



The latest edition is the “Sustainability Communication Guide 2023”.
It is available at the following URL.

https://www.dentsu.co.jp/en/sustainability/sdgs_action/thumb01.html



Sustainability Communications Guide

Sustainability Communication Guide 2021

A practical checklist and the social changes behind it

dentsu
japan network

Dentsu Team
SDGs

Sustainability management initiatives are now a necessity for companies. In addition, proper communication/presentation of engaged activities are becoming essential in current era.

In today's world, sustainability communication is not just a necessity for companies, but, through empathy and acceptance, can gain more advocates and fans.

The key to solutions to social issues depends on arranging alliances, and how to increase impact.

However, if you use over-the-top or inappropriate expressions that are unrelated to actual performance or can lead to misinterpretation, your sustainability communication could not only have a detrimental effect on your business, but also result in harsh criticism from a range of stakeholders. In other words, it could impact on your company's corporate value.

To avoid having these initiatives misinterpreted, it is necessary for communications to be based on established or accepted practices, historical precedents, current contexts, and related rules and regulations. Further, instead of one-way communications, it is essential to adopt an attitude toward deepening mutual understanding, through bilateral

interaction.

This Guide starts off with a checklist, prepared based on expert opinions, intended as a foremost point of reference to be checked at the minimum, and thereafter provides more detailed contextual information on the established rules.

This Guide is intended to contribute to richer and more proactive sustainability communication as part of efforts aimed at achieving a sustainable society.



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*For basic knowledge, overview and communication about the SDGs, please refer to the SDGs Communication Guide published in 2018.
URL : https://www.dentsu.co.jp/en/sustainability/sdgs_action/pdf/sdgs_communication_guide.pdf

The environment surrounding sustainability has changed dramatically over the last few years. These represent some of the events occurring globally.

Environmental group file lawsuit against a beverage manufacturer over its sustainability campaign advertising



UNITED STATES

A beverage manufacturer created advertising that showed it as a sustainable company. This advertising was used by the manufacturer on television, websites, in print, and on social media. In response, an environmental group noted that the company was the world's worst plastics polluter for three years running, as shown in an investigative report from another group, and filed a lawsuit on the grounds that this was a violation of the CPPA (Consumer Protection Procedures Act).

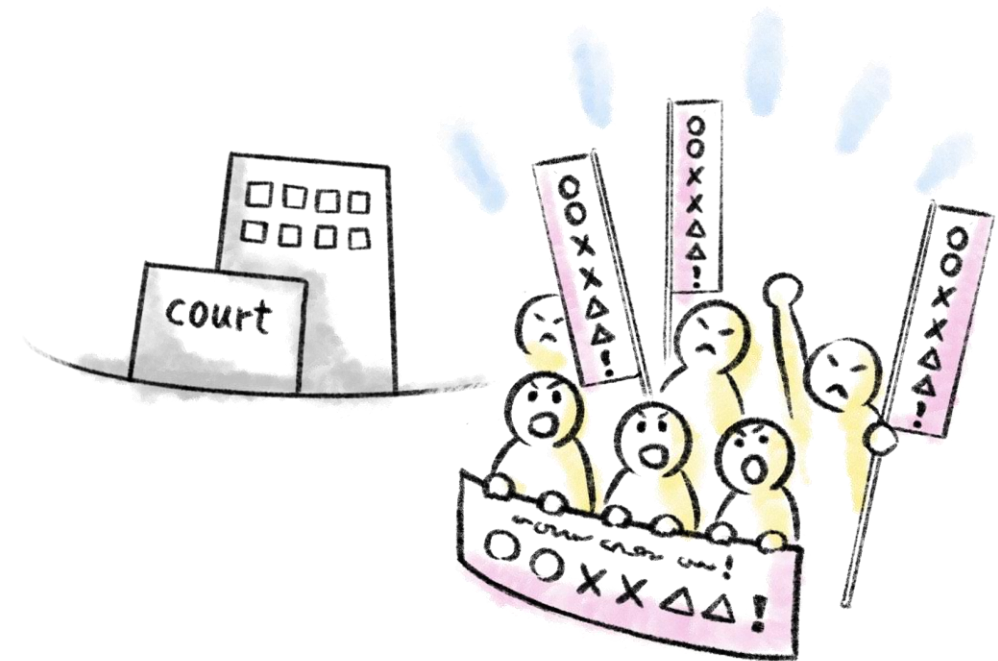


The environment surrounding sustainability has changed dramatically over the last few years. These represent some of the events occurring globally.

French consumer body sues global company over poor working conditions



A French consumer group filed a lawsuit against a global company, alleging that its statements regarding supply chain responsibility and management on its website were false. The issue centered around the degrading, inhuman working conditions in the country of production.





Below are some of the major historical events or changes that have occurred globally.

There has been rapid progress in the international formulation of policies, legal systems, and financial rules to protect human rights and the environment, and grassroots movements are becoming stronger. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has also led to increased interest in sustainability among consumers in Japan. Communication has moved from labeling 17 SDGs icons into the next phase. (See p.46 for more details.)

- **2015** SDGs adopted / Paris Agreement: Requirement to keep **global average temperature rise to no more than 2.0 °C, and ideally 1.5 °C.**
- **2017** Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD): Announces its **advice on disclosure of information related to climate.**
Keidanren's Charter of Corporate Behavior: **Subtitle now features "SDGs"**; penetration thereof into management layers of Japanese corporations.
#MeToo: Becomes a global social media movement of sharing the harm caused by sexual harassment/sexual violence
- **2018** IPCC: Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C
- **2019** Climate Action Summit (UN General Assembly): 77 countries and regions announce they will become carbon neutral by 2050
- **2020** George Floyd incident; **BLM gains strength throughout the USA**; COVID-19 spreads around the world
G20: Carbon Neutral by 2050 Declaration, Green Growth Strategy towards 2050 (Japan)
EU adopts taxonomy
- **2021** COP26: **1.5°C → Goal clarified**; Japan receives Fossil of the Day Award (twice in a row)
Corporate Governance Code revised (Japan)
IFRS establishes International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB)

Rapid changes over
the last 3-4 years



Part 1

Practical Sustainability Communication Checklist and Examples

Let's check this out first.



Checking perspectives

In sustainability communication, it is important understand a range of issues and see them from the perspective of those affected.

Broadly-speaking, the two perspectives to check are "the environment" and "human rights."

These have been marked with hashtags below, but naturally there are many other issues.

The Environment

In particular, rules related to climate change have been getting stricter.

It may be necessary to consider their relationship with your company's business in the first place.

Biodiversity and ocean plastic are other issues to consider.

#Climate justice #Carbon neutral #1.5°C #Circular economy #Ocean plastic #SDGs
#Biodiversity

Human Rights

Movements to ensure human rights throughout the value chain, not just the supply chain.

Consumer awareness is rapidly changing with regards to racial discrimination, gender discrimination, and other social issues.

#Gender equality #LGBTQ #DE&I #Disability
#Race #Ethnicity #Ethics #SDGs



The following pages present some areas which should be borne in mind during communication.

0. Before starting your communication
1. Preparing your communication
2. Planning expressions
3. Creating expressions (1) - (3)
4. Using the SDGs logo
5. Upon completion of draft expression
6. After your communication

0. Before starting your communication



Are there any inconsistencies between the initiative and your company's actions?

Is there anything your company is doing that contradicts the aims of the measures you want to communicate?
If so, you are risking these measures being seen as a smokescreen.

Are the outcomes of these measures clear, and can you report on their progress and results using uniform indices?

Managing the purposes, goals, schedules, budgets, KPI and other aspects of these measures in the same way you would normal business will make them easier to explain to other people.

Are the initiatives in line with the size of the company?

Even if you present goals that you consider achievable, based on your in-house resources, they may not be sufficient in terms of sustainability initiatives, given the size of the company. In some cases, if this is sent out as is, the integrity of the company may be questioned. Before communication, you first need to set goals appropriate to the size of your company, and they must be set according to the characteristics of the industry and the region in which it operates.

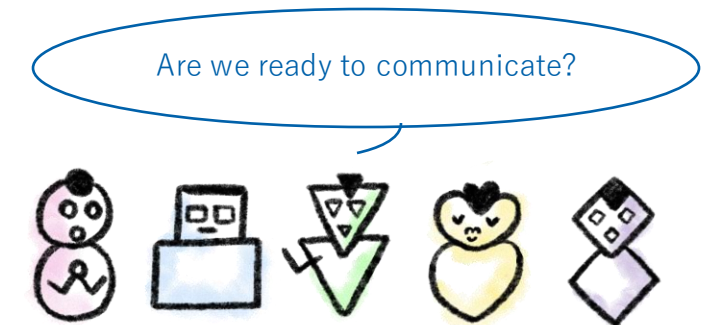
Judgment standards vary by country, region, religion, era, and social trends.

Are the themes and expressions appropriate to the country, region, religion, time period, and social trends?

There are no international guidelines on washing regarding sustainability. What specific expressions will be considered as washing will vary greatly depending on the individual person's literacy or the situation in the country or society. The legal framework (with regulations being tightened in recent years) also varies by country and region.

Statements that are not currently seen as washing could, through criticism by opinion leaders, affect the thinking of large number of people through social media, and in an instant, your company could be seen by society as having tried to wash.

* For a thorough definition on the word "wash," please refer to p.18.





A failure case due to lack of diversity in the team



A TV commercial of childcare products that depicts a mother struggling to raise her child has received a flood of criticism. With minimal representation of a husband in the film, it was pointed out as if portraying housework as a "women's job".

*In Japan, the low participation rate of men in housework and childcare is an issue.

The above case may reflect the current male-female ratio of staff members in today's Japan's advertising production.

It's not hard to imagine how a lack of diversity could result to overlook different perspectives and aspects.

However, by simply adding younger or female employees in a team of men would not be a fundamental solution.

If elder and the majority are all for it, others may not be able to speak up for; despite feeling uncomfortable with the plan or expression.

