPB)*. Adopted in March 2024, the purpose of this Act is to provide a framework for evaluating the environmental performance of buildings, covering factors such as its carbon footprint, the energy the building uses and when it uses it, the energy produced by the building as well as the equipment that promotes the sustainable mobility of its occupants or users (AEPB, section 1). In particular, it requires building owners, public bodies, and energy distributors specified by regulation to disclose certain information on the building's energy consumption, materials, and equipment (AEPB, section 4). This information must be verified by a recognized organization or person. In addition, the Act stipulates that “[a]n environmental performance rating [be] assigned to every building determined by government regulation” (AEPB, section 5). As a general rule, the building owner will assess its own performance rating based on regulatory criteria and report it to the government. However, in certain cases, the government will directly assign the rating to the building and inform the owner (AEPB, section 6). In addition, the Act stipulates that “the Government may, by regulation, establish standards regarding the environmental performance of buildings, which may take the form of standards regarding construction work or of an environmental performance rating” (AEPB, section 8). Lastly, the Act establishes a public register dedicated to the environmental performance of buildings (AEPB, section 17). “The owner of a building must, in the cases and on the conditions determined by government regulation, post the environmental performance rating of the building assigned in accordance with [said regulation]. The regulation may also prescribe the cases in which and conditions on which the owner must disclose the rating to a third person.” (AEPB, section 18). As of January 26, 2026, the Québec government had not yet adopted the regulations implementing the AEPB.

Additional measures related to environmental labelling have been considered by the Québec government in the past, but have not been implemented. For example, from February 2012 to April 2013, the Québec government conducted a pilot project in partnership with The International Reference Center for Life Cycle Assessment and Sustainable Transition (**CIRAIG**), the *Bureau de normalisation du Québec*, and twelve companies to assess the feasibility of “launching, on a Québec -wide scale, an assistance program to measure and highlight the carbon footprint of products, and to guide its eventual implementation.”¹²³

121. Section 38.8 of the CPA now states that “The merchant must indicate the duration of the warranty of good working order of the goods referred to in the first paragraph of section 38.1 near their advertised price or, in the case of a long-term lease of the goods, near their retail value, in a prominent manner.”

122. Option consommateurs (2023).

123. Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (2022). (our translation)

As part of this project, the carbon footprint of the participating companies' products was measured using the *GHG Protocol* standard. The project results revealed methodological issues that cast doubt on the reproducibility and comparability of the test results, with different independent experts obtaining varying results from the same primary data due to differences in the assumptions used (usage profiles, post-use management, etc.) and interpretations of the data. Due to these methodological issues, the government concluded that “the degree of advancement of practices and the difficulties in certifying the accuracy of results are not conducive to government support for product carbon footprint labelling or the development of a Québec certification, as initially desired.”¹²⁴

Recently, environmental labelling measures have reappeared on the Québec government's radar. For example, in its “Government Roadmap for the Circular Economy 2024-2028,” the Québec government sets itself the objective of “improving environmental labelling as a tool for responsible consumption.”¹²⁵

Similarly, in a French-only consultation document outlining the draft “Strategy for the Reduction and Responsible Management of Plastics in Québec 2024-2029” several draft measures directly related to the communication of information on the environmental impact of products are identified.

For example, the Strategy states that:

*The government intends to require eco-labelling for certain products made of plastic or containing plastic components in order to facilitate civic action and improve recovery and recycling rates for post-consumer plastics. These measures will be accompanied by information, education, and awareness campaigns to clearly explain the importance of following the instructions on the targeted eco-labels. The process will also demystify the logos relating to the recyclability and recycled content of plastic containers, packaging, and products marketed in Québec.*¹²⁶

The Strategy does not explicitly indicate which products would be covered by this new eco-labelling requirement, but it does mention single-use wipes, which are sometimes mistakenly flushed down the toilet. It is important to note that as of January 26, 2026, the final version of this draft strategy has not yet been released, which means that the measures envisaged by the government are still subject to change.

Some other current government initiatives, although not directly related to environmental labelling, could be expanded to include new requirements in this area. For example, the government recently adopted a modernized system for the selective collection of containers, packaging, and printed matter marketed in Québec.¹²⁷ This new system establishes EPR for waste producers.

124. Ibid. (our translation)

125. Government of Québec (2024a).

126. Government of Québec (2023a), page 20. (our translation)

127. Government of Québec (2021); Blais (2024a); Government of Québec (2022).

Indeed, since January 1, 2025, full operational and financial responsibility for the selective collection system has been entrusted to waste producers.¹²⁸ Through a designated management organization, Éco Entreprises Québec, producers must meet recovery, recycling, and local recycling targets starting in 2027.¹²⁹ The modernized selective collection system has also been simplified to include all containers, packaging, and printed matter made of fiber, plastic, glass, metal, or aluminum, as well as all products used for food preparation or consumption, printed matter with a useful life of less than five years, and containers and packaging used to support or present a product.¹³⁰

Although these new measures do not establish any requirements for environmental labelling on containers, packaging, and printed materials, they could indirectly lead to the standardization of sorting instructions across Québec. In October 2024, Éco Entreprises Québec published non-binding guidelines on packaging recyclability (**NBGRs**), which are intended to be a “summary of the state of knowledge on recyclability” taking into account “sorting, packaging, and recycling infrastructure in Québec.”¹³¹ The NBGRs set out specific rules for different packaging materials, including plastics (rigid PET, rigid HDPE, rigid PP, flexible PE); paper and cardboard; metals (aluminum and ferrous metals); and glass. However, the NBGRs are primarily intended for educational purposes, with Éco Entreprises Québec specifying that “the NBGRs cannot be used for marketing or certification purposes, for example by declaring that packaging or printed matter complies with the NBGRs.”¹³² Nevertheless, the Québec government could decide to incorporate the principles established in the NBGRs into a mandatory environmental labelling system.

For the time being, the modernization of the selective collection system is expected to lead to the creation of a uniform list of recyclable materials, applicable throughout Québec. This will make it easier for Québec consumers to recognize products that are accepted for selective collection.¹³³ However, no system for presenting sorting instructions has been announced.

Until the current reform is finalized, collection rules may vary from one municipality to another. To facilitate sorting, the Québec government has launched the *Ça va où?* platform, a directory of residual materials by municipality, which allows users to check the appropriate way to handle each category of material in a given locality.¹³⁴

128. Government of Québec (2022).

129. Ibid.

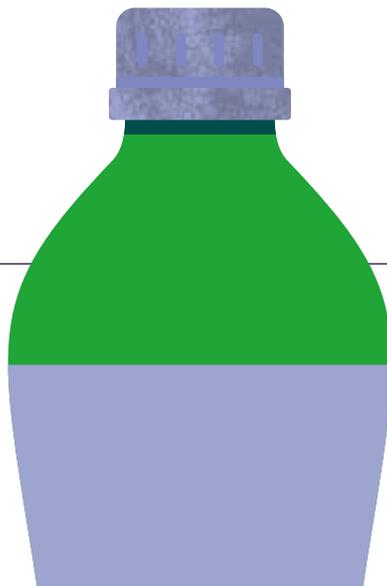
130. Ibid.

131. Éco Entreprises Québec (2024). (our translation)

132. Ibid. (our translation)

133. Blais (2024a).

134. Recyc-Québec (undated).



Box 3 | Labelling requirements: France

In addition to the labelling rules for sorting (described in Box 2), France has developed several mandatory environmental labelling initiatives targeting electrical and electronic equipment, housing and cars, among others. Some of these programs are the result of the implementation of European directives.

→ Repairability and sustainability indices

The AGECE Act establishes a repairability index for certain categories of electrical and electronic products.¹³⁵ This index takes the form of a score out of ten and must be disclosed by sellers at the time of purchase.¹³⁶ Any seller of electrical and electronic equipment covered by the legislation, as well as those using a website, a platform, or any other online distribution channel as part of their commercial activity in France, must also inform consumers of the repairability index of the equipment in question at the time of purchase, free of charge and by means of marking, labelling, diagramming, or any other appropriate method. Manufacturers and importers are also covered by the Act and must make this information available to the public electronically, in a format that is easily reusable and exploitable by an automated processing system in aggregate form. The index is obtained by adding up the scores obtained under five criteria, including the availability of documentation and spare parts for the product

Article 16 of the AGECE Act also provides for a sustainability index, which also takes the form of a score out of ten.¹³⁷ Developed more recently than the repairability index, this index has been in use since January 8, 2025 for televisions and since April 8, 2025 for washing machines.¹³⁸ The sustainability index includes additional criteria such as reliability and either complements or replaces the repairability index where it exists.¹³⁹

→ Energy label

In 2018, following the adoption of similar measures at the European level, the French legislature amended the *Consumer Code* to require the disclosure of an “energy label” for new products whose use has a significant impact on energy consumption.¹⁴⁰ This requirement provides for the identification of the model sold, its manufacturer, its energy class (i.e., a colour code associated with a letter grade from A to G), and its annual energy consumption. The requirement applies to refrigerators, televisions, and dishwashers, among others. Additional information is required for certain product categories, such as the disclosure of water consumption for dishwashers. A real-life example of labels from a French retailer’s website that incorporates energy labelling and repairability ratings is shown below.¹⁴¹

135. Nine product categories are targeted: washing machines (front-loading and top-loading), smartphones, laptops, televisions, lawn mowers, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, and pressure washers.

136. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2024b).

137. Ministère de la transition écologique (undated); Ministère de la transition écologique (2024b).

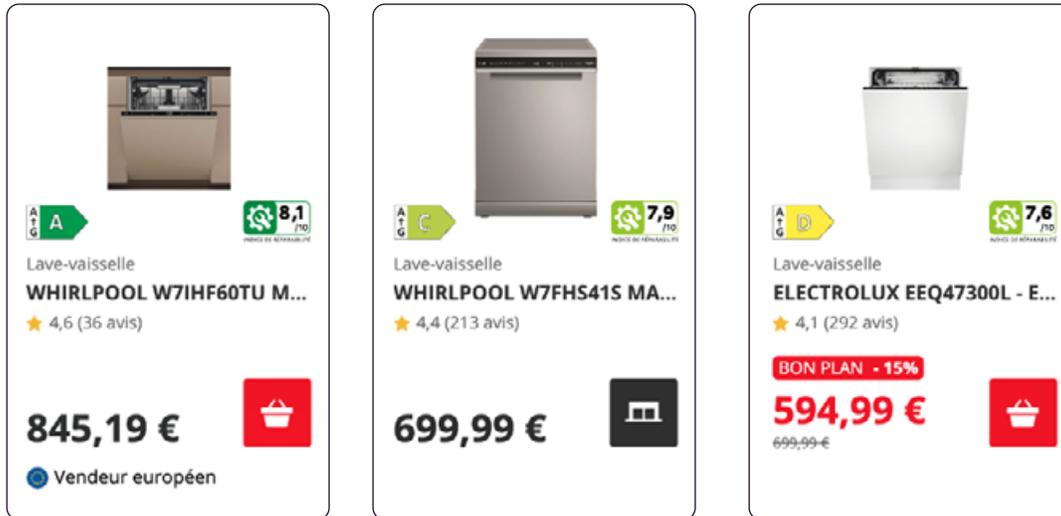
138. Ibid.

139. Ibid.

140. Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie (2023).

