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Quantifying sustainability, a summary of active initiatives



Product sustainability claims, certification systems, eco-labeling:
issues & potential solutions

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Overview

- A sports analogy
- The major challenges
- Overview of initiatives to address challenges
- Focus on 3 major initiatives:
 - Sustainability Consortium
 - Packard Foundation
 - Keystone Center's Green Products Roundtable

A baseball analogy



- Many fans, players, teams, owners want to see & invest in good baseball
- Fans willing to pay to see good baseball live & on TV
- Plus purchase t-shirts, hats, jerseys & other merchandise

A baseball analogy



A baseball analogy



Imagine professional baseball with ...

- 500 leagues
- Some leagues focus just on batting averages, some just on home runs, some just on pitching
- A few small leagues claim to cover all aspects of baseball

- Thousands of teams
- Tens of thousands of players
- No MLB body defining, collecting, distributing statistics
- Hundreds of claims of national & world champions, MVPs

- Claims with ... hidden tradeoffs, no proof, vagueness, irrelevance, fibbing, lesser of two evils, false labels

Eco-labels tracked by ecolabelling.org

(project of BigRoom, Inc. supported by Duke University & Sustainability Initiative)

ECOLABELLING.ORG

WHO'S DECIDING WHAT'S GREEN?

SEARCH OUR DATABASE

(eg. coffee, fsc, paper.)

SEARCH

SEARCH BY REGION



Global Africa Asia Europe Latin America North America Oceania

SEARCH BY TYPE

Buildings	64	
Carbon	14	
Electronics	40	
Energy	31	
Food	90	
Forest Products	35	
Retail Goods	74	
Textiles	40	
Tourism	28	
Other	79	

RECENT BLOG POSTS

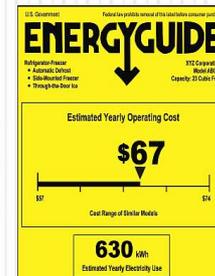
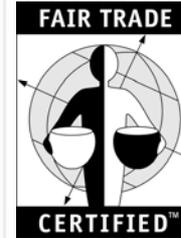
Global Survey to Index Ecolabel Universe Launches

Vancouver -- Monday, Nov 23rd, 2009 -- Big Room Inc., The World Resources Institute, The Sustainability Consortium, and Duke University today launched a global survey of ec...

[Read More](#)