In order to prevent any social pressure, it is important to ensure a sense of "psychological safety", i.e., to provide an environment in which anything can be freely said.



2. Planning expressions



Are the purpose, reasons, and aspirations clear?

Share among the team what sort of communication you want: what, why, who for, and for what goal.

Is it based on the strengths of your core business?

With the concept of CSV (Creating Shared Value) as well as CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

Does it include a customer experience-focused perspective?

Incorporate the perspective of what experiences you can provide, in addition to information such as advertising and PR.

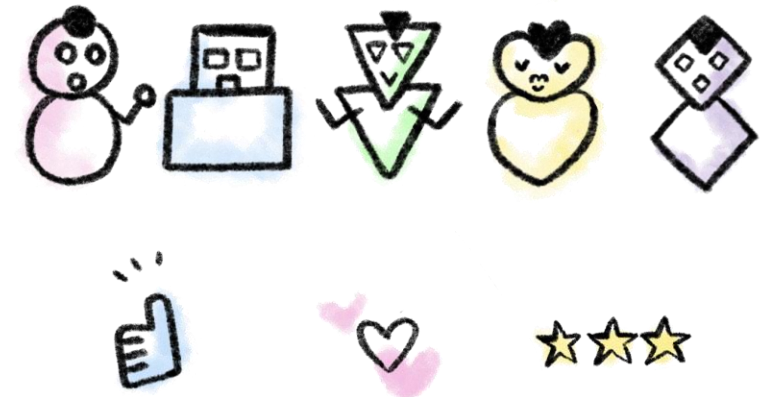
Can you work with people, companies, groups, or media that share your aspirations?

Expanding your team beyond the company can enrich your initiatives and increase their scale. Consider asking the advice of experts or NGOs/NPOs or getting them to join the team.

Are you envisaging the response to your communication?

In recent years, there has been an increase in communication aimed at creating debate in society.

What's needed for communication that will get people to empathize and make them fans?



3. Creating expressions (1)



Consideration for human rights

Check again to see if it's safe to respond in the same way as previous precedents and past experiences.

Society is changing at a tremendous pace. It is often the case that something that was not considered a problem in the past now is a problem, so it is necessary to keep an eye on social trends when making decisions.

1 Check the original meaning of words before you use them

- Be aware that some words can be taken in different ways due to religious or historical backgrounds.

2 Verify whether the people in your advertising or how you portray groups is appropriate

- Check to see whether you are including stereotypical roles or images, preconceived ideas, discriminatory ideas, and so on. Are there any marginalized people? Are the characters depicted sufficiently diverse?

*More and more, what was acceptable in the past is no longer acceptable. Some of this is due to changes in values, but you need to realize that in not a few cases there were always unacceptable but were overlooked until now.

- Also, think about whether the representation will alienate anyone, and whether there is diversity in the characters presented.

3 Be aware that different countries have different values and cultures

- Be aware that there can be considerable differences in evaluation and understanding regarding history or peoples among different countries or ethnicities.

4 Envisage cases where only parts are taken out of context

This is an example of dishonesty that aims to create and amplify an image with pictures of "smiling children" and "rich nature," even though there are no facts.



3. Creating expressions (1)

Consideration for human rights

Specific Examples

- Some basic rules
 - Eliminate all forms of discrimination and prejudice (in all areas, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, origin, age, etc.).
 - Be aware that social information and historical background can change judgment criteria.
 - Avoid stereotyped perspectives (especially ones caused by unconscious bias).
- Gender (sexual discrimination, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.)
 - Avoid gender-based role perspectives.
 - Also be careful about stereotyped depictions.
- Race and ethnicity
 - Do not emphasize or ridicule skin color or visible characteristics
 - Avoid assessing other countries from a so-called first-world perspective.
- People who are disabled or ill
 - Check and use objective information.
 - Be aware of perspectives that contrast with "healthy" people.



3. Creating expressions (2)



Phrases to watch out for

- Blackface

Painting your face black, even though your skin is of a different tone, can become a major issue due to the history of racism against black people.

- Using animals to make fun of people

For example, things like putting clothes on chimpanzees have been criticized as making fun of specific races.

- Consider whether you really need to make use of historically problematic motifs (such as those associated with the Nazis).

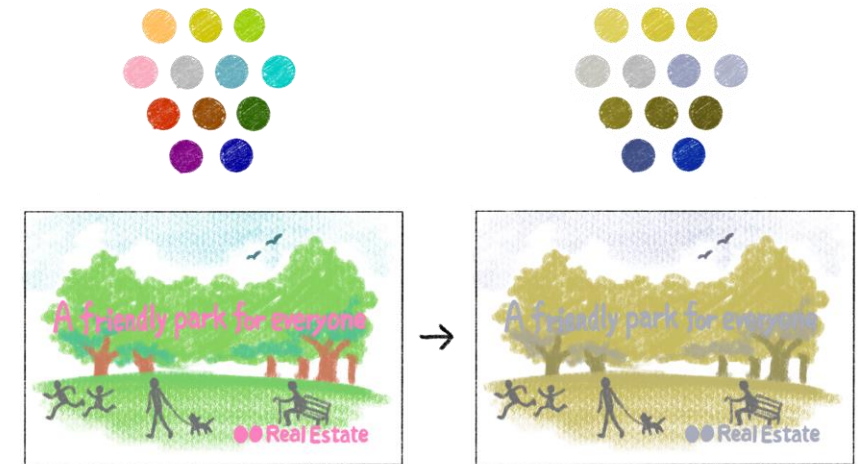
(There are cases, such as providing historical explanations, where it is in fact permitted.)

- In addition, there are cases of racial discrimination even in Japan. Do not consider it somebody else's problem.

Accessibility perspectives

Have you ensured accessibility in your distributed materials such as websites and leaflets, and not just in advertising?

For example, people see colors differently, and may not be able to read something, depending on the color combination. We also recommend allowing people to use things like text-to-speech functions for your website.



View as seen by a color blind person



3. Creating expressions (3)



To avoid washing

*For a thorough definition on the word "wash," please refer to p.18.

1 Avoid statements that are baseless or have unclear sources

It is best to avoid any sources or materials which cannot be validated or has low reliability.

When comparing other productions or services, make sure the phrases are based on fair and accurate information with the consensus of the public.

2 Avoid expressions that exaggerate over reality

Inflation of minor initiatives, exaggerating on smaller efforts, or expressing standard functions/legally regulated matters as if done voluntarily may be considered as "washing".

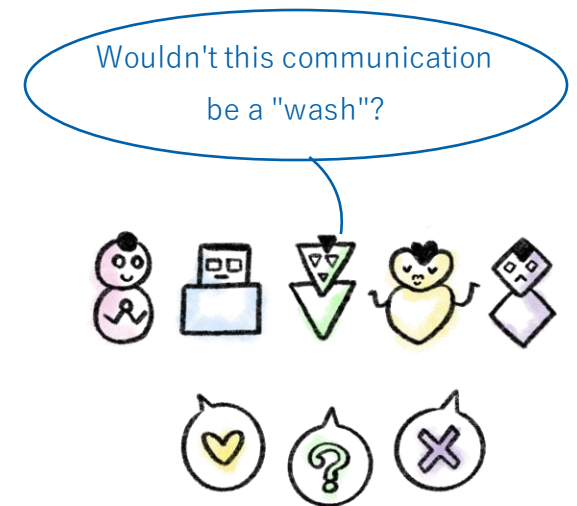
Make sure the expressions are appropriate from "Life cycle" perspective of products/ services, and are consistent with company's overall business

3 Avoid ambiguous expressions where the meaning of the words is hard to define

Avoid copy (e.g. "eco-friendly") that uses abstract meanings of the words or lacks concrete evidence.

4 Do not use visuals that have little connection to the facts

Using photos as smiling children or bountiful natural environments only to give positive associations will be seen as washing.



3. Creating expressions (3)



To avoid washing

- 5** Consistency with the overall image of the product or service
Accurately present your overall image. Check consistency with other aspects of the product or service.
Try to prevent misunderstandings about the overall environmental impact.
- 6** If there are conditions, show them clearly
Do not try to hide them away using small fonts. Be open to all.
- 7** Use proper labels or information about durability and disposal
- 8** Do not hide information necessary to make the correct choice
Include even the negative aspects for information related to environmental impacts.
- 9** Find ways to provide easy access to information that cannot be contained in the communication (such as QR codes or websites)





Examples of Potential Washing

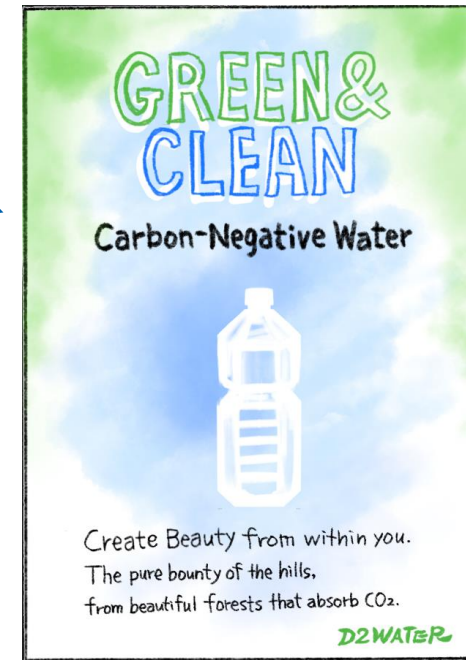
The basis for claiming "eco-friendly" is vague.

The heart in the sky has no connection with the facts, and will be seen as just providing an aesthetically pleasing image.



Even at the very minimum industrial standard, travel by aircraft generates more CO₂ than other means of transport. In this sense, it cannot really be said to be "eco-friendly".

"Carbon negative" means to absorb more CO₂ than is created. How this could be achieved is not clear. It could make people think that drinking this water will absorb CO₂ somehow.



Appealing to being carbon negative due to the fact that the forest where this water is taken from absorbs CO₂ is too broad an interpretation, and will lead to misunderstandings.



