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ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIMS



Background

Marketers should take account of Government guidance including the Green Claims Code published by DEFRA and BIS.

Rules

- 11.1 The basis of environmental claims must be clear. Unqualified claims could mislead if they omit significant information.
- 11.2 The meaning of all terms used in marketing communications must be clear to consumers.
- 11.3 Absolute claims must be supported by a high level of substantiation. Comparative claims such as "greener" or "friendlier" can be justified, for example, if the advertised product provides a total environmental benefit over that of the marketer's previous product or competitor products and the basis of the comparison is clear.
- 11.4 Marketers must base environmental claims on the full life cycle of the advertised product, unless the marketing communication states otherwise, and must make clear the limits of the life cycle. If a general claim cannot be justified, a more limited claim about specific aspects of a product might be justifiable. Marketers must ensure claims that are based on only part of the advertised product's life cycle do not mislead consumers about the product's total environmental impact.
- 11.5 Marketers must not suggest that their claims are universally accepted if a significant division of informed or scientific opinion exists.
- 11.6 If a product has never had a demonstrably adverse effect on the environment, marketing communications must not imply that the formulation has changed to improve the product in the way claimed. Marketers may, however, claim that a product has always been designed in a way that omits an ingredient or process known to harm the environment.
- 11.7 Marketing communications must not mislead consumers about the environmental benefit that a product offers; for example, by highlighting the absence of an environmentally damaging ingredient if that ingredient is not usually found in competing products or by highlighting an environmental benefit that results from a legal obligation if competing products are subject to that legal obligation.

11.8 This rule must be read in conjunction with Directive (EC) No 2010/30/EU and the Energy Information Regulations 2011 on labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products and its subsequent delegated regulations. The Directive introduces an information and labelling framework whereby delegated regulations will detail which products need to contain an energy efficiency rating or fiche. The rule only applies to products which are subject to a delegated regulation.

From 1 August 2017 Regulation EU 2017/1369 mandates a rescaling of existing energy labelling to provide more accurate information for consumers, including in advertising, where the energy efficiency class of a product and the range of classes available will need to be given. The existing delegated regulation continues to apply whilst that rescaling process is ongoing.

For more information on delegated regulations, go to [energy](#).

Marketing communications for specific energy-related products, subject to a delegated regulation, that include energy-related information or disclose price information, must include an indication of the product's energy efficiency class i.e. in the range A+++ to G.

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Marketers must make product fiche information about products that fall under delegated regulations available to consumers before commitment.