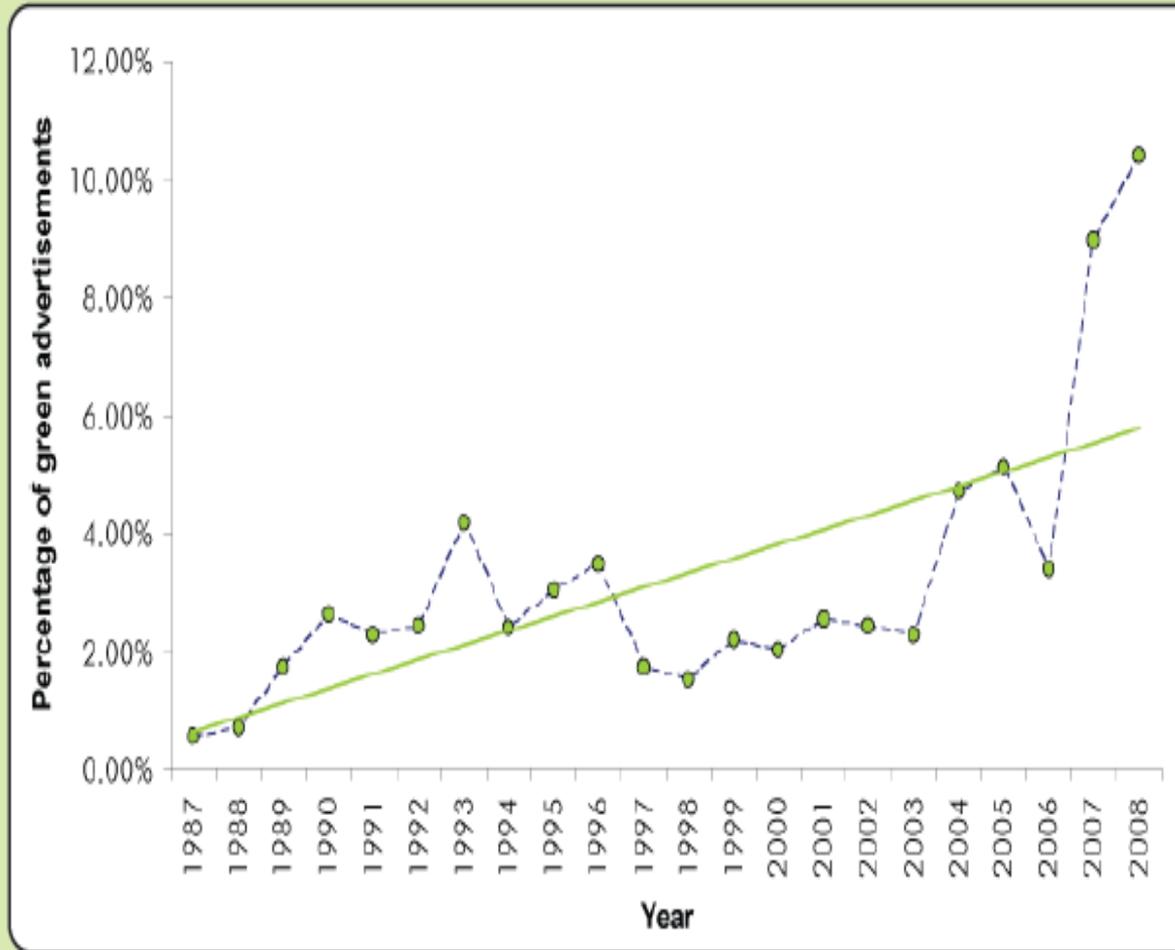


Some major North American product eco-labels



Surge in Green Advertising