The Impacts of "SDG-washing" on a Company



In the 1980s, companies claiming to be environmentally-friendly, despite their actual negative impact on the environment, were criticized for "green-washing."

Recently, increasing numbers of NGOs and activists use the strategy of filing lawsuits against companies they consider to be acting in bad faith to place them in the public eye. Lack of consideration for green-washing, SDG-washing, or human rights is not just a communication issue: it could cause consumers to lose faith and major damage to your company's appeal as a potential target for ESG investment.

* Another term for SDG-washing is "rainbow-washing", which should not be confused with rainbow-washing in the LGBTQ sense.

(Reference source: WBCSD <https://www.wbcsd.org/Programs/People-and-Society/Sustainable-Development-Goals/Resources/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-from-rainbow-washing-to-transforming-the-world> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021)

Green-washing, and its derivative, SDG-washing, is used in the negative sense to imply:

- (1) A company wants to create the impression it cares about the SDGs when it does nothing to back that up,
- (2) A company wants to create the impression it cares about the SDGs more than it actually does, or
- (3) A company wants to present only positive information, without presenting facts that are detrimental.

Whitewash	Means to paint over flaws, to deceive. It has the nuance of emphasizing only certain facts, or interpreting them in advantageous ways.
Derives from	
Greenwash	Whitewashing related to the environment
Bluewash	Whitewashing that makes something seem as if it has the UN's seal of approval
And these derive from	
SDGs-wash	Whitewashing related to the SDGs
Rainbow-wash	Whitewashing related to the SDGs (based on the 17 colors of the SDGs) (It can also refer to whitewashing related to LGBTQ)



4. Using the SDGs logo



Don't forget to check not just the 17 goals of the SDGs, but the 169 targets as well.

Using the SDGs logo implies that you support the SDGs and are contributing to their achievement.

If you confirm where your measures will contribute, not just to the 17 goals of the SDGs but in view of the 169 targets as well, it will be easier for future communications or when responding to inquiries.

There are 232 indices for the 169 targets, some of which have numerical targets.

*169 targets of 17 goals (United Nations)

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

Comply with the UN guidelines.

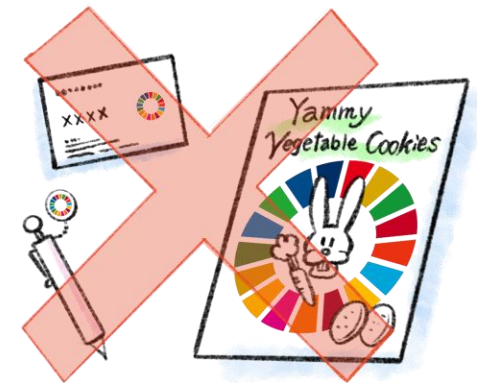
- Any use of logo for fundraising and commercial use requires prior written permission to the United Nations.
- The logo may not be used on your company's stationery or business cards.
- The logo or wheel may not be used in combination with other logos or characters.
- The logo or wheel should be used in conjunction with the phrase, "XXX Company [your company] supports the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," when using the logo or wheel with your company logo. There are regulations regarding layout, borders, etc. therefore it is advisable to check the guidelines below.

The United Nations has issued guidelines for using the logo. Please check the following URLs for details before using the logo.

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

- Guidelines for the Use of the SDG Logo Including the Colour Wheel, and 17 Icons (United Nations)
https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SDG_Guidelines_AUG_2019_Final.pdf
- FAQs (United Nations)
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/#FAQ>

Is this the right way to use the logo?





A classic example of SDG-washing



JAPAN

Considering the background of the SDGs, i.e., their adoption by the UN in 2015 from a sense of crisis regarding the current state of the world, stating that you have always worked towards them is both disrespectful and could lead to a backlash.

This SDGs logo is the older version, after revision, in which the "G" in "GOALS" is more elongated. (As of December 2021)



When using the icons for the goal(s) you contribute towards, you may be asked exactly how you are contributing, and what KPIs you have set. Check down to the target level.

*169 targets of 17 goals (United Nations)
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



5. Upon completion of draft expression



Do departments other than the one that created the communication check it?

The team creating it may have overlooked some obvious things, but an external review can often identify them.

We suggest seeking the opinion of a department as far removed from the team that created it as possible, or, ideally, a third party (such as one of the following NGOs) to check it.

Have you had it checked by experts or NGOs?

External experts or NGOs specialised in the related issues have high awareness of recent cases.

While seeking their advice for the final draft is beneficial, you may receive some useful hints about your communication if you consult them at an earlier stage.

We suggest creating a relationship that allows you to talk with them on a regular basis.



6. After your communication



If your communication concerns aspects likely to polarize opinions, envisage what opposition there might be, and prepare for it. However, as with all communications, reactions that were not anticipated may result regardless of the time spent on research beforehand.

■ Make preparations for responses

- Deal promptly with any opinions you receive.
 - Provide easy-to-understand information at an early stage.
 - Don't hide inconvenient information; disclose it honestly.
 - Ensure you respond sincerely.
- Etc.

■ What to do on a daily basis

- Utilize social networking sites to get a sense of what's going on in the world.
 - Create relationships with experts, NGOs, etc. you can consult.
 - Establish a simple route/system for dealing with inquiries.
- Etc.

■ What to do ahead of time

- Prepare materials you can disclose to counter foreseeable opposition.
 - Check your company's internal reporting routes/systems.
- Etc.



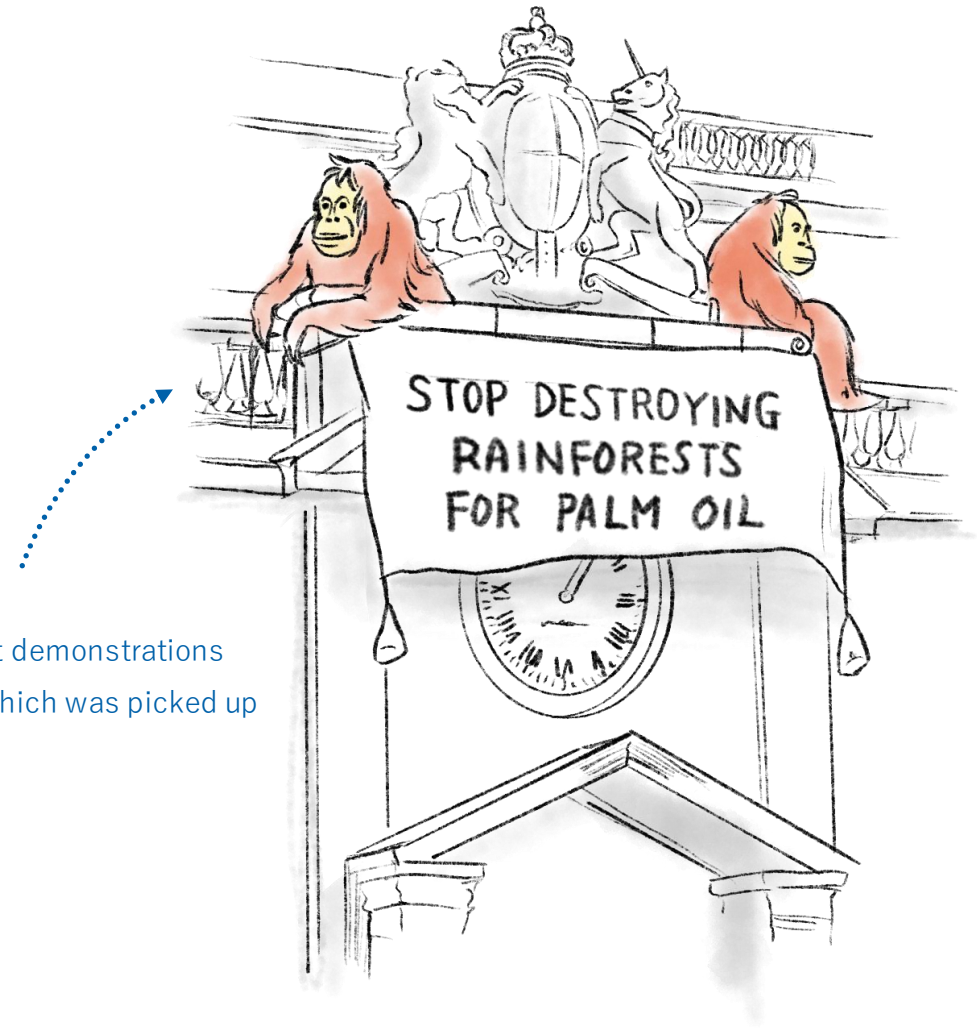


An example of corporate activities modified following notice from an NGO

Toward the end of the first decade of 2000 many demonstrations and social campaigns took place in first-world nations in protest of rainforest destruction by global corporations.

The protests aimed to halt purchasing from a company that produced palm oil through illegal logging of native forests.

These protests led to a change in behavior of the purchasing company and revision of their purchasing policies. Other companies followed suit, and as a result, local palm oil companies changed their operational practices to those not involving the destruction of forests.



NPO members carried out demonstrations dressed as orangutans, which was picked up by news channels.