141. Darty (2024).

Figure 7 | Example of environmental labelling in France



→ Energy performance diagnosis of housing

The energy performance diagnosis (**EPD**) is a tool for assessing the energy and climate performance of a home.¹⁴² This tool establishes a standardized method for evaluating the energy consumption and GHG emissions of a home, which is assigned a rating from A to G. The EPD also provides additional information, such as a diagram identifying sources of heat loss in a building and recommendations for renovation.¹⁴³ The EPD must be provided when a home is sold or rented. Under amendments adopted in June 2025, each EPD must include a QR code to verify its validity, with implementation of this requirement planned for 2026.¹⁴⁴ The French government plans to adopt regulatory and tax measures based on the EPD, including a ban on renting the most energy-intensive properties (scores F and G) by 2028.¹⁴⁵ An example of one of the indicators included in the EPD is provided below.¹⁴⁶

142. Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie (2024).

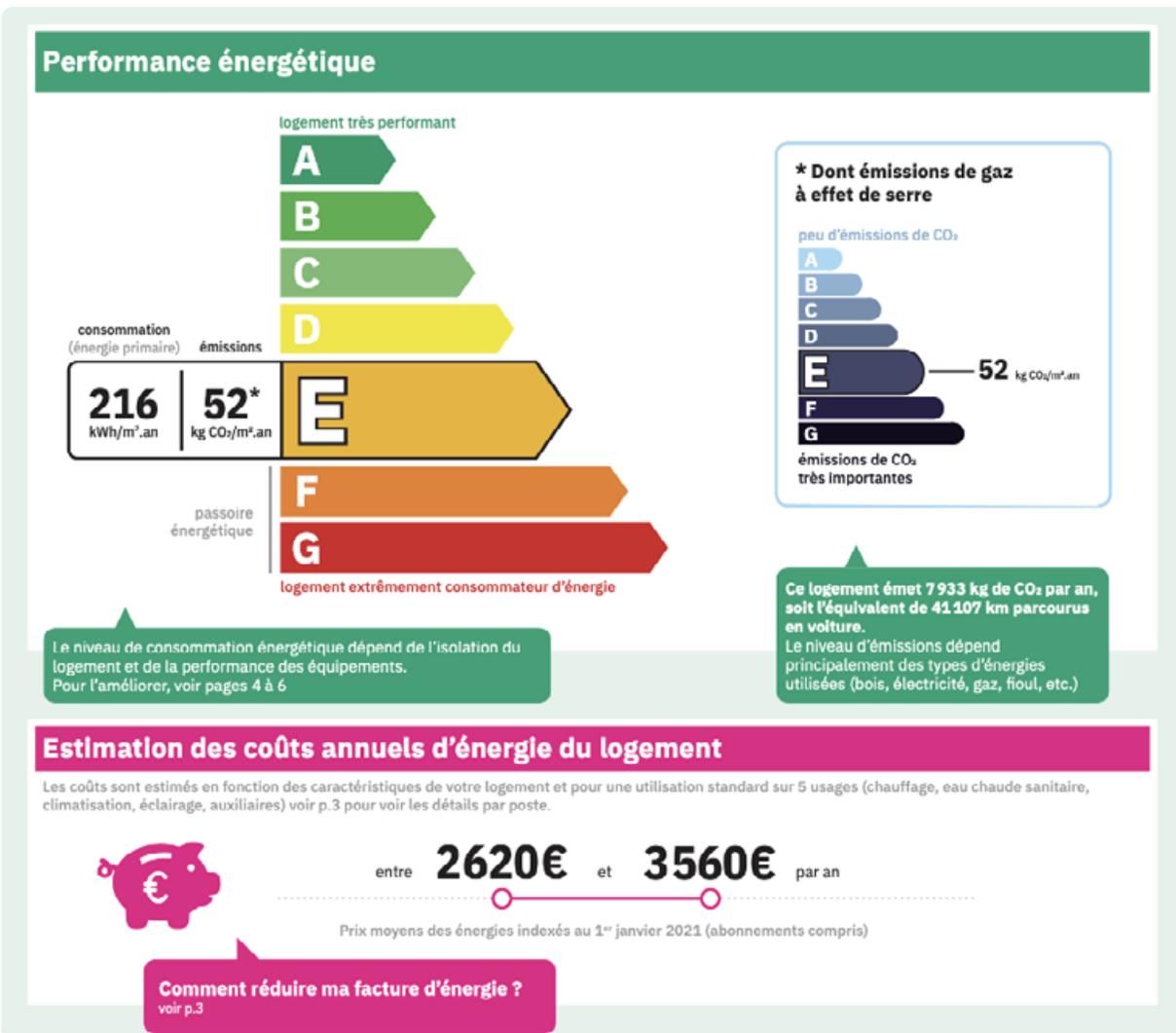
143. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2021).

144. République française - Service Public (2025).

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid.

Figure 8 | Energy performance diagnosis of housing



→ Environmental labelling

Article 2 of the *Loi Climat et résilience* (Climate and Resilience Act) amended the *Environment Code* to implement a mandatory labelling system for the environmental and social impacts of certain products.¹⁴⁷ This implementation is currently underway.

The information disclosed under this plan must reflect the entire life cycle of the product in question and take into account its impact in terms of GHG emissions, damage to biodiversity, consumption of natural resources, and environmental externalities. With regard to the form of labelling, the government currently favours the use of a numerical value (rather than a colour code combined with an alphabetical rating), to reflect the fact that even the best-performing products have some impact.¹⁴⁸ It is also expected that the data and method used to present this

147. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2024b).

148. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2024b).

rating will vary depending on the product category. For example, for textile products, the current method of calculating the “environmental cost” incorporates a series of impact criteria, including water consumption, microplastic emissions, and the use of pesticides and chemicals.¹⁴⁹ Article 7 of the *Climate and Resilience Act* stipulates that environmental labelling must also be reflected in product advertising.¹⁵⁰

The French environmental labelling system is currently undergoing a trial phase spanning a maximum of five years, after which a decree is expected to be issued specifying the categories of products for which environmental labelling will be mandatory. Five product categories are targeted during this trial phase: clothing textiles, food products, furniture, hospitality, and electronic products. The rollout of voluntary environmental labelling for textiles, a sector described as a priority, began in the fall of 2024 and became mandatory in October 2025.¹⁵¹

It should also be noted that, in parallel with the environmental labelling initiative for textiles, the 2025 Proposition de *Loi visant à réduire l’impact environnemental de l’industrie textile* (Bill to reduce the environmental impact of the textile industry), in addition to a ban on advertising certain textile products classified as “fast fashion” (see Box 1), also sets out certain labelling requirements for sellers of these products.¹⁵² These requirements include an obligation to present “messages encouraging moderation, repurposing, repair, reuse, and recycling of products, providing information on the social impact of the product, raising awareness of its environmental impact, and providing information on the environmental impact of the product delivery service offered” (article 1, our translation). They also include an “obligation to indicate the origin of manufacture of the garment on the seller’s digital platform” (article 1 bis AA, our translation).

→ Net-zero claims

Article 12 of the *Climate and Resilience Act* amended the *Environmental Code* to impose disclosure requirements on advertisers who claim that a product is net-zero. Under the decree implementing article 12, any advertiser stating in an advertisement that a product is “carbon neutral,” “net-zero,” “climate neutral,” “fully offset,” or making similar claims, is required to prepare and disclose specific information to consumers each year to substantiate these claims.¹⁵³

149. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2024c).

150. Ministère de la transition écologique (2023a).

151. Ministère de l’Économie, des Finances et de la Souveraineté industrielle et numérique (2025).

152. French National Assembly (2025).

153. French Republic (2022).

4.3 Certification programs

A. DESCRIPTION

Certification programs allow companies whose products or activities meet certain performance criteria to affix the program’s certification mark, logo, or expression on their products and in their communications with consumers. Certification programs can be established by public organizations, such as a government or government agency, or by **private organizations. Unlike public certifications, which are regulated by the government, private environmental certifications are not subject to any specific regulations in Québec or the rest of Canada.** However, claims made under such programs are subject to general laws prohibiting misleading advertising and regulating the use of trademarks.¹⁵⁴

The table below summarizes the main terms and conditions of a certification program. Environmental certification programs have several advantages. For example, by establishing an independent third-party verification process, certification programs can help limit the risk of an organization falsely claiming to meet certain quality criteria, which can reduce the risk of misrepresentation.

Furthermore, by defining specifications that must be met by certified companies, certification programs are a simple and easy-to-understand source of information for consumers who want to distinguish between polluting and less polluting products. In addition, the specifications of such programs can help companies identify practices to adopt in order to minimize their environmental impact.¹⁵⁵

Table 3 | Summary of environmental certification program requirements¹⁵⁶

Characteristics	Description	Options
Binding effect¹⁵⁷	Is it mandatory to be certified under this program and/or another recognized program in order to be authorized to make the claims covered by it? ¹⁵⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory • Not mandatory
Exclusivity	Can multiple programs coexist to certify the same characteristic? ¹⁵⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive • Non-exclusive

154. Under the *Trademarks Act*, certification marks are subject to the same rules as other trademarks. The *Trademarks Act* provides for three types of trademark remedies, set out in sections 19, 20, and 22 of the Act, respectively. Section 19 states that a person may not use a trademark in connection with their goods or services without the authorization of the person who owns the trademark – for example, affixing a certification logo to their products without authorization (“the registration of a trademark in respect of any goods or services, unless shown to be invalid, gives to the owner of the trademark the exclusive right to the use throughout Canada of the trademark in respect of those goods or services...”). Section 20 prohibits the use of a trademark in a manner that is likely to cause confusion with another person’s trademark – for example, using a logo that resembles that of a certification program well known to the public. Finally, section 22 deals with practices that cause a trademark to lose its goodwill, such as an advertising campaign aimed at undermining the credibility of another person’s trademark. (“No person shall use a trademark registered by another person in a manner that is likely to have the effect of depreciating the value of the goodwill attaching thereto.”)

155. An example of this is certified organic wine. See: Delmas and Grant (2014).

156. Inspired by Gruère (2015); Roe and Sheldon (2007); and Minkov et al. (2020).

157. The federal government’s proposed initiative for compostable plastic is an example of a mandatory certification system: only certified companies will be able to tell the public that their products are compostable. However, companies that do not wish to offer compostable products will still be able to choose not to have their products certified.

158. For example, under a mandatory certification program for “organic” products, only products that are certified under the mandatory program may be labelled “organic.”

159. For example, non-exclusivity would exist if several different certification systems could be used to certify the compostability of packaging.



Establishment and administration of the program	What type of entity is responsible for establishing and administering the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government entity • Quasi-governmental entity • Private entity
Recipients	Which stakeholders are the recipients of the certified information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers • Businesses • Government
Transparency	Are the results of the certification process available to the public?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full publication of results • Partial publication of results • No publications
Aspects evaluated	Are multiple stages of the life cycle and aspects of environmental impact assessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mono-factor • Multi-factor
Verification	Is compliance with certification criteria verified by an independent third party?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic verification • Random verification • No verification and/or self-verification
Assessment method	What method is used to assess environmental impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCA • Other method
Grading	Does the program provide for different certification categories that allow for differentiation based on performance level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous grading (e.g., numerical score) • Grading by level (e.g., gold, silver, and platinum)

However, certification programs also have limitations. For example, a program's criteria may **not be sufficiently demanding or appropriate** in light of the overall impression conveyed by the certified claims. This may be the case if a program allows the certification of practices or products that do not offer significant environmental benefits, or if the program's criteria do not take into account all of a product's significant environmental impacts throughout its life cycle and lead the certified company to make sweeping claims.¹⁶⁰ In fact, **environmental certification programs may even promote greenwashing if they endorse and promote practices and products that are harmful to the environment.**¹⁶¹

In addition, a certification program may not provide for comprehensive verification mechanisms.¹⁶² This would be the case, for example, if a product's compliance with a program's requirements were not verified (i) objectively and independently; (ii) in accordance with the program's requirements; and (iii) by a person with the necessary expertise to perform such verifications. This would also be the case if a program did not provide for mechanisms to ensure compliance on a regular basis and did not provide for any consequences (such as loss of certification) in the event of non-compliance.