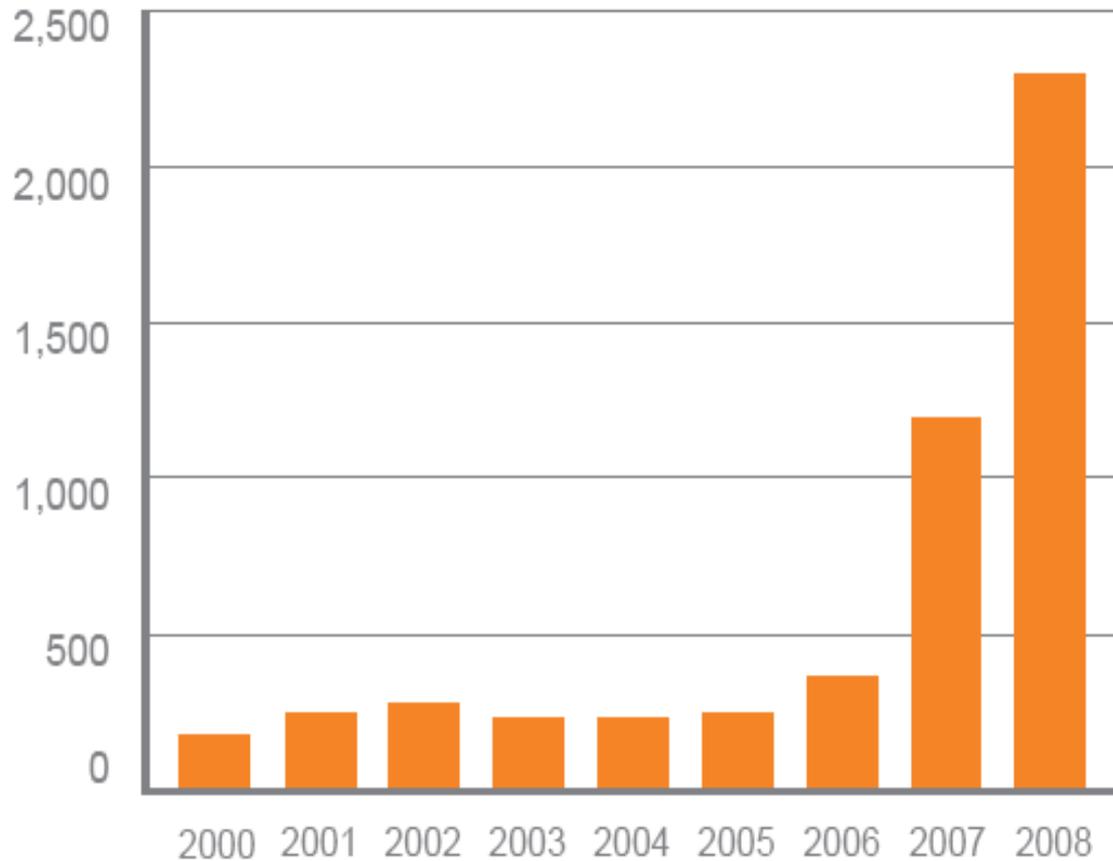
(from Scot Case of TerraChoice, Global Ecolabeling Network & Canadian Gov EcoLogo Program)