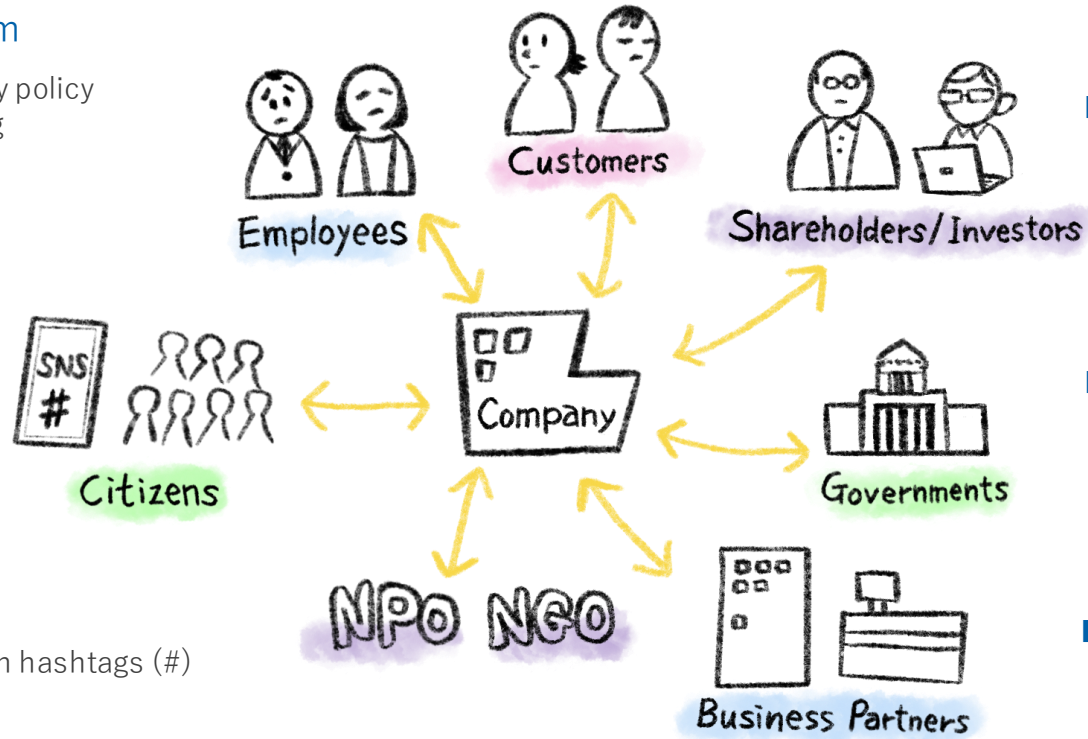


- Turnover/decline in engagement
- Employee activism

Gap between company policy and employee thinking

■ Reduced sales

People stop being fans and switch to another brand



- Boycotts
- Social media inflaming

Mismatch with consumer awareness

■ Hashtag activism

Spreading issues through hashtags (#) on social media

■ ESG information disclosure requirements

Investment may be revoked if inadequate

■ Administrative guidance

Including orders to cease corporate activities.

■ Suspension of handling, suspension of transactions, and dissolution

Removal from shelves, etc. in response to consumer awareness

■ Lawsuits

One of the purposes is to create a social buzz.





Be attuned to tides in the world and Japan, and the changing social atmosphere

In recent times, consumers have become more attuned to current events, which means companies need to be aware they are subject to intense scrutiny in terms of the environment, human rights, and so on. There are also pressures of due diligence from the legal system, and from the financial world.

Learn from lived experiences

Learn from examples such as flame wars, demonstrations, and lawsuits, including their reasons, backgrounds, and how they spread. What's important is to be aware not of which party was in the right, but who they impact.

Bring in systems like training and share awareness within your teams, company, and by extension, the industry as a whole

Sharing with everyone rather than stopping at individual learning will spread it wider and deeper; this is the system that needs to be created. Learn from experts, NPOs, and NGOs.

Also, try to reflect such awareness in the work of other departments (such as HR or Accounting).

Incorporate diversity and DE&I perspectives among planning and CR team members

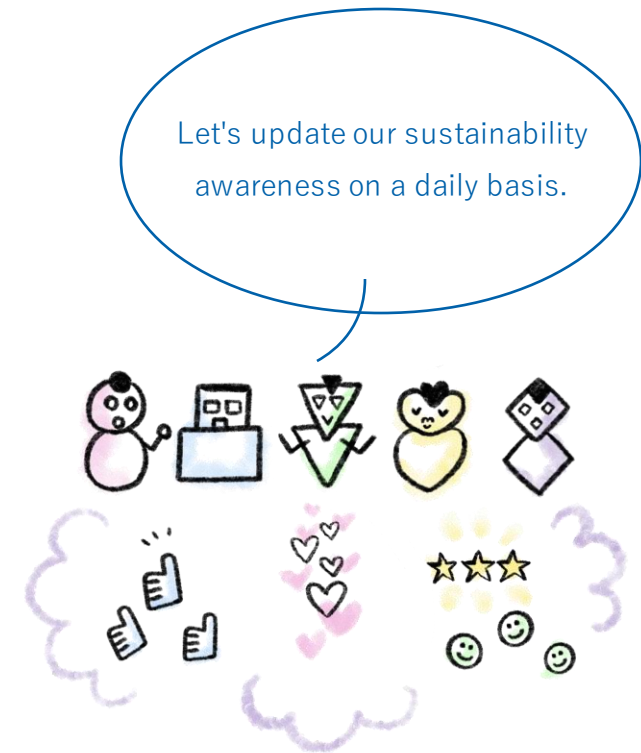
Ensure that your team members are diverse and that they have the psychological safety to say what they want.

Continue dialogue even after the communication

The basic rule is that communication is a two-way street, not something you just announce and leave out there.

Communication can only take place when you acknowledge what your company is not doing and what it cannot do.

Be sincere and humble regarding responses to your communication. Regular engagement with groups like NGOs can also reduce risk.





In 2020, the Dentsu Advertising Awards included the new SDGs Special Award, awarded for works that are seen as sincerely exploring what advertising can do to help achieve the SDGs. They are judged by a panel comprising companies, NPOs, and experts.

Some of the points considered are:

- Does the work express ideas to create a sustainable society?
- Does the work feel like it cares about SDGs, such as "no one left behind"?
- Does the work sincerely tackle SDGs communication?

73rd Dentsu Advertising Awards SDGs Special Award (2020)
Tokai Television Broadcasting Co., Ltd. "Living with Invisible Disabilities"



This is a long TV commercial that promotes understanding of developmental disabilities, which are difficult to understand from others. Several people with developmental disabilities appear on screen, each talking about their conditions, experiences and thoughts.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFppNU0ONQo&list=PLSpUqO56sG4dklfnu7i_n7sjr7yhyvllM&index=6

74th Dentsu Advertising Awards SDGs Special Award (2021)
kai corporation's "Freedom to Shave" virtual model ad



Related to the body-positive movement, this message, which states that it is an individual's choice as to whether to shave unwanted hair or not, was highly evaluated because it came from kai corporation, a maker of razors. The use of a virtual model made it possible to start a conversation about unwanted hair, a comparatively taboo subject, without resistance. This highly creative ad was made through a diverse range of ideas coming together.

<https://www.kai-group.com/news/id/758/>



Part 2

Background and Context to Sustainability Communication

Brief review of the background "context" and "rules".



Environmental issues

【 CLIMATE CHANGE 】

- 2015 Paris Agreement: 1.5°C target (effort target) → 2021 COP26: 1.5°C is the world's shared goal
- There is a difference in perception between developed and developing countries regarding which country has emitted or is emitting most greenhouse gases, and between the generation that has emitted large amounts of greenhouse gases and the younger generation that will not be able to emit greenhouse gases in the future.
- Rather than just being a topic for the future, there are countries and cities whose very existence is threatened due to rising sea levels.
- "Fridays For Future": A movement that began in August 2018 when Greta Thunberg, then 15, staged a lone sit-in in front of Sweden's parliament to protest the lack of action on climate change. (Reference source: Fridays for Future <https://fridaysforfuture.org/> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021)

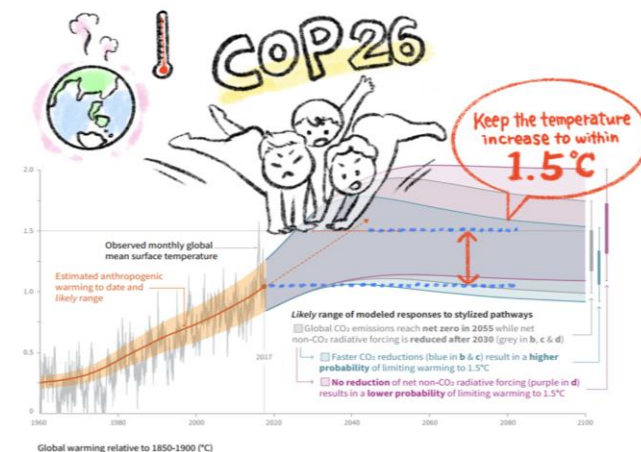
【 BIODIVERSITY 】

- Contributions to ecosystem services, health, and medicine that cannot be calculated in monetary terms, such as clear air and water.
- We are currently in the Sixth Mass Extinction. Destruction and pollution of the natural environment, overexploitation of resources, introduced species, and climate change are said to be the major factors.

【 MARINE PLASTIC 】

- Plastics made from fossil fuels do not break up even after centuries, and many of them end up in the oceans.
- By 2050, it is forecast that the total amount of plastic in the sea will exceed the total amount of living organisms in it.
- The equivalent of a credit card's worth of plastic is ingested every week by every person in advanced nations, because of the food chain.

There are number of other related key words, so being aware of these will help as well.





Human rights issues

【 BASIC RULES 】

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination and prejudice (in all areas, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, origin, age, etc.).
- Social information and historical background can change judgment criteria.
- Avoid depictions based on stereotypes (especially ones caused by unconscious bias).
- Beware of wealth disparity/economic inequality.

【 GENDER (sexual discrimination, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.) 】

- Avoid gender-based role perspectives.
- Also be careful about stereotyped depictions.
 - Misogyny, Misandry
 - LGBTQ (SOGI)
- "MeToo" hashtag

【 RACE, ETHNICITY 】

- Do not emphasize or ridicule skin color or visible characteristics.
- Do not assess other countries from a so-called first-world perspective.
- Black Lives Matter (BLM)
 - Ethnic Minorities
 - Hate speech
 - Cultural diversity

【 DISABLED OR ILL PEOPLE 】

- Check and use objective information.
- Be aware of perspectives that contrast with "healthy" people.
 - Cancer, HIV, leprosy, other contagious diseases
 - Physical, visual, aural, intellectual, psychological
 - COVID-19-based discrimination





Human rights issues

【 BURAKU* DISCRIMINATION 】 *Buraku is the term for a socially-discriminated community in Japan.