160. Potter et al. (2022).

161. Gruère (2015).

162. Lyon and Montgomery (2015).



In addition, some certification programs raise issues of **conflict of interest**. Organizations that market private certification marks are usually funded by fees charged to organizations that wish to have their products certified. Some authors have noted the risk of conflicts of interest that could exist between increasing the number of “customers” and maintaining a credible certification system.¹⁶³

Furthermore, in the presence of non-exclusive programs, the coexistence of an array of competing environmental certifications **can create confusion** among consumers.¹⁶⁴ According to the Ecolabel Index database, there were more than 450 ecolabels worldwide as of January 26, 2026.¹⁶⁵ Admittedly, the coexistence of numerous labels can have benefits in that it allows competition between programs and the emergence of a diversity of programs tailored to the needs of different categories of consumers.¹⁶⁶ However, beyond a certain point, this diversity can reduce the informational value of certification programs and require consumers to invest time and resources to understand each label.¹⁶⁷

Figure 9 | The proliferation of certifications creates confusion



Finally, it is possible that the name, logo, or other similar aspects of the program may give a **misleading impression of the environmental benefits** of the certified product. For example, a certification program called “Eco-Green” that allows the use of a logo representing a tree leaf could give the impression that certified products have positive environmental impacts throughout their entire life cycle, which is unrealistic.

A similar issue is the **halo effect**, i.e., the perception that a product certified for a specific environmental aspect will also perform better than average in other environmental, social, or health aspects not covered by the certification program. For example, a 2017 study showed that labelling products as “100% biodegradable” led consumers to mistakenly perceive these products as safer and better for the environment.¹⁶⁸ A similar effect has also been identified in relation to certification programs for organic farming and products labelled as “natural,” “fair trade,” or “eco-friendly.”¹⁶⁹

163. See Pedersen and Neergaard (2006).

164. Fischer and Lyon (2014); Harbaugh et al. (2011).

165. Ecolabel Index (2026).

166. Gruère (2015); Heyes et al. (2020).

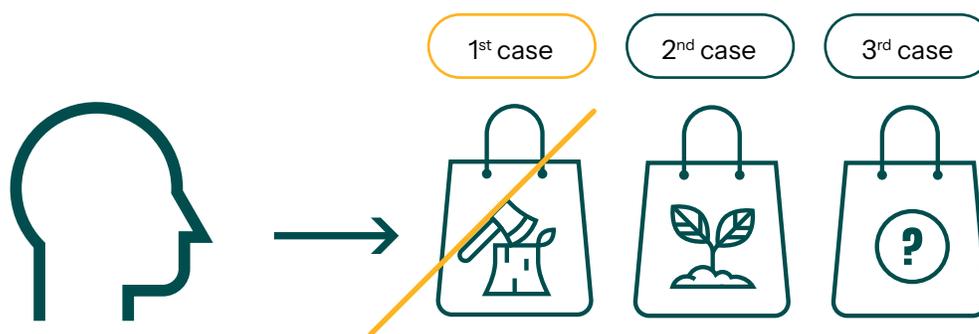
167. Fischer and Lyon (2014); Harbaugh et al. (2011).

168. Amos et al. (2017).

169. Ibid.

Furthermore, most certification programs focus exclusively on **communicating positive information**. As such, they allow for two possibilities: either the communication of positive information (i.e., that the product is certified) or the absence of communication (i.e., that the product is not certified). Thus, these programs are not designed to help consumers identify the products that are most harmful to the environment. However, some studies have shown that communicating negative information has a greater impact on consumer choices than communicating positive information.¹⁷⁰

Figure 10 | Disclosure of exclusively positive information



When a product has negative environmental impacts, this information is rarely brought to the consumer’s attention (first case). When a product has reduced environmental impacts, this information is sometimes disclosed to the consumer, particularly through a certification mark (second case). In most cases, no information is disclosed (third case). As a general rule, no information on the negative impacts of products is provided.

Finally, some certification programs are based on **problematic ecological compensation practices**. As described by the French government, ecological compensation does not concern “the company’s activities or the product,” but constitutes “an external commitment [...] to protect the environment.”¹⁷¹ This may include, for example, a commitment to protect or restore natural areas for each unit of product sold or to offset the environmental footprint of a product through the purchase of offset credits.¹⁷²

Such claims can be misleading when they falsely imply that an offset operation neutralizes the overall environmental impact of a product or when they give a misleading picture of the significant environmental impacts of a product. Furthermore, even when offset activities have actually been carried out and the costs fully covered, the degree of uncertainty regarding the achievement of the anticipated long-term results may be so high that the certified claim remains misleading or proves to be false.

170. Potter et al. (2022); Engels et al. (2010).

171. Conseil national de la consommation (2023, our translation).

172. For example, a commitment to plant a tree for every product sold.

B. ENFORCEMENT

i. Canada

At the federal level, the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations require that products labelled as organic or bearing the “Organic Canada” logo be certified under Canadian organic standards.¹⁷³ The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) uses a third-party service delivery model to ensure compliance with these standards. The model involves the CFIA granting accreditation to certification bodies that verify that operators comply with organic production standards and certify products accordingly.

In addition, as mentioned above, the federal government recently announced its intention to implement new labelling rules for plastic products, which include the establishment of a certification system for compostable plastics. The proposed framework would recognize four certification standards that would allow a company to make compostability claims.¹⁷⁴ Items labelled as compostable would also be required to meet certain minimum standards for the concentration of certain materials, “have undergone field testing at a composting facility in Canada, demonstrating that the item has disintegrated by at least 90% during the actual composting cycle for that facility” and be “associated with organic wastes, like food scraps and yard trimmings.”¹⁷⁵ An item’s compliance with any of these standards would have to be validated by an accredited third-party organization.¹⁷⁶

Labels presenting the term “compostable” on an item should specify that this term is “specific to industrial composting facilities” and should include the words “non recyclable.”¹⁷⁷

It would still be possible for companies not to make compostability claims and thus avoid the constraints associated with the certification program. In other words, compostability would not be a mandatory feature, but for companies wishing to label products as compostable, the stipulations of the certification program would be binding. Compostability would, however, be mandatory for price stickers for fruits and vegetables.

It should be noted that as of January 26, 2026, the final details of this regulatory program have not yet been released by the federal government.

ii. Québec

Québec’s *Act respecting reserved designations and added-value claims* establishes reserved designations and enhancing terms relating to specific characteristics of a product, such as a method of production or preparation. According to section 5 of the Act, “[t]o qualify for a reserved designation, a product must be certified by an accredited certification body as compliant with a specification manual.” In addition, to qualify for an added-value claim, a product must be certified by an accredited certification body. The enforcement of the Act is ensured by the *Conseil des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants* (Council for reserved designations and value-adding terms, a provincial body.)¹⁷⁸

173. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (2024b).

174. Government of Canada (2023a). These are the standards (i) ASTM D6400 – Standard Specification for Labelling of Plastics Designed to be Aerobically Composted in Municipal or Industrial Facilities; (ii) ASTM D6868 – Standard Specification for Labeling of End Items that Incorporate Plastics and Polymers as Coatings or Additives with Paper and Other Substrates; (iii) ISO 17088:2021 – Plastics – Organic Recycling – Specifications for compostable plastics; and (iv) “accredited standard specification that has equal or more stringent timeframes for disintegration and biodegradation of the plastic.”

175. Ibid.

176. Ibid.

177. Ibid.

178. Conseil des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants (undated).

The Québec government has also set up a directory of eco-labels providing information on the characteristics of some 40 eco-labels used in Québec.¹⁷⁹ For each eco-label, the directory identifies the target sector of activity, the brand owner, the life cycle stages covered, a summary of the criteria for obtaining the label, and an indication of the impact on GHG emissions.¹⁸⁰ An example of a file from the directory is reproduced in **Appendix C**.

Moreover, the Québec government funds the development of the *Le Décodeur* app, a free tool designed by *Protégez-Vous* magazine to help consumers assess the credibility of eco-labels and logos used to promote consumer products.¹⁸¹ To use the tool, users simply scan a logo with their phone in the app, which then presents a file evaluating the quality of the selected eco-label (see example below).¹⁸² The app also allows users to scan the list of ingredients in cosmetic products to learn more about their health risks. As of January 26, 2026, *Le Décodeur* lists a total of 117 eco-labels and 25,191 ingredients, including more than 200 that are considered risky.

Figure 11 | Example of an eco-label assessment sheet from *Le Décodeur*

ALIMENTS DU QUÉBEC

Bon ⓘ
Aliments du Québec
 Ce logo indique que le produit est composé d'au moins 85 % d'ingrédients québécois et que tous les ingrédients principaux (souvent les premiers dans la liste) proviennent du Québec. De plus, le produit a été entièrement fabriqué et emballé au Québec.

Transparence ⓘ
 Bon

Robustesse ⓘ
 Bon

Portée ⓘ
 Bon

Certifié par un tiers
 Oui

Aspect de la responsabilité
 Lieu spécifique

Catégorie(s)
 Alimentaire

Sous-Catégorie(s)
 Fruits et légumes, Viande, Poisson et fruits de mer, Vin et autre alcool, Produit transformé, Autres (Boissons, Confiseries et produits sucrés, Mets préparés et produits végétariens, Noix, arachides, Graines et grignotines, Nourriture pour animaux, Soupes, sauces, marinades, assaisonnements et épices)

[Site officiel de la certification](#)

179. Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (2024).

180. Ibid.

181. Protégez-Vous (2023).

182. Protégez-Vous (2024).

Box 4 | Framework for environmental certifications: European Union

In 1992, the EU established the *EU Ecolabel*, a voluntary eco-labelling system that allows products that meet minimum environmental performance requirements set at the European level to be eco-labelled. The *EU Ecolabel* is designed to take into account all of the environmental impacts of a product and its packaging throughout their life cycle.¹⁸³ Each EU member country is tasked with establishing a body responsible for issuing the eco-label. Eleven product categories are currently covered, including cleaning products, clothing and textiles, DIY products, electronic equipment, and personal hygiene products.¹⁸⁴ The certification program template is available to producers, manufacturers, importers, service providers, and wholesalers, as well as retailers for products marketed under their own brand. A company wishing to benefit from the *EU Ecolabel* must submit an application to the responsible authorities and pay the processing fees for its file.

To complement the *EU Ecolabel program*, which is not mandatory, the EU proposed the draft *Green Claims Directive* in 2023.¹⁸⁵ The aim of this directive was to define minimum requirements for environmental labels, which would be required to obtain a “certificate of conformity” issued by an independent verifier (articles 8 and 10). Environmental labels would have to be developed by “experts that can ensure their scientific robustness” and would be required to include procedures for dealing with non-compliance and withdrawal or suspension in cases of flagrant and persistent non-compliance.¹⁸⁶ To be approved, new environmental labels would have to submit certain supporting documents.¹⁸⁷ Labels that do not meet these minimum standards would be prohibited.¹⁸⁸ However, the process of adopting the *Green Claims Directive* was suspended on June 20, 2025.¹⁸⁹ The future of this directive therefore seems uncertain at present.