Based on survey of 18,000+ advertisements in the back issues of Time, Fortune, National Geographic, Forbes, Sports Illustrated, and Vanity Fair. Advertisements that made environmental claims were counted and described as a percentage of the total number of advertisements.

Surge in greenwash press coverage

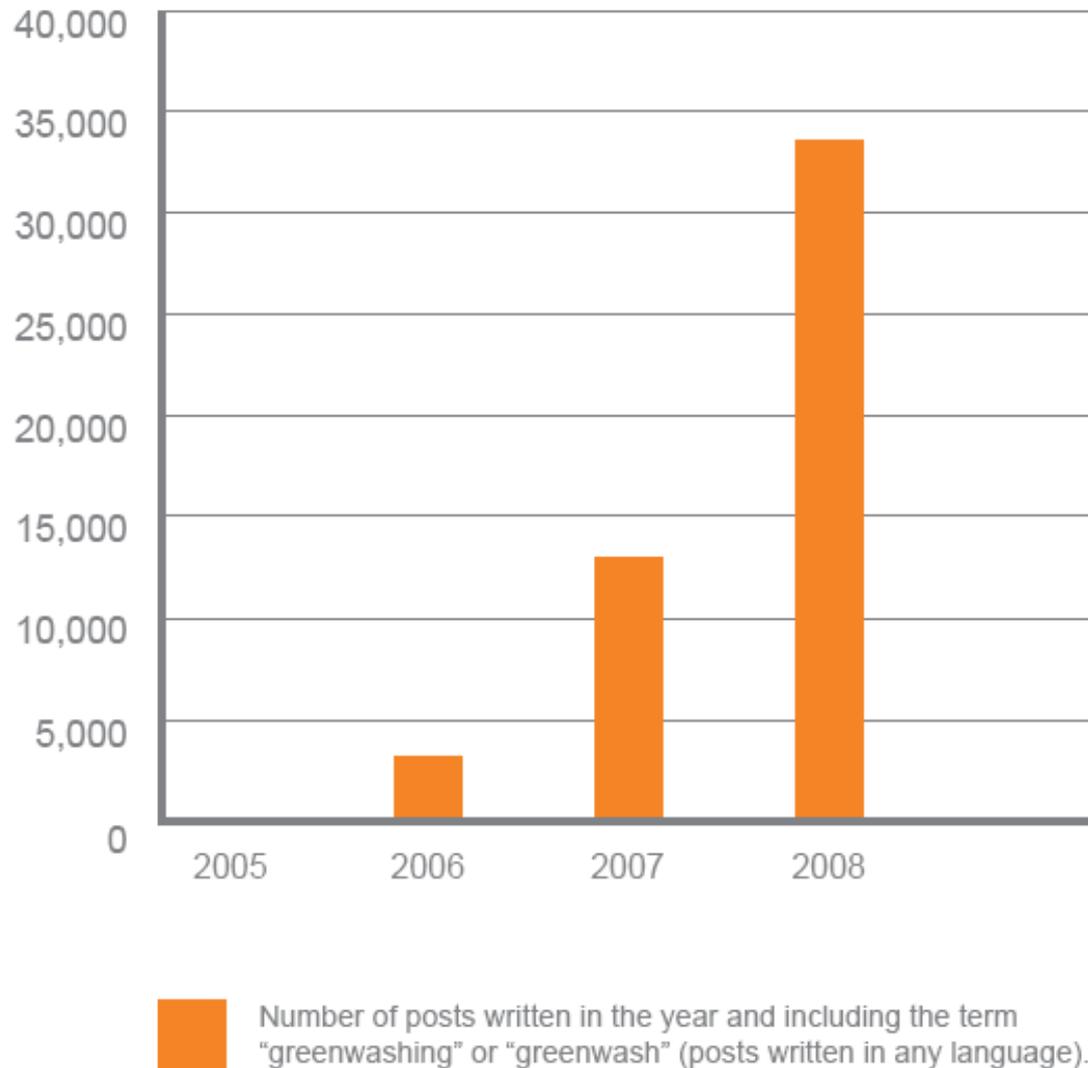
(from BSR's *Understanding & Preventing GreenWash*)