- The state of discrimination is worsening due to spreading over the Internet.
- Avoid expressions judging people or groups based on their origin, such as bloodline, family history, and lineage, as this may lead to discrimination.

【 RELIGION 】

- In addition to direct elements (doctrine, scripture, symbolism), care needs to be paid to cases such as everyday words or fashion designs that are based on religion.

【 DISCRIMINATION by APPEARANCE 】

- Deepen your understanding of various cases regarding external features caused by disabilities or diseases.
- Avoid "lookism" (judging people by how they look or, their external appearances).

【 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, ELDERLY RIGHTS 】

- Children have their own human rights as independent people (they are not to be considered separately from adults).
- Worsening of the reality of child labor (forced labor) and poverty.
- Consideration for the dignity of senior citizens in an aging society.
- An increased need to eliminate "ageism" (stereotypes about ages or generations).

There are number of other related key words, so being aware of these will help as well.





Preamble / Goal / Target / Indices

【 Preamble to the SDGs 】

["Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"](#)

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

→ The 17 goals of the SDGs stemmed from a sense of crisis that the prevailing initiatives were no longer sufficient.

It is not a mistake to label your communications by the goals the activities relate to.

However, it needs to be borne in mind that SDG initiatives are being carried out throughout the world in order to solve issues that cannot be solved by existing initiatives.

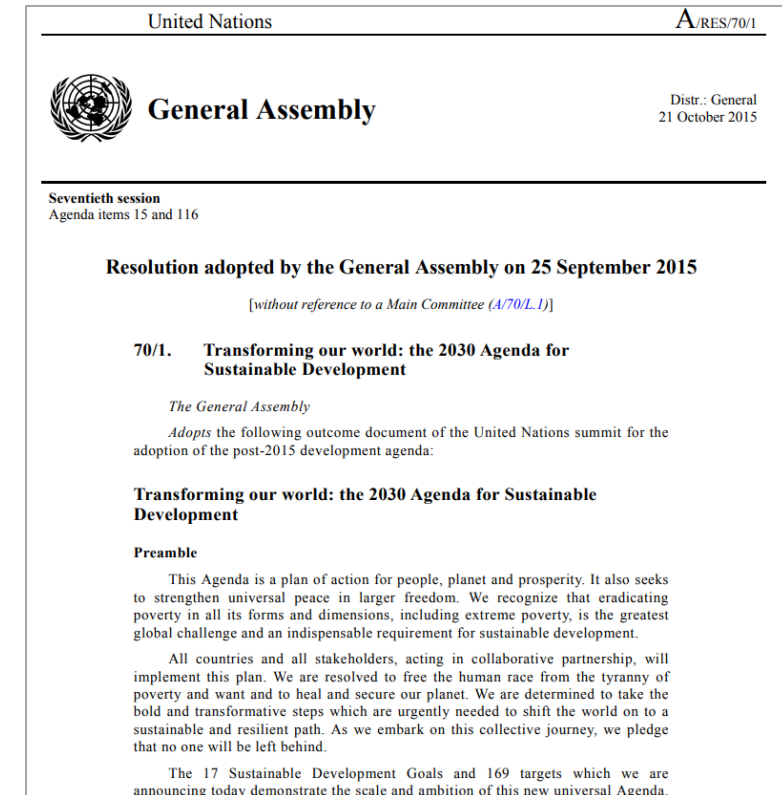
If you think of the SDGs in this way, then in essence what is really required is initiatives to transform the world.

【 169 Targets, 232 Indices 】

[THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development \(un.org\)](#)

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

Rather than what goals your current activities correspond to, going forward it is likely that you will be asked what reforms you are planning to undertake to achieve the goals.





Appendix

Accelerated uptake of initiatives related to the SDGs by Japanese companies



The SDGs have spread throughout corporate Japan, especially at the management level, due to revisions made by Keidanren to its Charter of Corporate Behavior, which is based on "Delivering on the SDGs through the Realization of Society 5.0."

The SDGs ethos is currently filtering down to the middle management levels.

The overall state of action has moved from "Step 1: Understanding the SDGs" to the final "Step 4: Integrating" and "Step 5: Reporting and communicating" phases, which demonstrates how rapidly the SDGs have taken root.

Q. Please select the situation below that best describes the level of awareness of the SDGs within your company/group. (Multiple selections possible)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Mainly rooted in the CSR department	83.7	85.9	84.4	77.4	84.1
Rooted among senior management	27.9	36.2	59.4	77.4	85.1
Rooted among middle management	5.4	9.2	18.3	32.8	43.8
Rooted among employees	-	8.0	16.7	21.0	37.5
Also rooted among stakeholders such as affiliate companies	2.7	2.5	4.4	7.0	11.5
Don't know	11.6	6.7	2.8	2.2	0.5

Q. Which step defined in the SDG Compass is your company/group currently at?

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Step 1: Understanding the SDGs	53.5	42.9	30.6	18.8	12.0
Step 2: Deciding priorities	22.2	27.6	28.3	25.8	19.7
Step 3: Setting goals	11.1	13.5	16.7	26.3	20.7
Step 4: Integrating	9.1	8.0	12.2	15.1	27.4
Step 5: Reporting and communicating	4.0	8.0	12.2	14.0	20.2

*Only responses from the 99 companies/groups that referenced the SDG Compass in 2016.

Source: Global Compact Network Japan, "SDGs and Business to Overcome the COVID-19 Pandemic: Actions by Companies and Organisations in Japan 2020 Edition." Access date: Dec. 22, 2021
<https://www.meti.go.jp/press/2020/12/20201225012/20201225012-1.pdf>
https://www.ungcjin.org/common/frame/plugins/fileUD/download.php?type=contents_files&p=elements_file_4680.pdf&token=092d5f7266ba24051dcb0ed13d01596a0bde4497&t=20210910131452



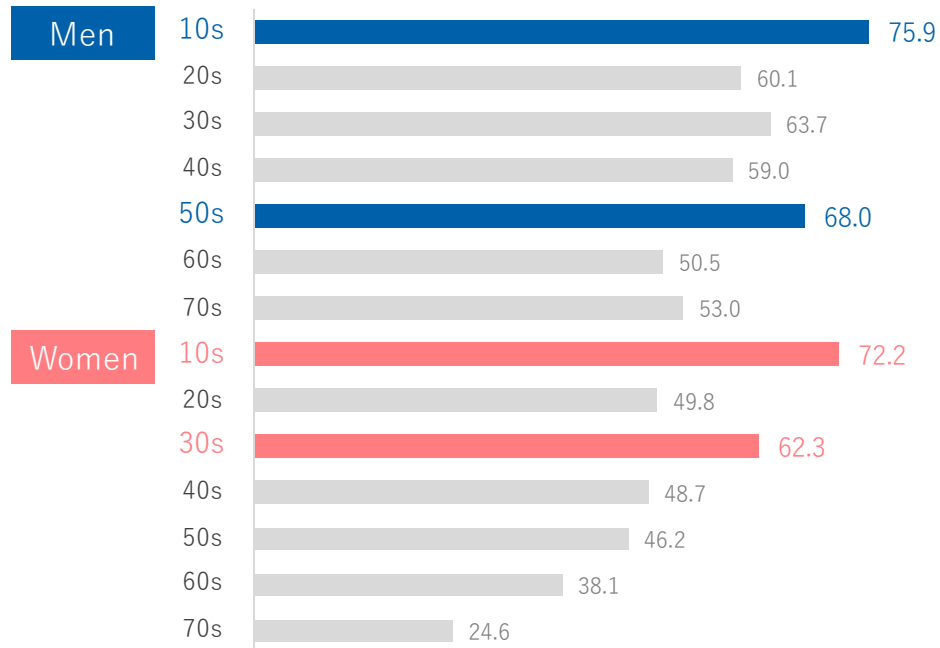
Awareness of Japanese consumers regarding the SDGs (1)



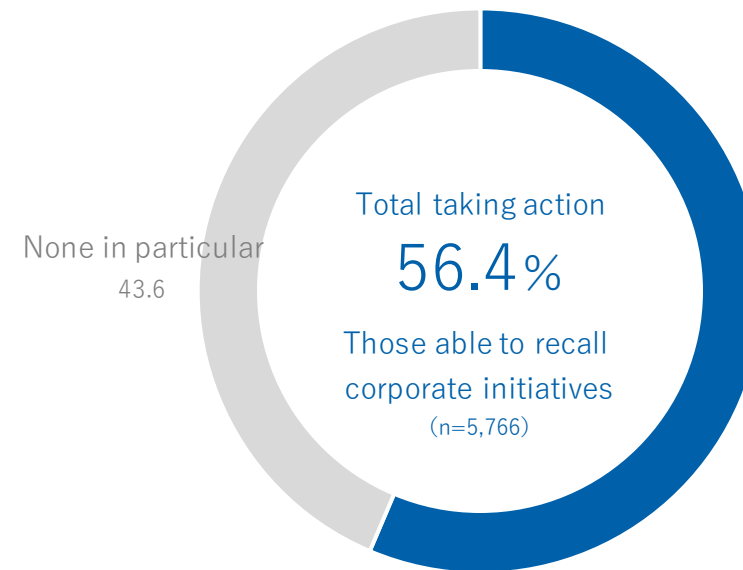
Awareness of the SDGs is far higher in the teens in both sexes (through learning about them at school).

As a result of learning about the ESGs/SDGs, the total percentage of people who put this knowledge into some form of action is 56.4%.

