

EN

E-000800/2025

Answer given by Mr Hoekstra
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.4.2025)

The Commission is committed to fighting greenwashing in business to consumer communication. In 2024, the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD)¹ was amended based on a Commission proposal on the Empowering Consumers for the Green Transition Directive². The amended UCPD contains a prohibition of generic environmental claims unless an excellent environmental performance can be demonstrated, and detailed rules on ‘future environmental performance claims’ such as net-zero commitments.

Relevant for such claims and climate claims more broadly is also the proposal for a Green Claims Directive³, under discussion by co-legislators. Aiming to prevent greenwashing in explicit voluntary environmental claims made by traders to consumers, the proposal sets detailed rules on substantiation and communication of environmental claims and on governance of environmental labelling schemes. The proposal explicitly tackles climate claims by requiring that the substantiation assessment: 1) separate any offsetting (based on carbon credits) from the calculation of greenhouse gas emissions, 2) specify whether those offsets relate to emission reductions or removals, and 3) describe how the offsets relied upon are of high integrity and accounted for correctly to reflect the claimed impact on climate. Moreover, the term ‘net-zero target’ is defined in EU law⁴ in a delegated act under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive.

The Commission expects the above instruments to provide a framework for companies to make transparent and credible environmental, including climate claims, helping restore consumers’ trust in these, and thereby also mitigate any ‘greenhushing’.

¹ Directive 2005/29/EC (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02005L0029-20220528>).

² COM/2022/143 final (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52022PC0143>).

³ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-directive-green-claims_en

⁴ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2772 (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=OJ:L_202302772#ntc37-L_202302772EN.000301-E0030).