 Number of articles including the term "greenwash" or "greenwashing"
(region of coverage: international)

Surge in greenwash blog coverage

(from BSR's *Understanding & Preventing GreenWash*)



Prevalence of greenwashing

(from Scot Case of TerraChoice, Global Ecolabeling Network & Canadian Gov EcoLogo Program)

“We identified 1,018 consumer products bearing 1,753 environmental claims. **Of 1,018 products** examined ...

... **all but one**
made claims that are **demonstrably false** or
... that **risk misleading** intended audiences.”

Seven “sins” of greenwashing

(from Scot Case of TerraChoice, Global Ecolabeling Network & Canadian Gov EcoLogo Program)



1. Hidden Trade-Off
2. No Proof
3. Vagueness
4. Irrelevance
5. Fibbing
6. Lesser of Two Evils
7. Worshipping False Labels

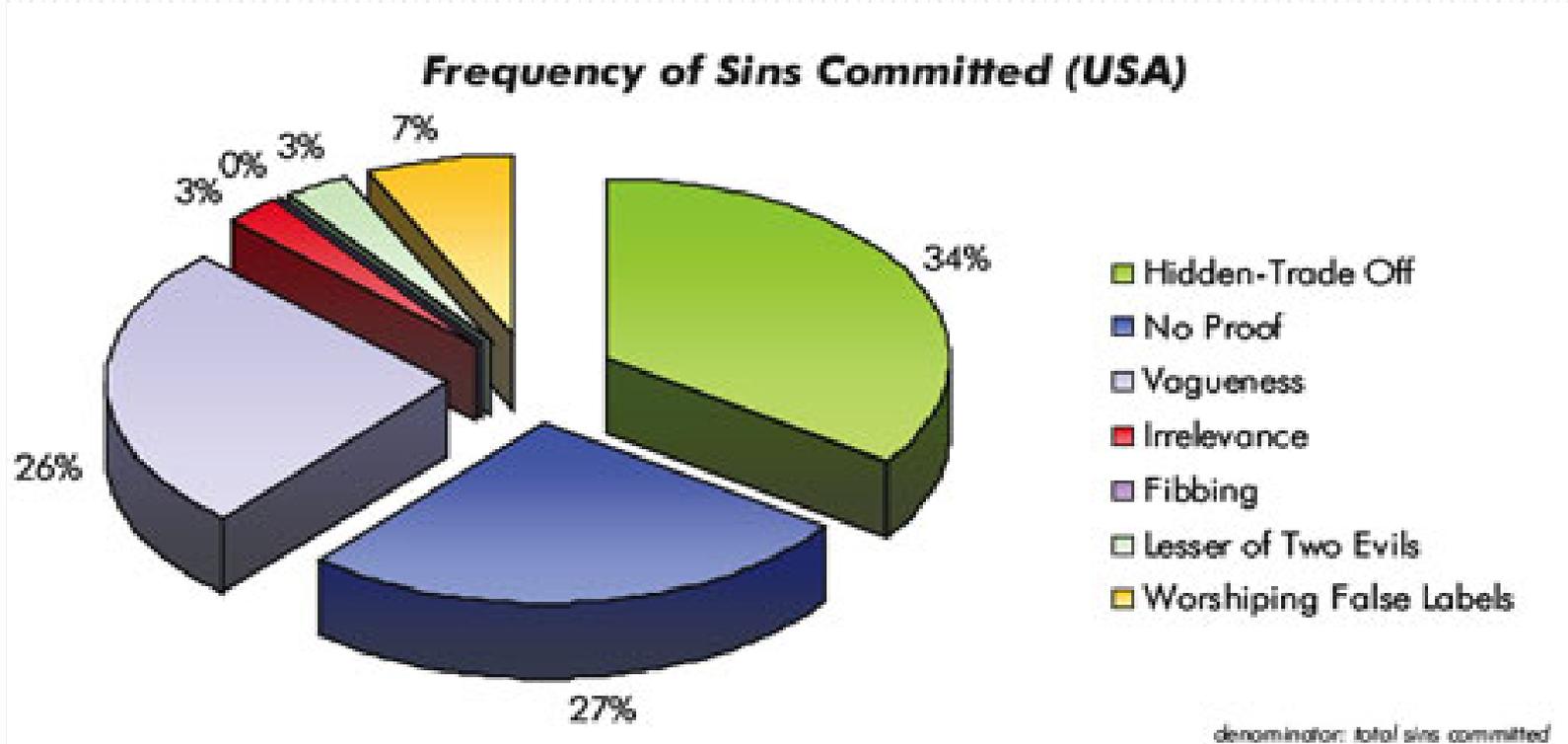
Seven “sins” of greenwashing

(from Scot Case of TerraChoice, Global Ecolabeling Network & Canadian Gov EcoLogo Program)