The European Union also amended its *Unfair Commercial Practices Directive* (separate from the proposed *Green Claims Directive*) in 2024 to prohibit generic environmental claims when marketing products to consumers in the absence of a recognized label.¹⁹⁰ Examples of generic claims listed in the directive include the terms “environmentally friendly,” “green,” “climate-friendly,” and “good for the environment.”¹⁹¹ Under this directive, these terms may only be used if there is an official eco-labelling standard that sets out the requirements that must be met in order to use them.¹⁹²

183. National Consumer Council (2023).

184. European Commission (undated).

185. Ibid.

186. Ibid.

187. Ibid.

188. Ibid.

189. European Parliament (2025).

190. European Commission (2024).

191. Ibid.

192. Ibid.

4.4 Laws and guidelines on misleading advertising

A. DESCRIPTION

Laws on misleading advertising prohibit false or misleading representations made to promote a product. Such prohibitions are found in general consumer protection laws, such as the CA and the CPA. They can also be found in laws specific to certain sectors or types of products, such as the *Textile Labelling Act*, which deals with consumer textile items. These laws are sometimes accompanied by guidelines issued by enforcement agencies to indicate their expectations of businesses.

Violations of misleading advertising laws can lead to investigations by these agencies, criminal or administrative proceedings, and consumer remedies, including class actions.

Misleading advertising laws are usually written in broad and general terms, making them applicable to a wide range of commercial representations. In addition, they usually allow consumers to bring private actions, in addition to oversight by enforcement agencies.

However, misleading advertising laws often apply only to statements made voluntarily by companies, which limits their scope. For example, a company could omit information about the environmental impacts of its products without violating misleading advertising laws.¹⁹³

Furthermore, as mentioned above, it can be difficult for consumers to identify cases of false or misleading environmental advertising, as information on environmental impact is complex and difficult to verify.

Finally, some enforcement agencies have limited resources to conduct investigations and initiate legal proceedings, lack environmental expertise, and do not proactively monitor markets, which can reduce the effectiveness of misleading advertising laws.

B. ENFORCEMENT

i. Canada

The CA contains several provisions that regulate companies' environmental claims. For example, subsection 74.01(1) of the CA, which is civil in nature,¹⁹⁴ prohibits representations to the public that are intended to promote a product or any business interest and that is false in a material respect, i.e., greenwashing types A and B.¹⁹⁵

193. However, it is important to remember the requirements of section 228 of the CPA, which prohibits the concealment of "material facts" and could apply to certain serious omissions.

194. The CA also includes a criminal provision—section 52—prohibiting misleading advertising. This provision applies only to cases where false or misleading information has been communicated knowingly or without regard for the consequences.

195. See Figure 3, p. 21 of this report.

In addition, the CA prohibits certain promotional representations that are not supported by sufficient corroborating evidence, which includes type C greenwashing.¹⁹⁶ Three types of claims are subject to the CA's corroboration requirements:

- Claims **relating to the performance, effectiveness, or useful life of a product**. Such claims must be based on sufficient and appropriate evidence.
- Claims about the **environmental benefits of a product**. Such claims must also be based on sufficient and appropriate evidence.
- Claims relating to the **environmental benefits of a company or a company's activities**. Such claims are currently required to be based on sufficient and appropriate corroborative evidence obtained using an internationally recognized method (**IRM**). However, it should be noted that proposed amendments to the CA following the tabling of the 2025 federal budget could change this latter requirement.¹⁹⁷

The substantiation requirements relating to the environmental benefits of a product, company, or company activity were added to the CA in June 2024. Their adoption led to strong reactions from certain stakeholders, with some welcoming their adoption and others raising concerns about legal predictability.¹⁹⁸ In response to this criticism, CB conducted a public consultation that led to the accelerated publication of guidelines on environmental claims.¹⁹⁹

In addition to these guidelines, businesses can refer to the *Deceptive Marketing Practices Digest – Volume 7*, a concise document published by the CB following the adoption of legislative amendments to help companies comply with the law.²⁰⁰ For example, the digest advises companies to avoid general environmental claims, misleading comparisons, and forward-looking statements that are not based on concrete actions.

Section 74.1 of the CA establishes that a breach of the CA's civil provisions on misleading advertising may lead the Competition Tribunal to impose various orders, including administrative monetary penalties (which can reach several million dollars, depending on the case) and the publication of corrective notices.

Such orders could previously only be issued at the request of the CB. However, since June 20, 2025, private parties may also bring private actions before the Competition Tribunal in cases involving misleading advertising. Applications must be pre-approved by the Competition Tribunal based on a “public interest” criterion, in order to prevent frivolous lawsuits. This new right of access could lead to an increase in the number of applications for orders to the Competition Tribunal in the coming years. As of January 2026, however, no private actions for greenwashing had been brought before the Competition Tribunal. It should also be noted that proposed amendments to the CA following the tabling of the 2025 federal budget could reduce the ability of private parties to bring such applications before the Tribunal.²⁰¹

196. Ibid.

197. See p. 62 of this report.

198. Snyder (2024).

199. Competition Bureau of Canada (2024a; 2025). These guidelines include recommendations on the broad principles that companies should follow in order to substantiate their environmental claims. However, they do not provide a detailed list of specific standards or certification programs that companies can use to substantiate their claims.

200. Competition Bureau of Canada (2024b).

201. See p. 62 of this report.

Prior to the legislative amendments of June 2024, a number of complaints had been submitted to the CB under general provisions of the CA on misleading advertising, and several investigations are still ongoing. For example:

→ Coffee capsules

In 2022, the CB and Keurig Canada Inc. (Keurig) agreed to a consent order under the CA in relation to Keurig’s claims about the recyclability of its coffee capsules.²⁰² According to the CB, Keurig had given the general impression that its polypropylene (**PP**) capsules could be placed in recycling bins across Canada, even though this type of plastic was not widely accepted by municipal recycling programs outside of British Columbia and Québec.²⁰³ From the CB’s perspective, these representations were false or misleading on a material point and therefore contravened the CA.²⁰⁴

Under the consent agreement, Keurig agreed to pay an administrative monetary penalty of \$3 million, donate \$800,000 to a Canadian environmental charity, and reimburse CB’s investigation costs.²⁰⁵ In addition, Keurig agreed to implement a compliance program and publish corrective notices. Finally, Keurig has committed to clarifying, where necessary, that its capsules are only “recyclable in certain locations” and may “not be recyclable in your area.”²⁰⁶

→ Forest product certification system

In 2021, six Canadian residents asked the CB to investigate the Canadian Standards Association’s “sustainable” forest management certification system.²⁰⁷ According to the petitioners, the certification program falsely promotes forest products from old-growth forests as “sustainable.”²⁰⁸ The status of this request for investigation remains unknown. However, in 2022, another complaint was submitted to the CB by environmental organizations regarding a second forest management certification system, that of the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative*.²⁰⁹ According to the complainants, the certification body allowed “sustainable” products to be certified without any real verification or specifications preventing certain practices that are harmful to the environment.²¹⁰ This complaint led the CB to open an investigation.²¹¹ To our knowledge, this investigation is still ongoing as of January 26, 2026.

202. Competition Tribunal (2022).

203. Ibid.

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid.

206. Ibid.

207. Ecojustice (2021).

208. Ibid.

209. Ecojustice (2023).

210. Ibid.

211. Ibid.



→ Cleaning wipes

In 2019, environmental organizations submitted a request to the CB to investigate cleaning wipes whose packaging indicated that they could be flushed down the toilet.²¹² This request was based on a study conducted by researchers at Ryerson University, which concluded that some cleaning wipes did not degrade sufficiently when submerged in water to be flushed down the toilet.²¹³ The complaint led to an investigation by the CB, which concluded in 2022 without the agency initiating enforcement action.²¹⁴ The CB indicated that it was unable to determine what standard to apply in assessing the meaning of the term “flushable.”²¹⁵

→ GHG emissions reduction

In February 2024, a British Columbia-based non-profit organization submitted a request to the CB for an investigation into allegations regarding GHG emissions by Lululemon Athletica Inc.²¹⁶ According to the organization, Lululemon used the phrase “Be Planet” in reference to its activities, even though the company had doubled its GHG emissions. This marketing campaign was also the subject of a similar complaint to the French authorities and a class action lawsuit in the United States.²¹⁷

Since the legislative changes of 2024, at least two CB investigations into environmental representations intended for consumers have been opened by the Bureau. The investigations, targeting the two natural gas distributors in Québec, Énergir and Enbridge Gaz Québec, both concern potentially misleading representations made by these two distributors regarding the option offered to consumers to choose renewable natural gas (**RNG**) supply.²¹⁸ As of December 5, 2025, these CB investigations were still ongoing.

There is no public data on the number of complaints received or the number of investigations initiated annually by the CB in connection with allegations of greenwashing. However, in its 2025-2026 Annual Plan, the CB states that the agency plans to “continue to combat misleading commercial practices in environmental claims.”²¹⁹ In addition, as mentioned above, the CB published guidelines on environmental claims in June 2025²²⁰ and commits in its 2025-2026 Annual Plan to “[d]eliver comprehensive and timely updates of our enforcement guidelines to align with the new legislation.”²²¹

212. Ecojustice (2019).

213. Khan et al. (2019).

214. Rabson (2022).

215. Ibid.

216. Owen (2024).

217. Hendriksz (2024).

218. Carbasse (2025).

219. Competition Bureau of Canada (2025b).

220. Competition Bureau of Canada (2025a).

221. Competition Bureau of Canada (2025b).

It remains to be seen how these guidelines will be reflected in the CB's enforcement activities. To our knowledge, the CB does not have a team dedicated exclusively to monitoring environmental claims and does not systematically verify such claims, with the detection of greenwashing cases falling primarily on the shoulders of consumers, competing companies, and civil society organizations. However, given the information asymmetry that exists between companies and the public, it can be difficult for third parties to identify which claims are false, misleading, or unproven and to report them to the CB for investigation.

This approach may be changing, however. In its 2023–2024 annual report, the CB indicated that over the past year it had adopted a “proactive approach to enforcement” and centralized a significant portion of its “intelligence [operations] within the Central Intelligence Unit of the Digital Enforcement and Intelligence Branch.” These changes could mean an intensification of the agency's efforts to proactively detect cases of misleading advertising in the future.²²²

It should be noted that in November 2025, additional amendments to the 2024 legislative amendments were proposed in Bill C-15, introducing the *Act to implement certain provisions of the budget tabled in Parliament on November 4, 2025* (Bill C-15). Section 43 of Bill C-15 proposes to amend paragraph 74.01(1) (b.2) of the CA to replace the requirement for businesses to use an IRM to substantiate their claims regarding the environmental benefits of their business or a business activity with the requirement to rely on sufficient and appropriate corroborative evidence (section 597(1) Bill C-15). It also proposes to exclude the possibility for private parties to apply directly to the Competition Tribunal for an order relating to a violation of paragraph 74.01(1)(b.2) (sections 597(2) and 598 of Bill C-15). Although we believe that removing the concept of IRM is acceptable in a context where this difficult-to-define concept had the potential to complicate enforcement of the Act, we are of the opinion that restricting direct access to the Tribunal by private parties represents a setback in terms of the CA's potential to contribute effectively to the fight against greenwashing. It should be noted that many companies have expressed support for clarifying the CA's anti-greenwashing rules rather than repealing some of them.²²³

In addition to the CA, other federal legislation also prohibits false or misleading representations to consumers, including the *Textile Labelling Act* and the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*. Finally, as mentioned above, the *Trademarks Act* provides for certain remedies in the event of misleading use of certification marks protected as trademarks.

ii. Québec

Like the CA, the CPA includes several provisions governing promotional representations by businesses. However, unlike the CA, which is likely to apply to any statement made to the public to promote a product or commercial interest, enforcement of the CPA is limited to the practices of a merchant, manufacturer, or advertiser intended for consumers. The table below summarizes the various “prohibited practices” under the CPA that may apply to environmental representations to consumers.

