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A GREEN MIRAGE: CORPORATE GREENWASHING AND ITS MALICIOUS ACTS TO SOCIETY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

“Words mean nothing when your action contradicts”

As the above saying goes in a common market, the demeanour of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), private firms and multinational corporations (MNCs) pose an unspoken greenwashing threat to the community and a dominant reason for climate shift. Greenwashing is the finicky exposure of positive information without full disclosure of negative information which acts like a double-edged sword to create an overly positive corporate appearance. Companies promising to be sustainable, biodegradable, or environmentally conscious sometimes fail to meet the promises they make to consumers. “It’s basically just a form of lying,” says Ellis Jones. Greenwashing occurs when management teams hope to appear that they are engaged in meticulous ESG analysis, given the pressure to do so in today’s business environment which has an enormous destruction in the society and climate. The corporate ploys us in every way using terms like ESG as a marketing tool just to sweep away green sheen under the carpet. The CSR done by the companies is just a distraction posed for a further colossal hand in marketing, this is a leading case where they opt for greenwashing which does not cost them much yet have a large sale in the market, we call them as hypocrites. Against this scrim, this paper aims to emphasize the hideous nature of corporate's greenwashing which leaves a huge scar on the society which we live and the unstable climate with a dwindling environment.

Keywords: Greenwashing, Climate change, Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG), Marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

A lot of consumers tend to buy environmentally friendly products and they even go a bit further to boycott the products that cause harm to the environment for instance like plastic we don’t like to use it and make a point to discard the usage all together. Some corporations take this as an advantage to lure consumers in and make a huge profit which makes them fall into the trap of greenwashing. Greenwashing is a term which is used to refer to the attitude that deceive the people in believing that the organisations are very environmental affable. The term greenwashing cropped up when the CSR (corporate social responsibility) came to presence we can call it the evil doppelganger. It is one of the aspects for corporates to enter the global market with the tag called climate safe.

Over the years there is constant change in climate and a lot of factors which our human race does affect it adversely, therefore companies did take up responsibility for their action and moved in a way to be hazard free for the environment which made us coin the term CSR corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility expenditures are unrelated to a company's products but visible to the consumer indicate that the firm is more trustworthy and that their product is of a higher quality (Fishman, Heal, and Nair 2007).

To get a clear picture of how the companies masks on the greenwashing the case of CARTIER company is considered. Even though CARTIER is considered a giant in the jewellery world people are in no for the chicanery by the French jewellery's gimmicks marketed as 'eco-friendly'. The purpose of this paper is to bring out the hooliganism of the corporates to the society and the environment.

1.1 REVIEW OF LITRATURE:

Alberto Aragon Correa J et al. (June 2014) the researcher has expressed there is a greater need to heed to the environmental conditions to develop a crystal-clear boundary by corporates do what they say. He also states that the corporates environmental friendliness has grown in the latter years as in the overall growth to the social and environmental changes. And the authors are very persistent on their actions with the regard to the environment. It emphasises on the social perk and costs in the environment to make a confident difference

Agostino Voller (2022) in this paper the researcher clearly enumerates an aspect of how to avoid the risk of greenwashing, contact for support cannot simply be interpreted as alluring communication method. The author gives us a clear idea on how there is a wide range of marketing and how the corporates form a communication practise to make a huge action on them and how it adversely affects the climate and the society.

Bowen (2014) the researcher points out the clout between ad mistering organizations and national environment. There is a glitch in differentiating the actual environmental progress as in real to what the corporate portrays making us into believing the environmental progress. As the corporates claim to be the frontier of the developing business the actions done by them as greenwashing is a big blow to the environment and its surroundings as greenwashing is a beneficial to business but costly to the society.

Jennifer K Lynes (2015) Companies throws a mask on their face to produce environmentally friendly products but their actual outcomes are just sins of fibbing. In other words, we can say o pure manipulator. The researcher has critically viewed that the corporates have to abide by the information's and the propaganda that it preaches so it is entirely safe for the consumers and the environment that we live in

Lyon and Montgomery (2015) have conducted a study that greenwashing builds up the image of the company from being partially baloney to being in full falsehood claiming that green claims are just talks. As greenwashing misleads many consumers in buying ecologically sound products but are being cheated right on the face which is a huge backlash to the people and the community that we abide.

