

Abstract Masterthesis in English

More and more companies implement sustainability strategies, CSR or environmental certifications. This way they signal the consumers an environmentally friendly behaviour on one side and on the other side gain market shares. This Thesis examines the consumers' perception about such means. Quantitative data was gathered through a questionnaire and analysed by descriptive statistics. The survey included a sample of N=185 participants, which were questioned about companies in different industries. Main results are, that the visibility of sustainability strategies and the consumers' perception is the highest in the food industry, followed by the cosmetics and textile industry. Moreover, the research shows a lack of transparency for the consumer und an increasing uncertainty towards these means. Through the lack of transparency of efforts, the truth of the content cannot be verified by the consumer. There is a missing consensus to convey the environmental and sustainability efforts of companies more credible. In practice, this leads to a growing number of greenwashing activities and dishonest marketing strategies. To counteract this, firms should enhance an open communication to the clients. Merely through this they will be able to be differentiated from greenwashing offers.

Keywords: sustainability strategies, CSR, environmental certifications, consumers' perception, greenwashing, marketing strategies