222. Competition Bureau of Canada (2024d)

223. Védrines and Laquerre (2025).



Table 4 | Cases covered by the *Consumer Protection Act*

Section	Prohibited practice	Examples of potentially targeted practices
219	False or misleading representations to a consumer	Presenting a product as “eco-friendly” when only the GHG emissions associated with its production have been offset by the purchase of voluntary carbon offset credits.
220(a)	Attributing false benefits to a good or service	Falsely stating that a product is “good for the environment” when it has negative environmental impacts.
221(a)	Falsely claiming that a good or service includes a particular component	Falsely stating that a product is made from recycled materials.
221(c)	Falsely claiming that a good or service meets a specified standard	Representing that a product is “organic” when it does not meet the requirements of that standard.
221(g)	Ascribing false performance characteristics	Stating that a product is “less polluting” than average, when that average has been calculated using a sample that is not representative of the products available in the relevant market.
222(d)	False claim that a product is manufactured according to a specified method of manufacture	Stating that a product is manufactured using a net-zero industrial process when this is false.
228	Omitting an important fact	Stating that a product is net-zero without specifying that this result was achieved through the purchase of voluntary carbon offset credits related to reforestation projects that have not yet taken place.
239(a)	Distorting the meaning of any information, opinion, or testimony	Implying that a product has been recommended by recognized scientific experts when this information is false.
239(b)	Communication of data or analysis falsely presented as scientific	Stating that the environmental impact of a product has been assessed as “low” by “experts” when no serious environmental impact analysis based on scientific principles has been carried out.

The fact that a prohibited practice has been used is not subordinate to whether or not a contract has been made (CPA, section 217).²²⁴

224. See: *Richard v. Time Inc.*, 2012 SCC 8.

Furthermore, the CPA stipulates that to “determine whether or not a representation constitutes a prohibited practice, the general impression it gives, and, as the case may be, the literal meaning of the terms used therein must be taken into account” (CPA, section 218). According to the Supreme Court of Canada’s decision in *Richard v. Time*, this criterion must be applied “from the perspective of the average consumer, who is credulous and inexperienced and takes no more than ordinary care to observe that which is staring him or her in the face upon first entering into contact with an entire advertisement.”²²⁵

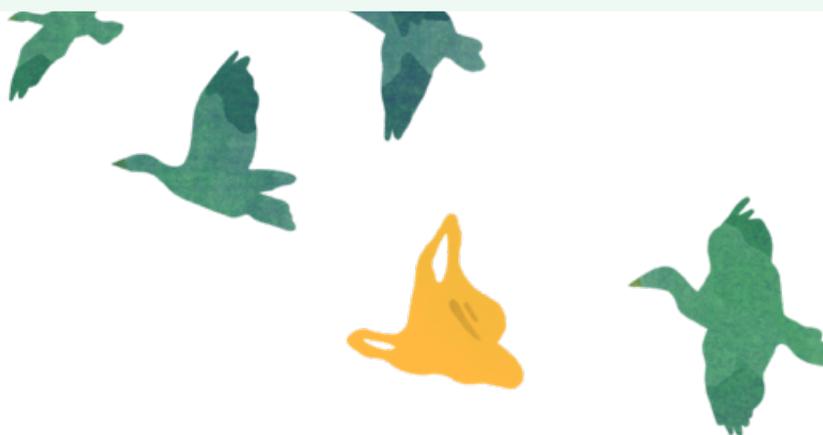
The OPC is tasked with enforcing the CPA and receiving consumer complaints. A violation of the CPA’s provisions on misleading advertising, considered a prohibited practice, may result in civil (including class actions), criminal, and administrative remedies.²²⁶

The provisions of the CPA on misleading advertising were recently invoked in a class action lawsuit concerning the recyclability of plastic bags; in a complaint to the OPC concerning renewable natural gas (RNG); and in an advertisement for pickup trucks.

→ Plastic bags

In May 2024, the Superior Court of Québec authorized a class action against Québec retailers for alleged false statements regarding the recyclability of woven and non-woven polypropylene (PP) bags. The plaintiff, who alleges that she would not have purchased these bags had they not been recyclable, is seeking punitive and compensatory damages.²²⁷

The appeal is based in particular on a study conducted by CIRAIG on the life cycle of shopping bags in Québec.²²⁸ According to this 2017 study, PP bags are discarded by sorting centres in Québec instead of being sorted for recycling.²²⁹ Consequently, the plaintiff considers that retailers have made false or misleading representations about the recyclability of the bags, which would contravene certain provisions of the CPA, the Civil Code of Québec, and the CA. Now that the class action has been authorized, it should proceed on its merits in the coming years.



225. Ibid.

226. See our 2021 research report on climate greenwashing for more details on this topic: Beaulieu and Bishai (2021), pp. 44-45.

227. CPA lawyers (undated).

228. Ibid.

229. Ibid.

→ Renewable natural gas

In 2023, the coalition of civil society organizations “Sortons le gaz!” filed a complaint with the OPC regarding commercial practices pertaining to RNG, asking it to investigate these commercial practices, take the necessary measures to ensure that they cease and are publicly rectified, and impose any necessary or useful sanctions.²³⁰ According to the coalition, the company gave consumers the false impression that they could supply their homes with a higher proportion of RNG than other customers based on the price paid. However, the purchase of RNG by a consumer rather constitutes an accounting measure to finance the percentage of RNG distributed throughout Énergir’s network, without changing the supply to a specific residence. On November 28, 2024, the OPC issued a notice of non-compliance to Énergir following this complaint.²³¹

Other statements related to RNG have also led to allegations of greenwashing under consumer protection laws in other Canadian provinces. For example, in March 2024, citizens and environmental organizations filed a lawsuit in British Columbia to force the natural gas distributor FortisBC to stop advertising the climate benefits of its RNG program.²³² As of January 26, 2026, to our knowledge, this case was still ongoing.

→ Pickup trucks

In June 2024, the organization Équiterre filed a complaint with the OPC regarding two advertisements promoting the Tacoma pickup truck.²³³ These advertisements, which appeared on social media, showed drivers spinning out at high speed in a desert landscape. According to the complaint, the advertisements could constitute a violation of sections 219 and 228 of the CPA, which prohibit false or misleading representations and prohibit the omission of an important fact. The ads failed to disclose the negative environmental impact associated with the use of the vehicles being promoted and depicted dangerous driving practices that were not representative of the actual use of the vehicles.

As is the case for CB, there is no public data on the number of complaints received or the number of greenwashing investigations initiated annually by the OPC. Furthermore, to our knowledge, the agency does not have a team dedicated to reviewing companies’ environmental claims, does not systematically and proactively verify them, and has not identified this issue as a priority in its enforcement activities. Finally, unlike the CB, the OPC has not announced whether it plans to publish guidelines on environmental claims by companies.

230. See Bergeron (2024).

231. Office de la protection du consommateur (2024).

232. Ecojustice (2024).

233. Blais (2024b).

Box 5 | Rules on misleading advertising: European Union

As mentioned above, in 2023 the EU proposed the *Directive on Green Claims* with the aim of regulating the justification and communication of environmental claims by companies.²³⁴ The draft directive sets out minimum justification requirements for voluntary environmental claims (i.e., those not required by law) (article 3). For example, companies wishing to make any such claim would be required to carry out an assessment that is “based on widely recognised scientific evidence, use[s] accurate information and take[s] into account relevant international standards,” covering the entire life cycle and “all environmental aspects or environmental impacts which are significant to assessing the environmental performance.” Claims that do not meet these minimum standards would be prohibited.

These substantiation requirements would be coupled with disclosure requirements. Under this directive, companies making environmental claims would be required to provide consumers with certain minimum information in conjunction with these claims in physical form (e.g., on the label), via an internet link, or via a QR code. This information should include “the underlying studies or calculations used to assess, measure and monitor the environmental impacts, environmental aspects or environmental performance covered by the claim, without omitting the results of such studies or calculations and explanations of their scope, assumptions and limitations” (article 5). Specific obligations would be provided for claims based on carbon offsets. However, the process of adopting the *Directive on Green Claims* was suspended on June 20, 2025.²³⁵ The future of this directive therefore seems uncertain at present.

Recent amendments to the *Unfair Commercial Practices Directive* also include requirements for forward-looking environmental claims (e.g., a goal of achieving net-zero by 2050). The amendments also prohibit generic environmental claims, defined as any system “to monitor the progress of the trader regularly with regard to the commitments and targets.”²³⁶ The amendments also prohibit generic environmental claims, defined as “any environmental claim made in written or oral form, including through audiovisual media, that is not included on a sustainability label and where the specification of the claim is not provided in clear and prominent terms on the same medium.”²³⁷ In addition, the amendments adopted prohibit “making an environmental claim about the entire product or the trader’s entire business when it actually concerns only a certain aspect of the product or a specific, unrepresentative activity of the trader’s business.”²³⁸

234. European Commission (2023).

235. European Parliament (2025).

236. European Commission (2024).

237. Ibid.

238. Ibid.



Box 6 | Rules on misleading advertising: France*

As is the case in Québec law, the French *Consumer Code* generally prohibits numerous types of misleading commercial practices. In addition, article 10 of the *Climate and Resilience Act* amended the *Consumer Code* to include specific references to environmental claims in the section on misleading commercial practices. For example, article L.121-2 of the *Consumer Code* now prohibits any practice that “is based on false or misleading claims, indications, or presentations” relating to the essential characteristics of the goods (including their “environmental impact”) or to the “scope of the advertiser’s commitments, particularly in environmental matters.” These provisions are supplemented by article 90 of *Act No. 2015-992 of August 17, 2015, on energy transition for green growth*, which states that “producers who voluntarily make environmental claims or communications about their products are required to provide the main environmental characteristics of those products.”

To help companies comply with these requirements, the French government and the National Consumer Council, an advisory body composed of various stakeholders, published a revised version of their “Practical Guide to Environmental Claims” in March 2023.²³⁹ This guide, the first version of which was published in 2010, aims to facilitate the interpretation of the French regulatory framework relating to environmental marketing, in particular by making recommendations on the use of certain claims, such as “sustainable,” “recyclable,” or “natural.”

Finally, beyond regulatory measures, the French authorities are demonstrating transparency in their enforcement activities to combat greenwashing. For example, the 2023 Activity Report of the Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs, and Fraud Control (DGCCRF) includes a specific section on the Directorate’s actions relating to environmental claims.²⁴⁰ This section, which supplements general information on the number of complaints handled by sector of activity, lists the number of investigations conducted into greenwashing, websites inspected, warnings and injunctions issued, cases referred to criminal prosecutors, and the number and value of administrative fines imposed.²⁴¹

* In this box, all passages in quotations, and all italicized legislation from whence they came, are our translations.