Q. Awareness of the term "SDGs" (by age and gender)



Q. People aware of corporate ESG/SDGs and taking action



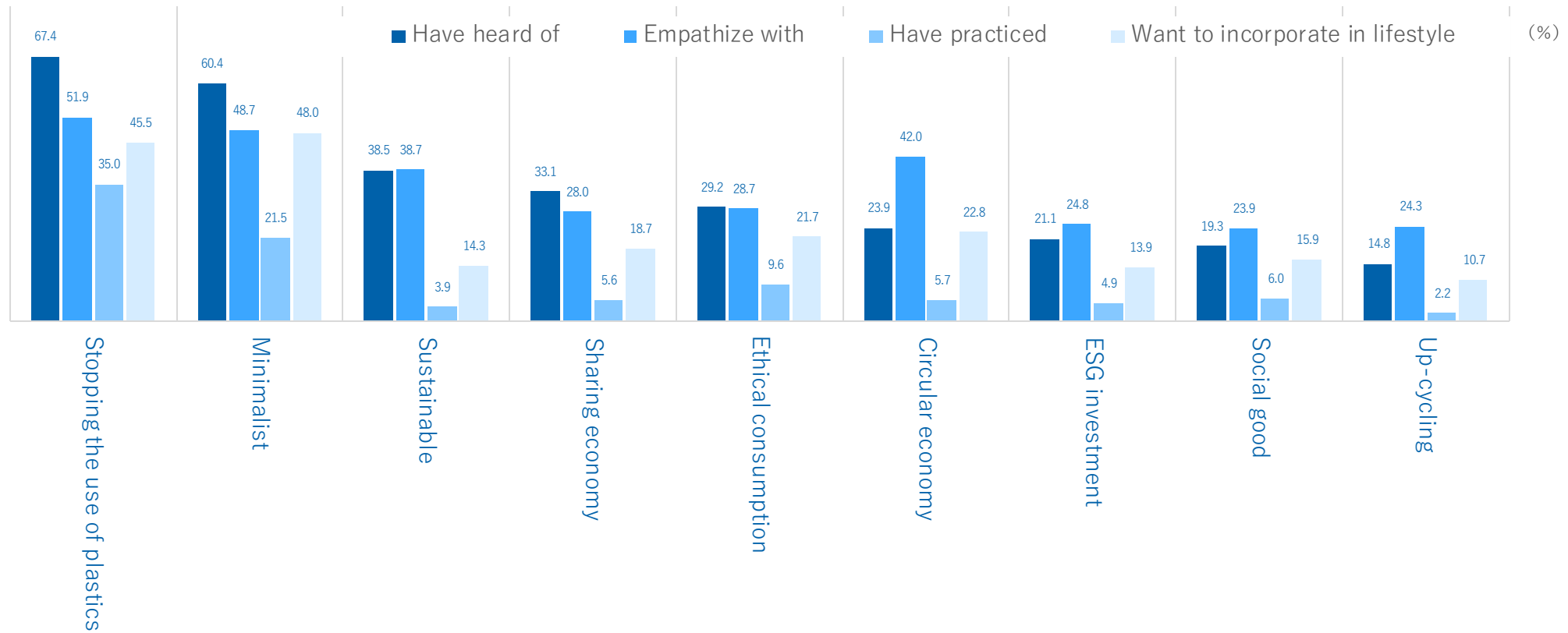
4th SDGs Consumer Survey Dentsu Team SDGs, May 2021
<https://www.dentsu.co.jp/news/release/2021/0426-010367.html>
 Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

Corporate communication Strategic studies Institute, ESGs/SDGs Awareness Survey
https://www.dentsuprc.co.jp/releasestopics/news_releases/20210928.html
 Access date: Dec. 22, 2021





For recognition, empathy, practice, and intention, "Stopping the use of plastics" was highest, followed by "Minimalist" " Circular economy" and "Up-cycling" had higher scores for empathy than recognition.



Source: "4th SDGs Consumer Survey", Dentsu Team SDGs (Jan. 2021. 1400 samples from men and women nationwide)

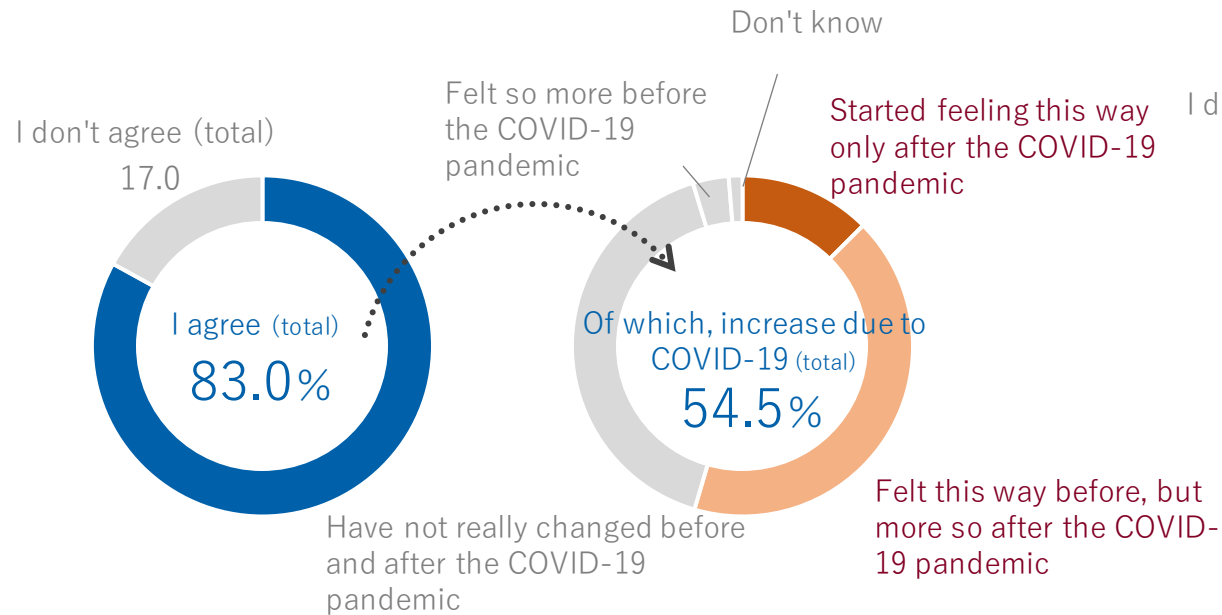


Change in public awareness of social issues following COVID-19

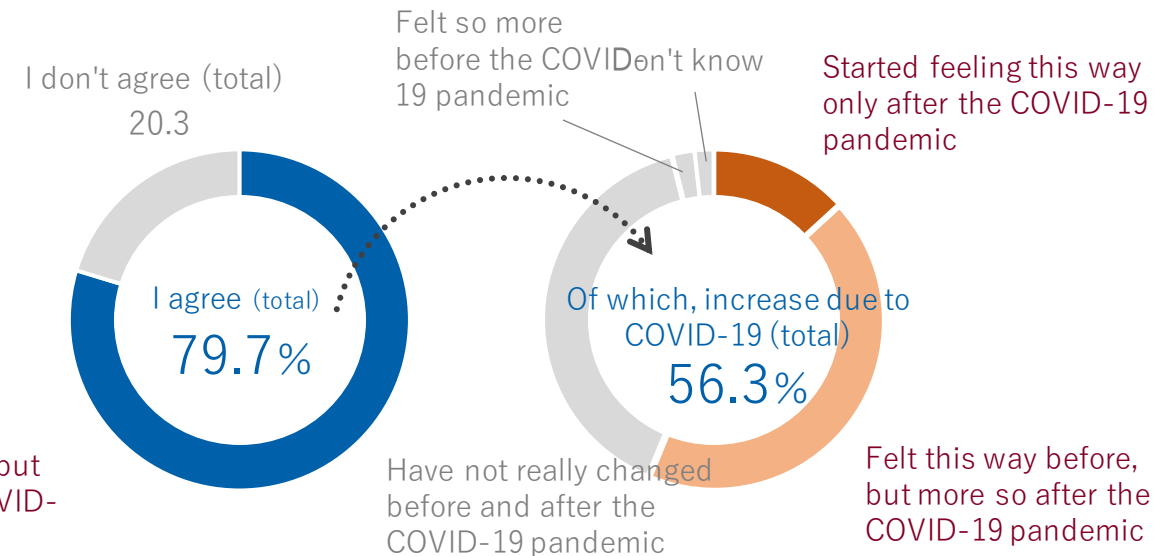


The survey showed that interest in the global environment, social issues, and regional and community sustainability had increased.

Q. The global environment and social issues are not someone else's problems.



Q. We need to think seriously about the "sustainability" (being able to continue on into the future without problems) of our planet and our society.



Source: Dentsu, "'Sustainability' and Corporations / Brand 'Purpose' (Aspirations towards society, social meaning of existence) Awareness Survey" (October 2020)

<https://dentsu-ho.com/articles/7599>

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021



Little room for optimism under the current sustainability situation



According to the UN, in several areas, sustainability has taken a step backwards since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Surveys have shown that issues like poverty, hunger, and the wealth gap have been exacerbated during the pandemic in Japan as well. In addition, according to the most recent announcement from the IPCC, keeping the global temperature rise to no more than 1.5°C is not sufficient for the current goals. More stringent goal setting and sincere efforts are required.



COVID-19 has led to the first rise in extreme poverty in a generation.



The global pandemic is exacerbating.



The pandemic has halted or reversed progress in health and shortened life expectancy.



COVID-19 has wiped out 20 years of education gains.



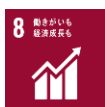
Women's equal participation in decision-making is crucial for COVID-19 response and recovery, but gender parity remains far off.



Billions of people still lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in 2020.



One third of the world's population use dangerous and inefficient cooking systems.



The pandemic has led to the loss of the equivalent of 255 million full-time jobs.



Global manufacturing production plummeted as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.



The pandemic is likely to reverse progress made in reducing income inequality since the financial crisis.



The pandemic has worsened the plight of slum dwellers.



The global "material footprint" increased by 70% between 2000 and 2017.



The climate crisis continues, largely unabated.



The sustainability of our oceans is under severe threat.



More than a quarter of species assessed by the IUCN Red list are threatened with extinction.



The pandemic is intensifying children's risk of exploitation including trafficking and child labor.



Net ODA reached a record high of \$161 billion in 2020, representing 0.32% of donors' GNI

Reference: The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2021.pdf

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2021/The-sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2021.pdf> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021





The word "sustainability" is understood in different ways, depending on the level of economic development in each country and the actual social problems faced. Careful planning is required when designing a global communication.