Maria Roszkowka (2021) has pointed out that strong environmental behaviour may limit greenwashing, through public exposure of dishonest corporate behaviour. Greenwashing a major ploy can be curbed by social media, government oversight of regulations. It enlists that it is crooked way of the corporates to damage the nature and earn profit out of it, which is highly condemning to brands with a false label with information's overloaded and a thick wall in the environmental communication

Parguel et al. (2015) has a deep stand in his paper of how the corporates manipulate and influence customer based on their emotion which is just fabricating things that does not exist but to build just up the company's image in doing so. It characterizes as calming attention and it is being said as recyclable which communicates to spread a positive attribute to distract people and cause a peripheral cue as imagery.

Sebastiao Vieira de Freitas et al. (2020) the researcher provides measures to keep in check the greenwashing by companies and the measures takes to protect genuine green companies. The researcher has also analysed that the companies are working hard to enable growth in profit which misguides the stakeholders in believing that the they are sustainable which in actual is all falsehood

Terra choice (2010) has suggested that it is where the company use the most popular way of advertising that is textual argument that make a false statement of their green claim which significantly leads to seven sins observed by Terra. It has said that there are a numerous sin to greenwashing which doesn't eliminate the actions but are in more guilty to produce them. They can be anything like baby products or the things we use for elderly people all having a green tag which merely make people blindly follow the line and in action get killed by it.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Consumers being blinded by the jargons and the counterfoil used by the corporates and are lured into being the victim of greenwashing. Is greenwashing a heinous crime which can be ignored by the society? Does greenwashing cause the abrupt switch in the climatic conditions?

1.4 OBJECTIVES:

- 1.To explore that greenwashing is destructive evil that is slowly eating away our planet.
2. Determining of huge course of greenwashing being poignant to the society.
- 3.To see if there is a lopsidedness in the climate due to greenwashing.
- 4.To highlight that the companies disguises greenwashing, making it deadly to the environment.

2.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

All the contents and data taken for this research are collected from various resources and articles primarily from various online sources. I have taken in review a lot many publications like springer open, research gate, sage, Mongabay, ESMA (European securities and market authorities), dirty fashion report and lot of case studies revolving around greenwashing. The data collected and used for this research are purely secondary data and ranges from 2006-2023 year are taken into deliberation. And to make an elaborate understanding CARTIER A FRENCH JEWELLERY, has been taken as case study analysis with the secondary information gathered to have a precise awareness of how the corporates play the game of GREENWASHING.

2.1 THE DISPARITY OF GREENWASHING AND ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance):**2.2 GREENWASHING:**

"Discretion is the polite word for hypocrisy" Christine Keeler

Regarding the environment, firms can be divided into four types (1) Vocal green organisations are those who are good environmentally friendly and has a positive performance. (2) Silent green organizations are those who are not communicative about their good environmental acts. (3) Silent brown organizations are those who don't communicate about their bad environmental acts (4) Greenwashing organisations provides fastidious exposure of positive information without full disclosure of negative information. Greenwashing is an act performed by corporates to deceive consumers in thinking that they are 'environmental and climate friendly' in which they try to manipulate the consumers in such a way we become the flag bearer of the so-called product or the firm.

For example, H&M maintained a scorecard for each product which gives us a complete insight of it being environmental sound. But after the release of Quartz's report, they abandoned the scorecard. The scorecards consist of Higg material sustainability index (MSI) by sustainable apparel coalition (SAC). They did have a contradicting version of SAC in the scorecard has already sustained brand image with their acts of greenwashing.

2.3 TYPES OF GREENWASHING:

There are a few types of greenwashing according to a bunch of articles, journals, and publications that has been considered in a concise part

1. Wrecking bio-diversity:

A company may paint a picture of them being environment conscious but, they cause major harm to the ecosystem for example: A German car manufacturer Volkswagen posed as itself the world's most environmentally compatible automaker saying it will reduce co2 emission but not only failed but aeriaded the co2 emission with each passing year.

2. Bogus label:

A company promises one thing but ditch the promise and deceive customers for example: Coco-cola being a huge brand came up with a new version of the drink called coca cola life that contains 36% less calories and 37% of reduced sugar but failed to fulfil if you would rather be dead than drinking so called this healthy drink.

3. No validation:

When a company does not hold any proof or receipts to go along with their go green products and they hold no ground to it. For example: Companies like Amazon, Google, Ikea claim to be in low carbon market but earned low count.

4. Ambiguity:

A company may use dubious tactic or unclear information about their product in environmental terms, for example: A product claiming to be sustainably feasible but fail to explain why they are called so just pointing out only the facts that the people need to see and masking away the rest from the public eye.

5. Double-crossing

When a company poses to do something but end up doing another is called double crossing as of when they claim to make products with the reduced usage of plastic by 60% but in actual, they produce it by reduction of 10%.

