

Greenpeace Greenwash Criteria

There are many ways in which corporations greenwash. The following are the criteria we use in our investigations.

Dirty Business

Touting an environmental program or product, while the corporation's product or core business is inherently polluting or unsustainable. For example, if a company brags about its boutique green R&D projects but the majority of spending and investment reinforces old, unsustainable, polluting practices.

Ad Bluster

Using targeted advertising and public relations campaigns to exaggerate an environmental achievement in order to divert attention away from environmental problems or if it spends more money advertising an environmental achievement than actually doing it. For example, if a company were to do a million dollar ad campaign about a clean up that cost less.

Political Spin

Advertising or speaking about corporate "green" commitments while lobbying against pending or current environmental laws and regulations. For example, if advertising or public statements are used to emphasize corporate environmental responsibility in the midst of legislative pressure or legal action.

It's the Law, Stupid!

Advertising or branding a product with environmental achievements that are already required or mandated by existing laws. For example, if an industry or company has been forced to change a product, clean up its pollution or protect an endangered species, then uses PR campaigns to make such action look proactive or voluntary.