Social Issues of Interest

Country	Issue	Percentage
Japan (n=500)	1 Natural disasters	57.2%
	2 Falling birthrate and aging population	45.6%
	3 Air pollution	41.6%
Germany (n=500)	1 Ocean plastic waste	58.8%
	2 Natural disasters	52.8%
	3 Poverty and hunger	52.2%
UK (n=500)	1 Ocean plastic waste	52.8%
	2 Forest conservation	42.4%
	3 Poverty and hunger	42.2%
US (n=500)	1 Poverty and hunger	47.4%
	2 Racism	45.8%
	3 Healthcare system and facilities	45.0%
China (n=500)	1 Air pollution	69.6%
	2 Water pollution and shortages	64.4%
	3 Educational issues	55.4%
India (n=500)	1 Air pollution	70.0%
	2 Water pollution and shortages	60.8%
	3 Public health	59.0%
Indonesia (n=300)	1 Educational issues	65.3%
	2 Public health	60.7%
	3 Poverty and hunger	57.7%
Malaysia (n=300)	1 Educational issues	55.3%
	2 Public health	53.0%
	3 Poverty and hunger	51.3%
Philippines (n=300)	1 Poverty and hunger	77.0%
	2 Public health	72.0%
	3 Healthcare system and facilities	67.0%
Singapore (n=300)	1 Poverty and hunger	42.3%
	2 Ocean plastic waste	42.3%
	3 Reduction of CO ₂ emissions	41.3%
Thailand (n=300)	1 Poverty and hunger	64.7%
	2 Air pollution	62.0%
	3 Unemployment rate	61.3%
Vietnam (n=300)	1 Air pollution	78.3%
	2 Water pollution and shortages	73.7%
	3 Natural disasters	66.0%

Image of the word "Sustainability"

Country	Issue	Percentage
Japan (n=500)	1 Global environment	51.8%
	2 Recycling society / Circular economy	29.2%
	3 Social impact	26.6%
Germany (n=500)	1 Recycling society / Circular economy	62.8%
	2 Global environment	58.8%
	3 Responsibility / Obligation	44.6%
UK (n=500)	1 Global environment	55.6%
	2 Recycling society / Circular economy	50.8%
	3 Responsibility / Obligation	36.0%
US (n=500)	1 Global environment	37.4%
	2 Recycling society / Circular economy	36.0%
	3 Sense of balance	32.6%
China (n=500)	1 Global environment	65.4%
	2 Recycling society / Circular economy	64.4%
	3 Technological advancement	49.4%
India (n=500)	1 Global environment	50.8%
	2 Sense of balance	41.8%
	3 Recycling society / Circular economy	40.4%
Indonesia (n=300)	1 Growth	55.7%
	2 Technological advancement	55.7%
	3 Innovation	49.7%
Malaysia (n=300)	1 Wellbeing	46.7%
	2 Harmony	41.0%
	3 Global environment	40.3%
Philippines (n=300)	1 Growth	51.7%
	2 Efficiency	49.3%
	3 Development	49.0%
Singapore (n=300)	1 Global environment	62.7%
	2 Recycling society / Circular economy	51.3%
	3 Social impact	42.7%
Thailand (n=300)	1 Wellbeing	52.7%
	2 Development	51.0%
	3 Global environment	49.3%
Vietnam (n=300)	1 Development	46.7%
	2 Endurance	45.3%
	3 Security	40.3%

Reference : Global Business Center, Dents inc./Dentsu Institute, "Sustainable Lifestyle Report 2021"
[Sustainable Lifestyle Receptivity Survey 2021 | Dentsu Institute](#) Access date: Dec. 22, 2021



Integrity in Sustainability Communication

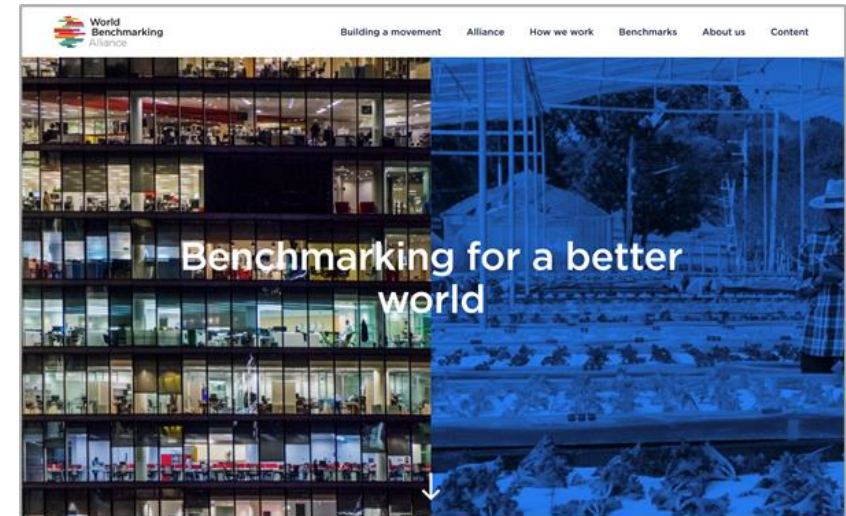
As corporate sustainability efforts become more widespread, movements to visualize their progress through numbers are becoming more common. When designing a communication, it is a good idea to consider the selection and presentation of content based on an understanding of your company's reputation and position in society.

The WBA, established by the United Nations Foundation, multiple NPOs, and economic groups, provides numerical assessments of the performance of key companies in the industrial areas where structural changes are needed to achieve the SDGs.

World Benchmarking Alliance <https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/>
Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

An index published annually by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, a US-based human rights NGO, to assess companies' efforts to eliminate LGBTQ discrimination.

Corporate Equality Index
<https://www.hrc.org/resources/corporate-equality-index>
Access date: Dec. 22, 2021





In many regions, particularly Europe and the United States, regulations are in place to prevent consumers from being placed at a disadvantage due to inaccurate or dishonest environmental marketing. Movements related to "green-washing" are gaining speed.

Current US regulations

■ Federal Trade Commission Act (FTC), 1914

- Section 5 of the FTC Act clearly states that unfair methods of competition and deceptive acts or practices affecting commerce are unlawful. This Section is the basis for ensuring that environmental claims, such as green-washing, are not made unfairly.
- In terms of the environment, the Federal Trade Commission has developed a special regulation known as the Green Guide. This sets out the Commission's current positions on environmental marketing claims under Section 5 of the FTC Act.

■ Green Guide, 2021 Revised Edition (US Federal Trade Commission)

- Based on the FTC Act, the Federal Trade Commission issues the Green Guide to ensure marketers do not make misleading environmental claims to consumers. It lays out general regulations related to environmental marketing, and overall policies related to making claims. The previous edition was revised in 2012, and the next revision is scheduled for 2022.
- In addition to marketing claims related to environmental benefits, certification and label approval, and carbon offsetting, the Guide introduces claims that are easy to misinterpret, such as "XXX-free," "non-toxic," "made using renewable energy," and "renewable materials."
- While the Green Guide itself is not legally binding, the FTC can take actions under the FTC Act if a business makes an environmental claim that is inconsistent with the Guide.

Source: Dentsu Team SDGs investigation (September 2021)



In many regions, particularly Europe and the United States, regulations are in place to prevent consumers from being placed at a disadvantage due to inaccurate or dishonest environmental marketing. Movements related to "green-washing" are gaining speed.

Current EU regulations

■ EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD), 2005

- The UCPD focuses on consumer protection, broadly prohibiting unfair commercial practices among businesses and consumers (B2C). This is the basis for ensuring that environmental claims, such as green-washing, are not made unfairly by businesses to consumers.
- The main rules of the UCPD that apply to environmental claims are that businesses should present their claims in specific, precise and clear manners so that consumers are not misled (Articles 6 and 7), and that they should be able to present valid evidence of their claims to the competent enforcement authority in the event of a challenge to the claim (Article 12).
- The UCPD applies to both offline and online transactions, regardless of medium or device.

■ Compliance Criteria on Environmental Claims - Multi-stakeholder advice to support the implementation/application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive 2005/29/EC, 2016

- This document contains advice for businesses and enforcement agencies on the implementation and application of environmental claims based on the UCPD. While not legally binding, it lays out the key policies on the content of environmental claims, precise and accurate wording, the substantiation of claims, and transparency for consumers. This document, which provides guidance of the implementation and application of the UCPD based on these compliance standards, contains guidance related to environmental claims and presents them in detail, along with case studies.

Column Law regulating "green-washing advertising" in France

In April 2021, the world's first law regulating green-washing was introduced in France. According to this law, fines of up to 80% of the cost of advertising will be imposed on anyone providing consumers with false or exaggerated information about climate change, environmental protection, and so on; violators will also be required to correct their advertisements, provide explanations on their websites, and so on.

Source: Dentsu Team SDGs investigation (September 2021)





In Britain in 2021, the Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) announced its Green Claims Code, a guideline for promoting the environmental friendliness of products and services, with the aim of protecting consumers from inaccurate information.

According to the CMA, 40% of online advertising in Britain contains expressions that create misunderstanding among consumers.

This Code will be seen as strengthening regulations regarding communications that make claims about environmental friendliness.

Reference: CMA, "CMA guidance on environmental claims on goods and services"

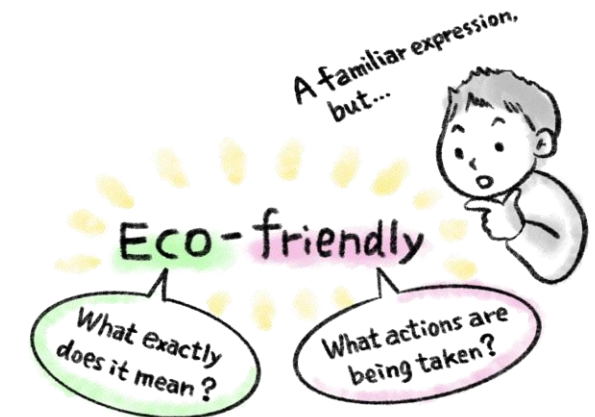
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018820/Guidance_for_businesses_on_making_environmental_claims_.pdf

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

A simple 13-item checklist is also provided, as below.