6. Wilful or Unwilful of data disclosed:

A company when wilful or unwilful discloses one information and conceal one information for example: when they stress over the facts that they recycle the emissions from the company but cloak the fact that they emit carbon in a sizable measure.

7. Entice and swap:

As in when they broadcast the company's single product being of great use to the environment, they fail to open up their deadliness caused by an enormous products produced by them.

2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE (ESG):

ESG is a groundwork that helps people understand how a company is administering danger and moments in accordance with environmental, social and governance.

Figure 1: source (<https://in.search.yahoo.com/search?fr=mcafee&type=E211IN714G0&p=es>) provided under FIGURE LEGENDS

Environmental problems may arise which is blended with climate, pollution waste, energy consumption, natural resources supervision, and animal security assurance to helps us assess any environmental dangers posed by the company and how it is being executed.

Social attitude of the company has an imposing way to the internal and external shareholder. What is the ESG criteria in the company agenda? Does it bequeath a part of its profit to the social community or does it step forward to work and make a change in local community? Does the company view and take care of the employees who are in working and to ensure their safety and wellbeing? Socially responsible investing (SRI) makes it a point to advocate honest practices such diversification, admittance, association-focus, social honest and corporate fairness in addition to fighting against racial, gender and sexual bigotry and it demonstrates an image of being socially engaged as these set a high parameter for the growing economies.

Governance is simply classified as the company as to how the company is being directed and handled. When a company have a through transparency of the business it is said to have a clear integrity and diversity as it is answerable to the customers. And it takes huge toil on the liability on the part of galena.

3. GREENWASHING AFFECTING SOCIAL FLOOR:

Greenwashing are the unproven claims by the company and it has an adverse effect on the society as consumers will never have faith in the company regarding the environmental claims. Consumers have a zero tolerance towards greenwashing as it greatly affects the public safety. It is tempting to ignore all the attributes the company throws towards climate in the name of greenwashing. While some of the businesses are legit say like 2,000 of them promising and working towards climate. According to Air Safety Foundation (ASF), 17% of the companies are high emission and 58% of companies do not report the emission let alone bring a change and 60% are the real green hypocrites. The sustainability percentage of customer trust is 20% only which gives us a crystal-clear image of companies greenwashing in the society.

A large part of consumer buying is based on their emotions and the corporates are using this behaviour to enlarge their business and make a huge profit. In today's world buying green products are a priority for a lot of customers. The advertising consultancy Terra Choice Environmental Marketing made a definite conclusion in research on greenwashing from 2006 and 2009 that in 2,219 products making green affirmations, 98% of them were culpable of greenwashing.

4. GREENWASHING AFFECTING CLIMATE SHIFT:

Greenwashing is the major problem for solving the climate issues, it is made up of clever PR and falsehood. Companies who are doing well in CSR are very modest while those in greenwashing tell stories. There are no clear standards of the companies. They fail to disclose the emissions percentage and how much of it is offset. The primary threat of Global Warming is Greenhouse gases (GHG) which tends to be a large emission by greenwashing of the companies. The green hydrogen got from renewable electricity is 'cooking up this earth'. The production of this green hydrogen is highly polluting worldwide and is responsible in emission of CO₂.

* Blue hydrogen is got from natural gas, where the emissions are collected using carbon capture and storage

* Green hydrogen is got from electrolysis powered by renewable electricity.

A comparison of production process for "blue" and "green" types of hydrogen

Figure2: Source (Woodside) provided under FIGURE LEGENDS

A radial transparency is required by the companies to eradicate this green washing being said by Al Gore and Gavin McCormick the developers of TRACS- Tracing Real Time Atmosphere Carbon Emission which is an NGO that has developed an AI which uses the data from 300 satellites with air-based sensors so we will know the percentage of greenhouse gases emission and from where it is being emitted. For this let us have a brief view on Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions

*Scope 1 emission- This is the one which makes the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission directly from the company for example: boilers, material manufacturing, and gases emitted from the vehicles

*Scope 2: These are the emissions a company makes indirectly when an energy is being bought by the company for various reasons for example: when electricity or energy is being used to produce colling of the building and gases being emitted during this process.

*Scope 3: Now here's the real deal where it gets real, in this type an organization is being indirectly responsible for the emission of the GHG as in the form of buying production from its suppliers and from its products when customer use them for example: Banks are investing in companies such as oil and gases, producing steel ores, acquiring materials are responsible for emission of GHG.

