

'Green claims' directive

In March 2023, the Commission proposed a directive on green claims. During its March plenary session, the European Parliament is due to vote on the report adopted jointly on 14 February 2024 by its Committees on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO).

Background

The Commission [found](#) that 53% of the environmental claims in the EU it examined were vague, misleading or unfounded, and 40% were unsubstantiated. The 2020 [new consumer agenda](#) stressed that consumers need to be better protected against 'information that is not true or presented in a confusing or misleading way to give the inaccurate impression that a product or enterprise is more environmentally sound, known as "greenwashing"'. The green claims proposal complements the [Directive to Empower Consumers for the Green Transition](#), adopted on 20 February 2024, through proposing more specific rules.

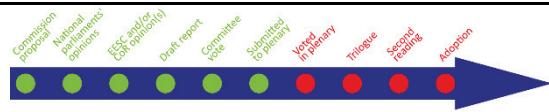
European Commission proposal

The [proposed directive](#) would set detailed rules on substantiating and communicating explicit environmental claims about products, in business-to-consumer commercial practices. It would apply to voluntary explicit environmental claims and labelling schemes (i.e. certification schemes that certify that a product, a process or a company complies with the requirements for an environmental label). Member States would have to ensure that companies carry out an assessment to substantiate environmental claims, but there is no prescribed method for this assessment. In addition, some requirements would be set for comparative environmental claims. The requirements to substantiate environmental claims, and on communication of environmental claims, would not apply to [microenterprises](#), unless they request the verification. The proposed directive would also set requirements for environmental labelling schemes. Member States would have to establish procedures to ensure *ex ante* verification of the substantiation and communication of claims, against the requirements set out in the directive, to be carried out by a verifier, delivering a certificate of conformity certifying that the claim or the label complies with the requirements.

European Parliament position

ENVI and IMCO adopted their report on 14 February with 85 [votes](#) in favour, two against and 14 abstentions. According to the report, the verification of environmental claims and labelling schemes by the verifiers should be completed within 30 days. Member States should ensure that the cost of verification and certification takes into account the complexity of the claim, and the size of companies requesting verification and certification. The Commission should establish, through a delegated act, a simplified verification system allowing companies to benefit from a simplified procedure for certain environmental claims. It should also provide a report on the use of environmental claims on products containing toxic substances, assessing the need for restrictions or prohibitions on the use of explicit environmental claims for these products. Climate-related compensation and emissions reduction claims based on carbon credits could only be used for residual emissions of a company through carbon credits certified under the [proposed regulation establishing an EU certification framework for carbon removals](#). The Commission would set up a 'green claims consultation forum' involving Member States' representatives and stakeholders. The proposed directive would apply to small companies 42 months after its entry into force.

First-reading report: [2023/0085\(COD\)](#); Committees responsible: ENVI and IMCO; Co-rapporteurs: Andrus Ansip (Renew, Estonia) and Cyrus Engerer (S&D, Malta).



[Outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe](#): This proposal is relevant for measures 5(1); 11(8).

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