239. Conseil national de la consommation (2023).

240. Direction générale de la concurrence, de la consommation et de la répression des fraudes (2024).

241. Ibid.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, we present recommendations to improve the quality and quantity of information disclosed by companies on the environmental characteristics of their products. Implementing these recommendations is essential to ensure that consumers have access to environmental information that is **truthful, comprehensible, comparable, timely, complete, and verifiable**. Such information is necessary to enable consumers to better understand the impact of their consumption habits and to help them make informed choices. This should then encourage companies to offer products that reflect these adjusted habits.

The measures we propose are consistent with sub-objectives 1.3.1 (“Increase the presence of sustainable products and services on the market”) and 1.3.2 (“Facilitate responsible and local consumption choices”) of the Québec government’s 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Strategy.²⁴²

They are also aligned with the various roadmaps adopted by the Québec government under this strategy. For example, the “Government circular economy roadmap 2024-2028” identifies the objective of “improving environmental labelling to promote responsible consumption.”²⁴³ The roadmap also identifies the objective of “promoting the circularization of food packaging,” recognizes “the lack of clear guidelines for the design and marketing of these products,” and mentions the improvement of “provisions governing plastic packaging” as a corrective measure.²⁴⁴

In addition, our recommendations would contribute to the achievement of Target 11 of the Québec government’s 2030 Nature Plan, which aims to “[e]mpower Quebecers to make sustainable consumption choices and encourage greater contribution from economic activities to biodiversity conservation.”²⁴⁵ To achieve this objective, the Nature Plan recognizes that “consumers need access to clear, verified information in order to make sustainable consumption choices” and that “[e]nhancing the environmental labelling of products and services to address biodiversity conservation is crucial to achieving this goal.”²⁴⁶ In order to achieve Target 11, the Nature Plan outlines actions aimed at “ensuring that consumers are provided with clear, reliable information on biodiversity to guide their consumption and investment choices.”²⁴⁷

The measures we propose would also be consistent with Goal 4 of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy 2022-2026 (“Promote knowledge and skills for sustainable development”).²⁴⁸ To achieve this goal, the strategy notes as a means of implementation the provision of information to help consumers make more sustainable choices, in particular by supporting labelling initiatives that enable individuals to acquire the appropriate skills and competencies to become sustainable consumers and by strengthening the labelling of consumer products.²⁴⁹

242. Gouvernement du Québec (2023a) (All quotations in this paragraph are our translations from the French only 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Strategy.)

243. Gouvernement du Québec (2024a)

244. Ibid.

245. Gouvernement du Québec (2024b) (all quotations from the Nature Plan are taken from the official English translation of said document.)

246. Ibid.

247. Ibid.

248. Government of Canada (2022).

249. Ibid.



Finally, the measures we propose are aligned with a number of legislative and regulatory measures announced or proposed by the governments of Québec and Canada, including the AEPB, the new EPR initiative, as well as the federal labelling and certification programs for the recyclability and compostability of plastics.

However, it is important to remember that even with comprehensive information on the environmental characteristics of consumer products, a number of factors limit the transformative potential of responsible consumption, including consumer interest in lower-impact products and their ability to pay for them.²⁵⁰ Furthermore, the urgency of action in the face of the climate and biodiversity crises requires structural responses that are commensurate with the scale of the challenges in order to protect the population and, in particular, the right to health and the right to a healthy environment.

Therefore, legislative and regulatory measures complementary to the recommendations included in our report, which are limited to information disclosure, must be adopted. These complementary measures should be designed to address both social and environmental challenges, helping to reduce rather than increase social inequalities for a more just, green, and resilient society.

5.1 Establish an environmental labelling system

Our first recommendation is to implement an environmental labelling system covering all consumer products likely to have significant environmental impacts. Under such a system, companies would be required to disclose specific information to consumers about the environmental impact of their products and how to sort them after use.

Such a system would require companies to disclose comprehensive and relevant information on the environmental impacts of products in a uniform and comprehensible format. By improving the quantity and quality of information available to the public, such a system would steer consumer choices toward options that are less harmful to the environment and stimulate innovation toward an increased supply of such products.

Such a system could be implemented by the governments of Québec and other Canadian provinces and/or by the federal government. Moreover, the system suggested herein would be consistent with a number of measures announced by the governments of Québec and Canada. For example, at the federal level, this system would be a logical extension of the measures on the labelling of recyclability and compostability of plastics announced in April 2023.²⁵¹

Similarly, at the provincial level, such a system would be compatible with the new EPR system and the resulting uniform sorting practices. It should be noted that under section 53.28(4) of the *Environment Quality Act*, the Québec government has the power to “regulate the labelling or the marking of the designated containers, packaging, printed matter or other products, among other things to prescribe or prohibit the use on them of terms, logos, symbols, or other representations intended to inform users of the advantages or disadvantages that the container, packaging, printed matter or other product entails for the environment.”

250. Pedersen & Neergaard (2006); Gleim & Lawson (2014).

251. Government of Canada (2023a).

Moreover, such a mandatory environmental labelling system would allow for the direct implementation of measures considered by the Québec government in its various strategies or draft strategies.

For example, the Québec government's Sustainable Development Strategy 2023-2028 states that "support for improving labelling and promoting verified environmental product declarations (EPDs), web referencing, and in-store product promotion is also a priority area for action."²⁵² Similarly, the consultation document outlining the draft "Strategy for the Reduction and Responsible Management of Plastics in Québec 2024-2029" identifies several measures directly related to environmental labelling:²⁵³

→ **Measure 3.1.2.1 – "Identify the categories of plastic products to be targeted for eco-labelling (2027)"**

→ **Measure 3.1.2.2 – "Regulate the imposition of eco-labelling for certain plastic products (2027-2029)" (our translation from the available French version)**

Furthermore, in a 2021 report on "The Current Status and Management of Final Waste," the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (Public Hearings Office on the Environment) noted that "regulating advertising, improving consumer support through clear labelling and signage regarding environmental impacts" were among the measures that could promote "eco-design, reuse, and source reduction."²⁵⁴

We recommend implementing this recommendation in two stages. In the **short term**, we recommend implementing a **targeted** environmental labelling system that would require both:

- **The highlighting of targeted environmental indicators for all product categories** for which such data already exists or could be easily obtained by the companies that market them. These indicators would be presented in an easy-to-understand format, such as colour codes and alphabetical or numerical ratings. For example, electronic products could be assigned mandatory eco-labels indicating their energy performance and repairability or durability using an alphabetical or numerical rating, as is already the case in other jurisdictions. This labelling system could also include mandatory indications for products with a significant environmental impact. Every public mention of these products – advertisements, labels, packaging, online descriptions, etc. – would be coupled with an indication of this impact. Such a system would quickly inform consumers about the negative environmental impact of certain products and encourage them to choose alternatives. This system would be inspired by the warnings on cigarette packs, combining simplicity and visibility of messages.
- **The disclosure of sorting instructions** for all consumer products (including packaging) that are likely to be donated, reused, repurposed, composted, returned, recycled, disposed of, or managed in any other way by consumers. This disclosure would systematically indicate the appropriate way

252. Government of Québec (2023a) (All quotations in this paragraph are our translations from the French only 2023-2028 Sustainable Development Strategy.)

253. Government of Québec (2023b).

254. Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (2022). (our translation)

to treat each product or packaging after use (donation, reuse, recycling, deposit, composting, disposal as residual waste, etc.) in order to avoid confusion. The lack of uniform sorting instructions hinders the proper management of materials, as consumers are often unsure about the recyclability or compostability of products. Although the proposed federal regulations on recyclability and compostability labelling for plastics have the potential to improve the situation, the standards put forward in the regulations do not cover all consumer products and packaging. Furthermore, it is important to distinguish between (i) information on a product's environmental impact, which allows informed consumers to make decisions that reflect their preferences, and (ii) information on how to sort a product after use. For example, the fact that a material is made from recycled material (information that reflects the environmental impact of the product) does not guarantee that it is recyclable (instructions on how to sort the product after use). Separating this information would avoid confusion between the two types of information, which serve different purposes.

Products subject to the requirement to provide targeted environmental impact indicators should be selected based on the following factors:

→ **Significance of negative impact**

Prioritization of product categories with the highest impacts throughout their life cycle, whether due to their individual impact (each unit sold has a significant impact) or collective impact (regardless of their individual impact, the aggregate impact of units sold is high, particularly because the product is consumed on a large scale), especially carbon-intensive products.

→ **Scientific and methodological maturity**

Prioritization of product categories for which there is already a robust methodology for assessing significant environmental impacts, particularly under existing environmental labelling initiatives in other jurisdictions, such as household appliances and electronics, or under private certification initiatives.²⁵⁵

→ **Data availability**

Prioritization of product categories for which primary data (i.e., data specific to the product in question) and/or secondary data (i.e., data from third parties) are already available or could be easily obtained.

→ **Existence (current or potential) of substitutes**

Prioritization of product categories for which substitutes exist or are likely to exist in the medium term, so that consumers can use the information to adapt their consumption choices.

255. For example, if a given product can be certified as carbon neutral, this means that its carbon footprint can be assessed; similarly, if certifications exist for other indicators, it is because these aspects are already measurable.

→ **Cost amortization**

Prioritization of product categories with high unit value or sales volume, allowing companies that market them to amortize labelling costs more easily.

The example of energy performance labels for buildings included in Box 3 of this report is an example of a targeted labelling system from which provincial and federal governments could draw inspiration.

The figure below provides another example of a labelling system, this time to identify products with high environmental impact, inspired by the labelling rules in force in Chile for products with high sugar and fat content.²⁵⁶ In this example, the labelling system provides both instructions on sorting after use and information on the significant environmental impacts of the product throughout its life cycle. Products that do not pose high risks would only present instructions on sorting after use, which would be mandatory for all products.

Figure 12 | Example of labelling with sorting instructions and guidelines²⁵⁷



An alternative to this system would be to add an environmental component to the nutrition symbol developed by the federal government, which became mandatory on January 1, 2026.²⁵⁸

Figure 13 | Example of a label incorporating the federal nutrition symbol²⁵⁹



256. RTBF (2020).
 257. Figure partially generated using Meta AI generative artificial intelligence.
 258. Government of Canada (2024b).
 259. The symbol on the left is the one that will be imposed by the federal government in 2026. The symbol on the right is a modified version of this symbol. See Government of Canada (2024b).



Currently, the symbol shown on the left side of Figure 13 must be affixed on the front of food packaging when the sodium, sugar, or saturated fat content reaches certain thresholds. An environmental component could be added to this symbol to identify products whose harmful environmental impacts exceed certain thresholds, as shown on the right side of Figure 13.

It is important to note that the format shown in Figure 8 does not have quite the same objective as the format proposed in figures 12 and 13. The first format allows all targeted products to be compared using a common measurement scale and to rank the relative performance of each substitute according to its impact. The second format only identifies the worst-performing products, i.e., those that exceed a given impact threshold. This second format creates only two categories of products: those with high impacts and those with low impacts. As such, this format does not allow for as accurate a comparison of the relative performance of different products and may reduce companies' incentives to improve their performance if these improvements do not result in a change in labelling.²⁶⁰

Despite this limitation, such a targeted labelling system would avoid certain technical and administrative constraints associated with the implementation of a more comprehensive environmental labelling system, which could be implemented at a later date.