Figure3:Source(<https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/focus/climate-change/zero-in-on-scope-1-2-and-3-emissions.html>) provided under FIGURE LEGENDS

5. FARCE NATURE OF THE CORPORATE IN ESG WITH A CASE STUDY:

As we all know that corporates do all the jabber for making a profit and to stay sustained in the market but it is just a camouflage of marketing this is a heinous crime committed by the companies. To understand this better let us glimpse of this with a case study; CARTIER FOR NATURE

Cartier in Paris was founded by Louis-François Cartier in 1847, Cartier has evolved through welcoming visionaries and free spirits into the Maison. Today this pioneering spirit is more alive than ever. From jewellery and fine jewellery to watchmaking and perfumes: Cartier's sit has set its timeless mark on every industry making it the renowned name in the world.

In December 2018, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) released a report assigning environmental ratings to 15 major watch manufacturers and jewellers in Switzerland. Cartier (being a subsidiary of the Swiss Richemont Group) was ranked No. 2 among the 15 manufacturers and assigned an average environmental rating of "Upper Midfield," suggesting the manufacturer has taken first actions addressing the impact of its manufacturing activities on the environment and climate change. According to Cartier's official company document, the company is committed to conduct businesses "in an environmentally responsible manner" and "minimising negative environmental impacts."

Cartier was criticised for greenwashing in the veil of amazon tribe Yanomami, saying that they are all in for conservation of the Amazon Forest. Their advertisement is as follows "Cartier for nature is supporting Hutu kara association Yanomami in Brazil to advance protection and reforestation initiatives on Yanomami land in the Amazon rainforest. While the foundation cartier pour l'art contemporaries has been raising awareness about Yanomami culture this two-pronged effort is necessary amid increasing pressures

and threats and more broadly to contribute to the fight against deforestation and climate change" (Cartier via AP). Beneath is a photograph that the company published:

Figure4:Source(<https://in.video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=mcafee&ei=UTF-8&p=cartier+greenwashing&type=E2111N714G0#id=1&vid=acbc6c957652b5e83a025b7c4485a9d9&action=click> provided under FIGURE LEGENDS

Cartier being a giant name in jewellery from France said they have made an effort to conserve the rainforest in which the Yanomami tribe live also making an raised standard of living they published this with a bunch of photos taken of the Yanomami people and children as their **PROOF AND RECEIPTS** but was called out in a disgraceful way by the leader Davi Kopenawa (tuxawa) of the Yanomami tribe saying they never did anything for the conservation or the upliftment of the forest or the people all is a farce and even said they have published the photos without their consent. And Cartier has been involved in illegal mining of gold and causing lethal gases and pollution in the rivers and water which is noxious to the Yanomami tribe and the forest. And after being called out they immediately took down the posts and the articles relating to the conservation.

This is clear case of greenwashing, as in they not only provided false information but had the gut to pollute and manipulate the environment. As a consumer I would be totally fooled by the company's jargons making me victim to their greenwashing.

6. RESEARCH SUGGESTION:

1. Never be blinded by the company's claims of being environmentally friendly
2. Always do have data analysis of the company of how they are eradicating their waste and how they recycle their wastes.
3. Have a conversation with the stakeholders and make it a point to bring emission rates and all the interlinked recycling in the portfolio of the company
4. Social activist and the environmentally friendly NGOs should have a through analyses of the company's emission and be called out and even get them sued if needed.

7. CONCLUSION:

Greenwashing can be limited not fully abolished by having a great accounting of the pollution causing materials and how they are being treated. It is always good to follow the chain and analyse and make the necessary change even be it time and money consuming. Always hold the company accountable for their actions. Climate is not something to be played with, we must not only check the carbon footprint but also the world footprint. If everyone starts to live as their choice, **WE WILL BE NEEDING FOUR PLANETS.**

Abbreviations:

SOE- State Owned Enterprise

MNC- Multinational Company

ESG-Environmental, Social, Governance

CSR- Corporate Social Responsibility

MSI-Material Sustainability Index

SAC-Sustainable Apparel Coalition

SRI- Socially Responsible Investing

GHG- Green House Gases

TRACS-Tracing Real Time Atmosphere Carbon Emission

AI-Artificial Intelligence

TUXAWA-A Leader of a Tribe

WWF-Wide Fund for Nature.