When making a green claim, a business should be able to answer 'yes' or agree to each of the following statements:

1. The claim is accurate and clear for all to understand
2. There's up-to-date, credible evidence to show that the green claim is true
3. The claim clearly tells the whole story of a product or service; or relates to one part of the product or service without misleading people about the other parts or the overall impact on the environment
4. The claim doesn't contain partially correct or incorrect aspects or conditions that apply
5. Where general claims (eco-friendly, green or sustainable for example) are being made, the claim reflects the whole life cycle of the brand, product, business or service and is justified by the evidence
6. If conditions (or caveats) apply to the claim, they're clearly set out and can be understood by all
7. The claim won't mislead customers or other suppliers
8. The claim doesn't exaggerate its positive environmental impact, or contain anything untrue-whether clearly stated or implied
9. Durability or disposability information is clearly explained and labelled
10. The claim doesn't miss out or hide information about the environmental impact that people need to make informed choices
11. Information that really can't fit into the claim can be easily accessed by customers in another (QR code, website etc.)
12. Features or benefits that are necessary standard features or legal requirements of that product or service type, aren't claimed as environmental benefits
13. If a comparison is being used, the basis of it is fair and accurate, and is clear for all to understand



Reference: CMA, "The Green Claims Code checklist"

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/green-claims-code-making-environmental-claims/green-claims-and-your-business>

Access date: Dec. 22, 2021





Amsterdam was the first city in the world to ban fossil fuel-related advertisements from its subway stations.

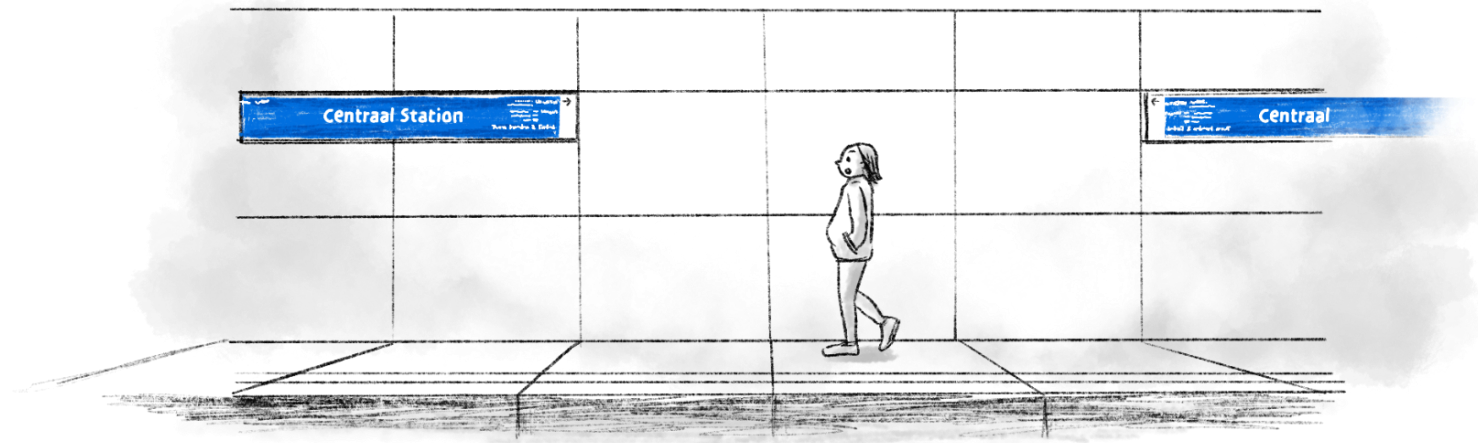
A ban has been put in place on advertisements from companies that handle oil and natural gas, and products and services based around fossil fuels (such as cheap plane tickets or brands of automobiles that use gasoline engines).

This ban is expected to be extended to other forms of public transport in the future.



THE
NETHERLANDS

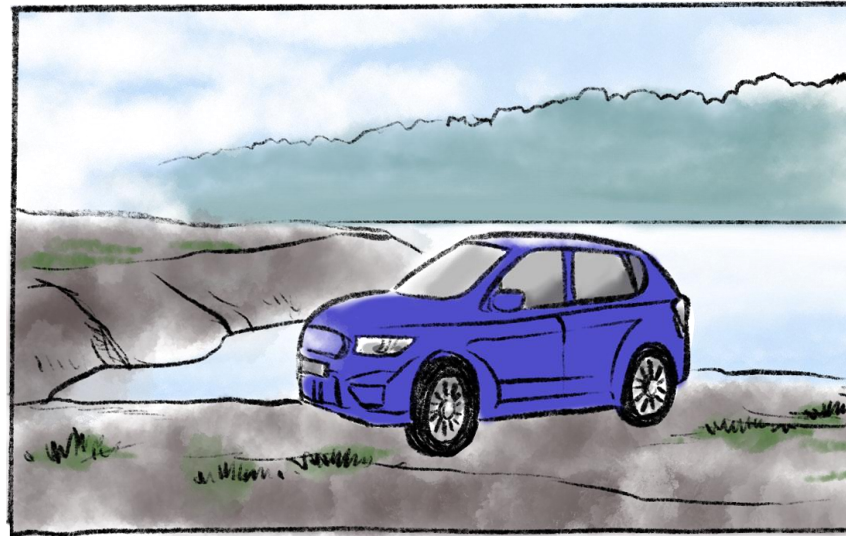
all blanc
walls ...





Ads showing vehicles parked in unspoiled nature violate regulations

In 2017, a French advertisement which used an image of a vehicle parked in a natural environment by a lake was deemed to violate the ARPP Code, as the image showed the vehicle parked on a surface that did not appear to be a road.





National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (National Action Plan / NAP)

This refers to action plans recommended to be developed by different countries, based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), adopted in 2011.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Business/Intro_Guiding_PrinciplesBusinessHR.pdf Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

Modern Slavery Act

In 2015, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 was enacted in the UK to strengthen the legal enforcement of modern slavery and human trafficking. In order to eliminate slavery from their supply chains, commercial organizations and companies operating in the UK with annual sales above a certain level are required to publish statements on the efforts taken to ensure no slavery or human trafficking occurs.

Legislation.gov.uk

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021

Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP)

This was announced in March 2012 by the United Nations Global Compact, the Save the Children Fund NGO, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

It supplements existing principles in CSR, such as on human rights, environment and labor, from the perspective of children's rights. This is the first framework to focus on children's rights in the value chain of corporate activities.

Save the Children

<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/5717.pdf/> Access date: Dec. 22, 2021



Reference : Sustainability trends (detailed version)



2006	Announcement of the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), a United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative and United Nations Global Compact	The PRI are guidelines that show that institutional investors have a fiduciary responsibility to incorporate ESG issues into their decision-making processes. This accelerates the flow of ESG investment.
2008	Lehman Brothers Bankruptcy	Global corporations and investors are made painfully aware of the importance of management with an eye to the medium- to long term, and balancing shareholder value with stakeholder value. It serves to popularize sustainability management.
2010	The International Standards Organization issues ISO 26000 (Guidance on Social Responsibility)	International regulations on social responsibility in both the public and private sectors (non-certified regulations).
2011	United Nations' "Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights" measures "OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises" revised	Incorporated into ISO 26000 to serve as guides for respecting human rights in businesses.
	Occupy Wall Street movement	Protests against the US economic and political worlds spread throughout America.
	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) established	This is an organization for gender equality among UN member nations and the empowerment of women.
2013	"Black Lives Matter" hashtag	Establishment of a foundation spurred by the killing of Trayvon Martin in 2012.
2015	The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly	The SDGs cover 17 goals, with 169 targets, to ensure "no one is left behind." Published in the 2012 "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".
	Paris Agreement	This Agreement seeks to keep global average temperature rises to no more than 2.0°C, and to no more than 1.5°C if possible.
	Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) established	The TCFD is designed to encourage the reporting of financial information related to climate to investors and corporations, as climate change presents a risk to the global economy.
	British Modern Slavery Act enacted	To eliminate slavery in the supply chain. Companies with annual sales exceeding a certain size are required to publish an annual statement.
2017	Keidanren revises its "Charter of Corporate Behavior"	The subtitle is now "Delivering on the SDGs through the Realization of Society 5.0."
	"MeToo" hashtag	Incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the US film industry leads to a worldwide movement of people confessing and sharing their experiences on social media.

2018	IPCC "1.5 Degree Special Report" report issued	The report emphasizes the importance of keeping global temperature increases to within 1.5°C, not 2°C.
	"Fridays for Future" movement	A movement from Generation Z that calls for climate change measures.
2019	Climate Action Summit (UN General Assembly)	77 countries announce that they will achieve effectively zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050. Japan, the United States, and China do not participate.
	Time selects Greta Thunberg as its Person of the Year	
2020	COVID-19	
	George Floyd case	BLM movement spreads across the US.
	The EU Taxonomy established	Financial strategies and laws that underpin the European Green New Deal. It classifies sustainable industries, businesses targeted by investment and loans, and eliminates "greenwashing" from a financial perspective.
	Japan declares carbon neutrality by 2050	"Green Growth Strategy towards 2050 Carbon Neutrality" established (Japan).
	Japan announces the "National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights"	
2021	IPCC 6th Assessment Report	For the first time, "human activities" are clearly stated to be the cause of climate change.
	COP26	Clarification of the "1.5 °C Target" and phase-out of coal-fired power generation.
	Corporate Governance Code revised (Japan)	This requires corporations to disclose their basic policies on sustainability. It requires disclosure of climate change-related information for the companies wished to be categorized as prime market corporations.
	National Action Plan announced (Japan)	
	International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) established	Aiming to unify sustainability disclosure standards.



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