Thus, in a second phase, the government should develop a comprehensive environmental labelling system. Under this system, companies marketing the targeted products would be required to present aggregate indicators of the overall environmental impact of their products. Unlike a targeted labelling system, which would only cover a limited selection of environmental indicators, this system would take into account all of the environmental impacts of products (biodiversity, climate, pollution, extraction of natural resources, etc.) throughout their life cycle, thus enabling consumers to have an overview of the environmental impact of the products on offer, including their positive and negative aspects.

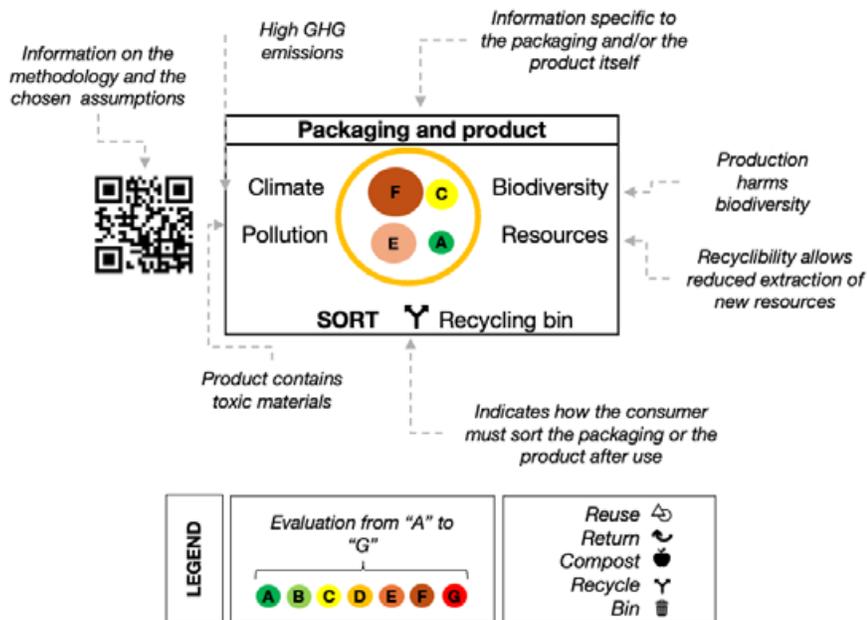
In this sense, the disclosure of indicators should be designed to help consumers understand the impacts of a product, question the need to purchase it, and, if necessary, encourage the substitution of high-impact products with low-impact products. In addition, the system should be designed to minimize the rebound effect, i.e., the incentive to consume more because the products consumed have a lower impact.²⁶¹

The figure below provides an example of what such a **comprehensive labelling system** might look like. In this example, impact indicators are aggregated into four colour-coded letter grades. These ratings assess the impacts of the product and/or its packaging on the climate, biodiversity, natural resource extraction, and pollution (other than GHGs). A QR code allows consumers to obtain more information about the methodology and data used by the company. The label also provides instructions on how to properly sort the packaging after use.

260. For example, a company that markets a product with extremely poor performance might consider that there is no point in improving its performance if this improvement does not allow it to fall below the labelling threshold. Similarly, a company that markets a product whose performance just barely avoids the labelling requirement may consider that there is no advantage in improving its performance further, since this improvement will not lead to any change in labelling.

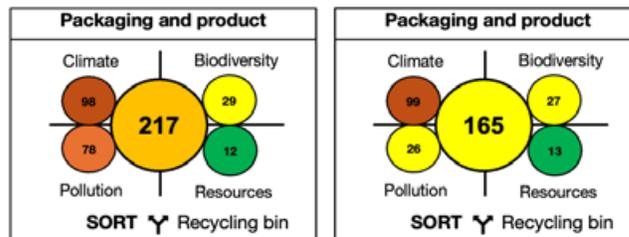
261. France Terme (2023).

Figure 14 | Proposed comprehensive environmental labelling (alphabetical format)



An alternative to the format shown in Figure 14 would be to use scores, which have the advantage of illustrating the relative performance of two substitute products more simply. In addition, this format avoids the need to determine a ceiling for the measurement scale. Figure 15 shows an example of such a format. In this example, the scores of two products are compared. The weighting of each impact category is considered equivalent, so that the total score is simply the sum of the specific scores.

Figure 15 | Proposed comprehensive environmental labelling (numerical format)



In conjunction with current rules on misleading advertising, such a system, if well designed, has the potential to counter most of the greenwashing techniques identified in Appendix A. For example:

- By requiring the **disclosure of information** on each significant environmental impact throughout a product's life cycle, the overall labelling system would prevent the omission of important information.
- By **standardizing how information is presented** and ensuring that it is disclosed in an **comprehensible format that allows for comparison** between products and is **framed in a way that changes behaviour**, the labelling system would minimize public confusion, prevent the use of misleading symbols, facilitate consumer decisions, and neutralize vague and overly general claims. Such standardization would also help reduce the costs of acquiring and disclosing information for businesses.
- By requiring that the information disclosed **be based on specific** corroborating **evidence**, the system would prevent the communication of information that is not evidence-based.

In addition, such a system would improve consumers' knowledge of the impact of their consumption choices and help dispel certain misconceptions. According to a 2024 study, only 23% of Québec consumers are able to correctly identify which stage of a food product's life cycle (production, transportation, packaging, etc.) emits the most GHGs, which can lead people who want to be eco-responsible to choose the wrong products.²⁶² To achieve this goal, the implementation of the system should be accompanied by a public communication strategy aimed at helping the public learn how to use these tools.

Given the compliance costs that such a system may entail, its implementation should be prioritized for product categories where the benefits outweigh the costs.²⁶³ It would be appropriate to begin implementing the system with pilot projects, for example in higher-risk sectors where the cost of the products sold would make it easier to offset the costs associated with calculating a life cycle analysis, where environmental impact indicators already exist and, if applicable, where fewer SMEs operate.

In addition, governments could prohibit labelling practices that obscure or undermine the effectiveness of the mandatory labelling system. Two examples would be to prohibit the addition of supplementary labels that highlight a positive (but low-impact) aspect to counterbalance the negative rating obtained under the mandatory system, or the superimposition of information aimed at overwhelming consumers with technical details in order to reduce the visibility of mandatory labelling .

Finally, governments could develop policies to complement the overall labelling system. One possibility would be to introduce a pricing system, as is the case under the Québec and federal carbon pricing systems. In these systems, mandatory disclosure of GHG emissions by large emitters is accompanied by a dynamic pricing system that encourages companies to reduce their emissions. The adoption of trade restriction measures is also possible. For example, France is considering banning the rental of housing with low environmental ratings, commonly referred to as "thermal sieves," by 2028.²⁶⁴ Governments could therefore explore mechanisms for pricing or gradually banning certain environmentally harmful products.

262. Saulais and Espougne (2024).

263. These benefits include the reduction of significant environmental impacts, increased consumer awareness, and the possibility of reducing consumption and substituting alternatives. At the same time, the constraints to be considered include the possibility of amortizing the costs of assessment over a sufficient sales volume, scientific and methodological maturity, and data availability.

264. Ministère de la Transition écologique (2021).

5.2 Raise the bar for environmental certifications

The use of an environmental certification mechanism does not guarantee that an environmental claim is true, non-misleading, or sufficiently and appropriately justified. For example, a certification program may be insufficient if its criteria are not sufficiently demanding or if they do not take into account all of the significant environmental impacts of a product throughout its life cycle.

To address these issues, governments should impose minimum standards on private environmental certification programs to ensure their quality. Such rules could be implemented by the governments of Québec and other Canadian provinces, or by the federal government. These rules could be adopted in the form of legislative amendments to misleading advertising laws or through separate legislative frameworks.

These rules should be based on ISO 14024*, which states that an environmental certification program must:²⁶⁵

- **establish criteria that address the entire life cycle of a product and its most significant environmental impacts.**
- **establish criteria aimed at reducing the product's most significant environmental impacts.**
- **allow for certification by an independent third party.**
- **provide for regular review of the specifications.**
- **publicly disclose its specifications.**

In addition, certification program rules should provide guidance on the use of ecological compensation mechanisms and address the risks of conflicts of interest.

Any company referring to an environmental certification program should be required to make publicly available evidence of its compliance with the program criteria and ensure independent and objective verification of this compliance by a qualified third party. In addition, the certified company should provide explanations to the public in order to clearly and accurately explain the criteria of the certification program as well as clearly specify whether the certification relates to a commitment, an action, or a result.

Furthermore, to ensure the implementation of this program, the government could create a mandatory registration and verification system for private certification initiatives, which would both ensure that they comply with minimum quality standards and provide a comprehensive database for public information purposes.

265. Conseil national de la consommation (2023).

* ISO 14024, specifically the current version ISO 14024:2018 (Environmental labels and declarations — Type I environmental labelling — Principles and procedures), is a proprietary, copyrighted standard published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). As such, the full text is not available for free public distribution. However, ours is a summary of the standard's content based on its official outline and scope:

Finally, governments should establish new public environmental certification programs for certain categories of frequently used claims that present recurring integrity issues, such as net-zero claims or the use of voluntary carbon offset credits.²⁶⁶ These initiatives would ensure that such claims are systematically validated by an independent third party and meet uniform and rigorous performance criteria. They could be based on existing models, such as the federal organic certification program or the provincial system governing reserved designations and value-added terms.

5.3 Require disclosure of evidence supporting environmental claims

Under the amendments to the CA adopted in June 2024, organizations that make claims about the environmental benefits of their business, products, or activities for promotional purposes must be able to substantiate them with adequate and proper evidence.

However, these amendments do not require companies to disclose this evidence, which only becomes accessible if legal action is brought before the Competition Tribunal. **This lack of transparency is a significant obstacle to identifying cases of greenwashing.**

Without access to corroborating evidence supporting an allegation, it is very difficult for third parties to know whether an allegation is based on credible evidence or is purely speculative and thus should be the subject of an application for an order by the Competition Tribunal. The CB relies on complaints from the public to launch investigations; however, in the absence of rules on the disclosure of supporting evidence, the public cannot fulfill this role.

Furthermore, it is unrealistic to expect a legal action to be filed every time a consumer wants to verify whether an environmental claim is based on credible supporting evidence.²⁶⁷

This lack of direct access to evidence can also slow down the CB's efforts to proactively verify environmental claims. In order to review the supporting evidence held by a company, the CB is forced to ask the company to provide it voluntarily or to apply to the Competition Tribunal for an order (CA, section 11). This process, far from being automatic, considerably complicates and burdens the agency's work.

In order to facilitate the identification of speculative environmental claims, **the Competition Act should be amended to require companies to make their evidence available as soon as an environmental claim is communicated to the public.**

The regulatory burden associated with this proposal would be minimal, since the CA already requires that claims be based on sufficient and appropriate evidence. Thus, the proposed measure would not require companies to conduct new analyses, but simply to publicly disclose the analyses that they are already required to prepare. For example, companies could make this information available through a hyperlink or QR code leading to a website validating their supporting evidence, as has been done in France since 2025 for the energy performance of buildings.²⁶⁸

266. As initially proposed by Lampron (2005).

267. In the French TotalEnergies case, where the French multinational oil company was convicted of misleading the public about its contribution to the climate crisis, more than three years passed between the original lawsuit and the court's decision. See Greenpeace France (2025).