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FIGURE LEGENDS:



Figure1:source (<https://in.search.yahoo.com/search?fr=mcafee&type=E211IN714G0&p=es>)

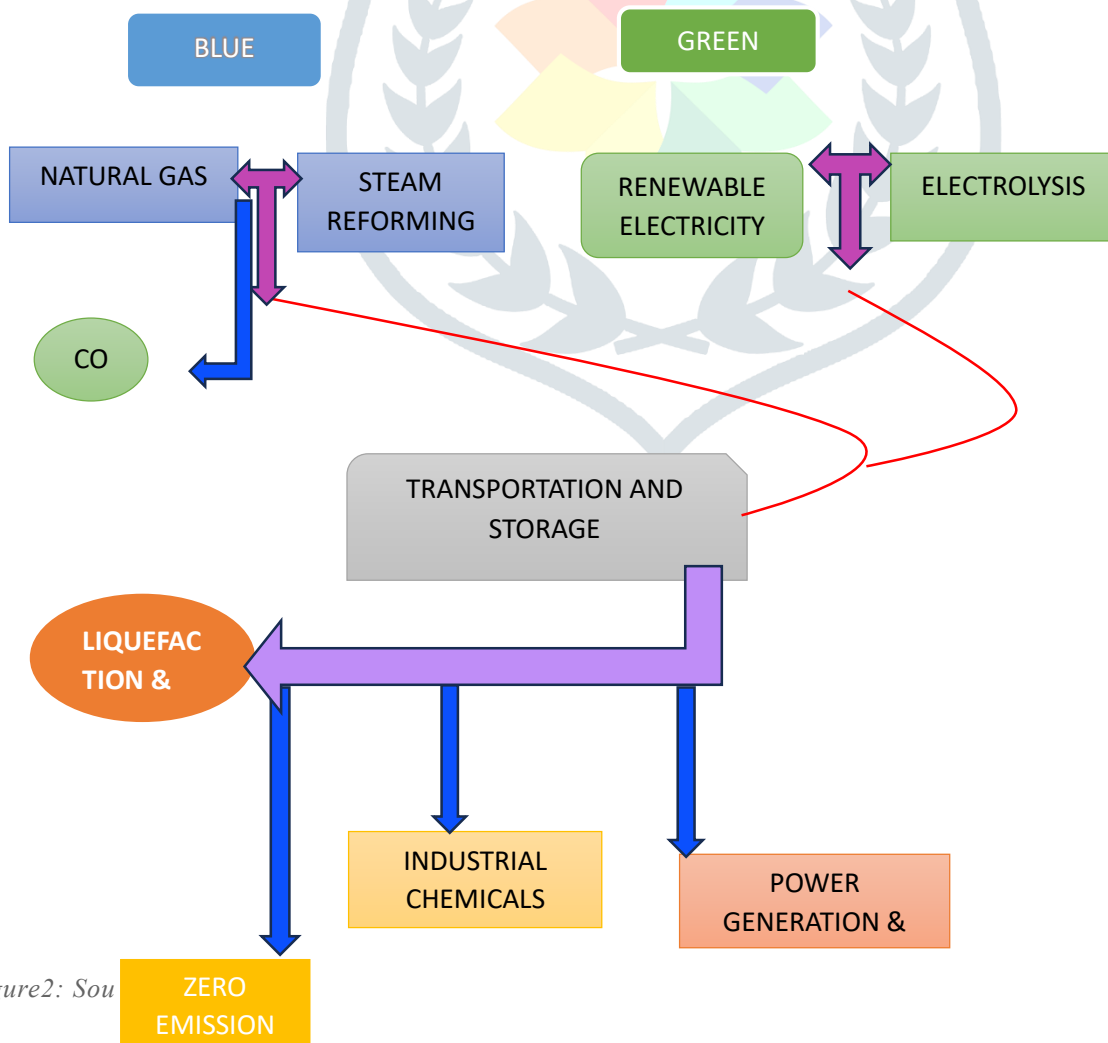


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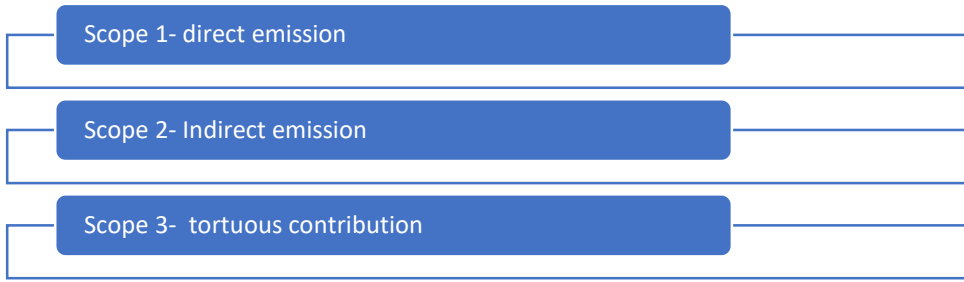


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Figure4:Source(<https://in.video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=mcafee&ei=UTF-8&p=cartier+greenwashing&type=E211IN714G0#id=1&vid=acbc6c957652b5e83a025b7c4485a9d9&action=click>)

