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## It's not easy being green for consumers

### New research finds Australians doubt the authenticity of environmental claims — with good reason

Businesses bombard consumers with claims about green and sustainable products but the authenticity of these claims is not easy to verify, leaving consumers worried that they're being duped, a new report from the Consumer Policy Research Centre (CPRC) has found.

The report surveyed Australian consumers on their experience of 'green' claims and conducted a 24-hour audit which found only a third of the total green claims seen had supporting evidence.

CPRC CEO, Erin Turner, said this is a huge factor because "Australians want to make sustainable purchases, 45 per cent of people said sustainability was a factor in their decision-making."

"In our investigation we found that too many businesses were making big environmental claims with vague terms.

"For a consumer, it is often unclear if the green claims businesses are making are genuine green-marketing or greenwashing," Turner said.

At the top of the list of products that consumers have *purchased because of green claims* are household cleaning products (47%), Groceries (42%) and Beauty and personal care (30%).

At least 50 per cent of people said they were worried about the truthfulness of green claims across every sector questioned, from energy markets to superannuation.

For businesses that engage in greenwashing, the research revealed a warning with 47% of Australians saying they would stop purchasing from a business that engaged in greenwashing and 35% said they would warn their friends and family.

And many, wrongly, assume that a trusted third-party is fact checking green claims before sale (45%).

"This is not the case, there is no third-party checking.

"Consumers should be able to trust that the sustainable claims they see are backed up with real environmental action but at the moment it's too hard to tell a vague promise from a genuine commitment.

"Business must take more responsibility for ensuring their green claims are truthful, accurate and easy for consumers to understand.

# Media Release



“We want a world where it’s easy for people to find meaningful sustainable options when they shop. To make this happen, we need regulators to continue to crack down on greenwashing as well as new laws to improve the quality of green claims consumers see.

“Right now, it’s far too hard for a consumer to figure out if the green products they are buying will make a genuine difference. It should be much easier to be green,” Turner said.

ENDS ###

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Full report: *The consumer experience of green claims in Australia ‘Carbon neutral...what the heck is that?’*

Website: [www.cprc.org.au/green-claims](http://www.cprc.org.au/green-claims)

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Erin Turner, CEO, CPRC

Erin Turner is a consumer advocate dedicated to working with governments and regulators to make markets fairer for Australians. With a wealth of experience in governance, policy, communications and research, Erin leads now leads the team at CPRC. Prior to CPRC Erin spearheaded the advocacy and communications team at consumer group CHOICE and worked for ACCAN and the CBAA. Erin has Master of Politics and Public Policy and is a board member of the Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA) and the Chair of the Financial Rights Legal Centre

## CPRC

Consumer Policy Research Centre (CPRC) is an independent, non-profit, consumer think-tank established to work with policymakers, regulators, academia, industry, and the community sector to develop, translate and promote evidence-based research to inform practice and policy change.