268. République française - Service Public (2025).

5.4 Step up enforcement of misleading advertising laws

The CB's Annual Plan for 2025-2026 states that the agency intends to “continue to combat misleading commercial practices in environmental claims (‘greenwashing’).” Furthermore, in its 2023-2024 annual report, the CB indicated that it planned to adopt a “proactive approach to enforcement.”²⁶⁹ In particular, it announced that it had recently centralized a significant portion of its “intelligence operations within the central intelligence unit of the Digital Enforcement and Intelligence Branch,” suggesting an increase in the agency’s proactive efforts to detect cases of misleading advertising.²⁷⁰ Finally, if new amendments to the CA are adopted as planned through Bill C-15 in 2026, it can be expected that the CB will publish updated guidelines on environmental claims addressing these amendments in the near future. The OPC, for its part, has not included greenwashing as a priority in its recent annual plans and has not committed to publishing guidelines on environmental claims.

In this context, and despite the CB’s communications mentioned above, it remains difficult to assess the intensity of OPC and CB enforcement activities with respect to misleading advertising, as neither agency discloses the number of complaints handled or the number of investigations initiated for this type of case. Furthermore, neither the OPC nor the CB reported on their enforcement efforts in relation to greenwashing cases in their latest annual reports. In addition, to our knowledge, neither the CB nor the OPC systematically monitors companies’ environmental claims.

To remedy this situation, we recommend that the CB and the OPC both:

- **Publicly report on their enforcement activities in relation to greenwashing cases.** To do so, both agencies could draw inspiration from the practices of the French DGCCRF. For example, for the year 2023, the DGCCRF disclosed specific information on its activities to combat greenwashing, including the number of investigations conducted, websites monitored, warnings and injunctions issued, cases referred to criminal prosecutors, and the number and value of administrative fines imposed.²⁷¹ Similar data should be disclosed by the CB and the OPC. We believe that the disclosure of this type of information strikes a balance between the necessary confidentiality of the investigation processes themselves and the transparency of these agencies’ activities.
- **Proactively monitor companies’ environmental claims.** For example, agencies should consider using automated IT tools to set up mechanisms for monitoring these claims. Such tools are currently being developed internationally.²⁷² Agencies could also use extrajudicial enforcement measures, such as sending out mass warning letters to companies suspected of greenwashing practices. Although the CB and the OPC already issue press releases warning companies to avoid certain problematic practices or alerting the public, communications sent to specific companies are likely to have a greater impact. Such measures are regularly used by other agencies abroad to quickly correct problematic practices without the inconvenience and slowness of the judicial process.²⁷³ If no corrective action is taken, formal enforcement measures could be initiated against offenders.

269. Competition Bureau of Canada (2024d).

270. Ibid.

271. Directorate-General for Competition, Consumer Affairs, and Fraud Control (2024).

272. See, for example, GreenWatch (2025).

273. See, for example, Kent (2024).

→ **Establish teams dedicated to environmental issues.** Assessing environmental claims can be complex, and setting up specialized teams in this area would improve the OPC’s and the CB’s ability to identify cases of greenwashing and take action against them.²⁷⁴ This approach would also be consistent with the recommendation of Canada’s Net-Zero Advisory Body, which recommends that all federal departments, agencies, and Crown corporations strengthen their expertise and capacity in data, analysis, and interpretation related to achieving net-zero.²⁷⁵ Furthermore, the creation of a team dedicated to emerging issues would not be unprecedented for the CB; a few years ago, it established the Digital Enforcement and Intelligence Directorate, composed of experts responsible for enforcement in the digital economy sector.²⁷⁶ A similar group of experts could be formed to monitor companies’ environmental claims and examine the interactions between the environment and other areas of CB enforcement, such as mergers, agreements between competitors, and abuse of dominant position. Other authorities active in similar areas, such as the Québec *Autorité des marchés financiers*, have recently created such teams.²⁷⁷

5.5 Prohibit certain advertising representations considered inherently misleading

The Québec and Canadian governments should specifically prohibit certain categories of advertising that promote products or lifestyles that are incompatible with Québec’s and Canada’s environmental obligations, commitments, and objectives.

For example, many jurisdictions have banned or are considering banning certain categories of advertising for carbon-intensive products and fossil fuel companies, as well as other similar advertisements. This option has already been the subject of private bills in British Columbia and at the federal level in the past.²⁷⁸

Furthermore, inherently misleading or generic claims, such as those based on broad terms like “sustainable” or “environmentally friendly,” should be explicitly prohibited, as is the case at the European level. We consider that these terms are already prohibited under the CA because they cannot be substantiated in accordance with the requirements of the Act given their general nature. However, this interpretation would benefit from being formalized.

To do so, the federal government could adopt an interpretive regulation under the CA (CA, section 128) indicating that the use of these terms is necessarily misleading within the meaning of section 74.01 of the Act. Similarly, the Québec government could amend the Regulation respecting the application of the *Consumer Protection Act* to set out the parameters of such a prohibition, as is already the case with the prohibition on advertising to children. These measures could be repealed when they cease to be useful after the implementation of an environmental labelling system such as the one recommended in [section 5.1](#) of this report.

274. Centre québécois du droit de l’environnement et al. (2023).

275. Canada’s Net-Zero Advisory Body (2023).

276. Competition Bureau of Canada (2024e).

277. *Autorité des marchés financiers* (undated).

278. Parliament of Canada (2024).

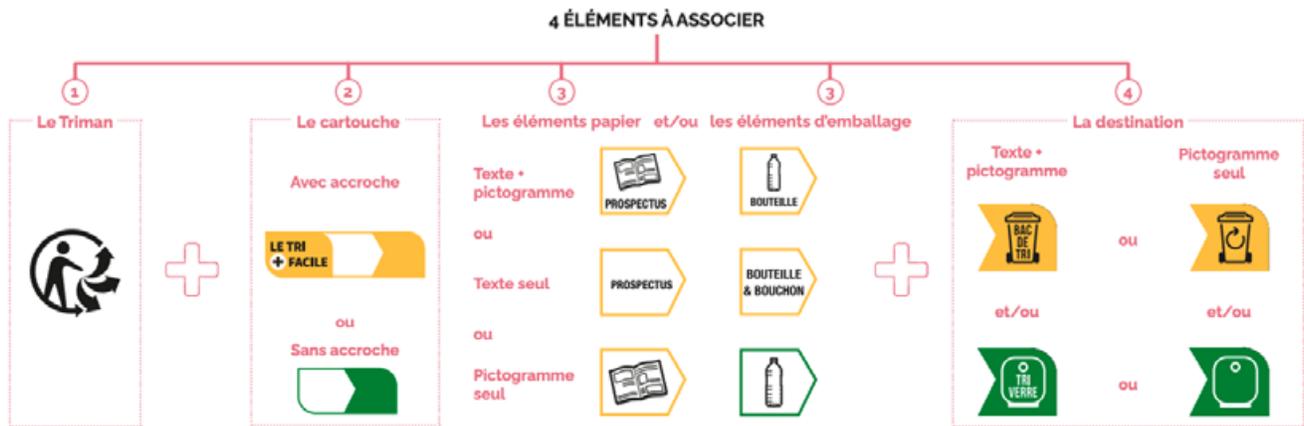
SUMMARY OF KEY GREENWASHING PRACTICES²⁷⁹

#	Practice	Type(s)	Example
1	Insufficient corroboration	C	Promoting a product as emitting 50% fewer toxic particles into the air than the industry average without having conducted tests to validate this information.
2	Vague and general statements	C/B	Using terms such as “green” or “eco-friendly” to describe a product’s environmental impact without proof of a neutral environmental impact throughout its entire life cycle and supply chain.
3	Misleading comparisons	C/B	Claiming that a product has the “lowest carbon footprint in the industry” without specifying the basis for this comparison and without supporting evidence.
4	Use of misleading certifications and eco-labels	C/B	Using a logo that gives the impression that a product meets higher-than-average environmental performance standards when this is not the case or when this information has not been independently verified.
5	Speculative forward-looking statements	C/B	Promoting an organization’s GHG emission reduction targets without having a credible plan to achieve them.
6	Selective statements	C/B	Providing favourable information about a product’s GHG emissions without mentioning its negative impacts on biodiversity, even though these negative environmental impacts are proportionally significant.
7	Use of misleading images, colours, and symbols	C/B	Placing images of trees on the packaging of a product whose production causes deforestation.
8	Promotion of negligible benefits	C/B	Stating that a product generates 5% less GHG emissions than the previous model, when 95% of the GHG emissions associated with that product are generated during its production.
9	Communication of purely false information	C/A	Stating that a product is recyclable when it is not recyclable in any region of Canada.
10	Misleading descriptions and explanations	B	Plainly indicating on a delivery truck that the product it contains is carbon neutral, and explaining on the company’s website that in reality the product only emits less GHG than other product lines offered by the company.
11	Promotion of ordinary or legally required features	B	Stating that refrigeration equipment does not use hydrochlorofluorocarbons, when such equipment is prohibited by law.
12	Use of jargon	B	Indicating the quantity of a pollutant present in a product without providing simple and comprehensible explanations of the meaning of this information.

279. Inspired by Nemes et al. (2022).

EXCERPT FROM ADELPHÉ'S SIMPLIFIED GUIDE TO SORTING HOUSEHOLD PACKAGING AND GRAPHIC PAPER LABELLING (FRANCE)²⁸⁰

La structure de l'Info-tri



Une règle complémentaire incontournable pour les produits emballés vendus à l'export et en France
 Le sigle FR, accolé au cartouche, est obligatoire dès lors que le produit est vendu en France et à l'étranger. Il permet d'indiquer au consommateur étranger que la règle de tri ne concerne que le territoire français. Pour plus d'informations, voir page 15.

280. Taken from: Adelphé (2024). Our translation of the title of the guide.

EXAMPLE FROM THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT'S ECO-LABEL DIRECTORY²⁸¹

Écoétiquette

Alimentation - Vêtements et produits textiles - Soins personnels - Produits d'entretien pour usage domestique ou industriel - Organisme de certification

Ecocert

Attester la rigueur du processus de certification.



Ecocert est un organisme de certification fondé en 1991 en France. Ecocert Canada est sa filiale canadienne depuis 2000. L'entreprise est accréditée pour délivrer des certifications au Canada dans les domaines de l'agriculture biologique, des systèmes de gestion environnementale et des émissions de gaz à effet de serre (certifications Engagement Climat et Compensé CO2).

— Informations générales

Propriétaire de la marque : Groupe Ecocert

Origine : France

Année de création : 1992

[Approche fournisseur](#)

[Approche produit](#)

— Nature des critères à remplir pour obtenir l'écoétiquette

Sociaux : Variable selon la catégorie de produit

Environnementaux : Variable selon la catégorie de produit

Économiques : Variable selon la catégorie de produit

Étape(s) du cycle de vie couverte(s) : Variable selon la catégorie de produit

— Acheteurs pour la fonction publique

Critères écoresponsables pris en compte par l'écoétiquette

Critère écoresponsable principal à inscrire dans SAGIR :

Variable selon la catégorie de produit

Impacts sur la réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre : Variable selon la catégorie de produit

Pour en savoir plus

<http://www.ecocert.com/notre-approche/index.html>

<https://www.ecocertcanada.com/fr.html>

281. Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs (undated b).



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