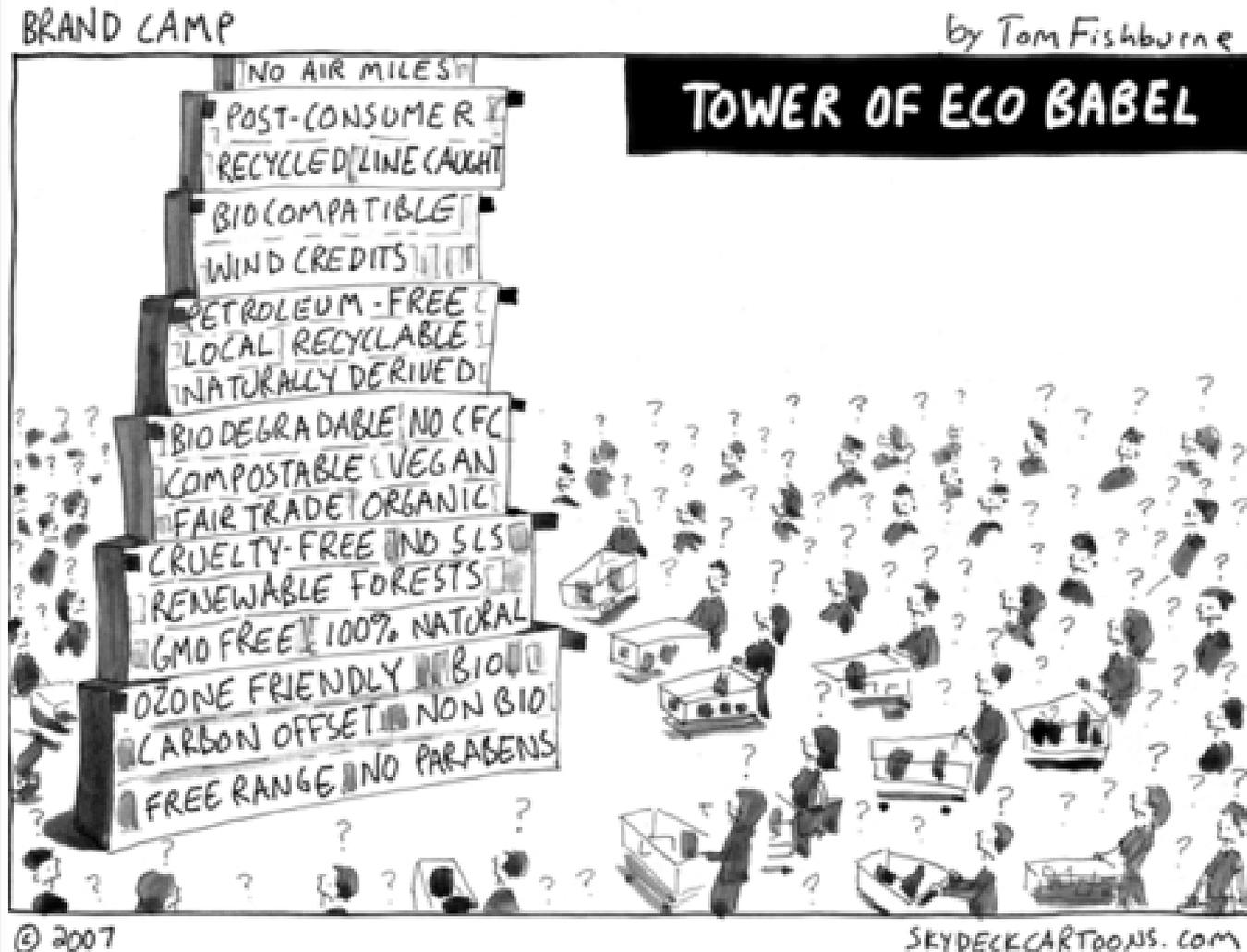
1. Hidden trade-Off:	suggesting a product is “green” based on a single environmental attribute (e.g., paper is green because it has high level of recycled content)
2. No Proof	claim that cannot be substantiated by easily accessible supporting information, or by a reliable third-party certification
3. Vagueness	claim so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by intended consumer (“non-toxic”, “all natural”, “green”)
4. Irrelevance	claim that may be truthful but is unimportant and unhelpful for consumers seeking environmentally preferable products (“CFC-free”)
5. Fibbing	environmental claims that are simply false (shampoos claiming to be certified organic, ENERGY STAR qualified caulk)
6. Lesser of two evils	“green” claims that may be true within the product category, but risk distracting consumer from greater environmental impacts of product category (organic cigarettes, “green” lawn insecticides)
7. Worshipping false labels	gives impression of 3 rd -party endorsement where no such endorsement exists (aluminum foil with certification -like images with name of company’s own in-house environmental program without further explanation)

Prevalence of greenwashing

(from Scot Case of TerraChoice & Canadian Government's EcoLogo Program)



Perspective of consumer or large institutional buyer



Potential Solutions

Major U.S. initiatives working to address sustainable product issues

Sustainability Consortium

**Packard Foundation/
Walton Foundation/
National Academy of Sciences**

**Keystone Center's Green Products
Roundtable**

Senator Feinstein bill

Markey-Waxman Climate Bill

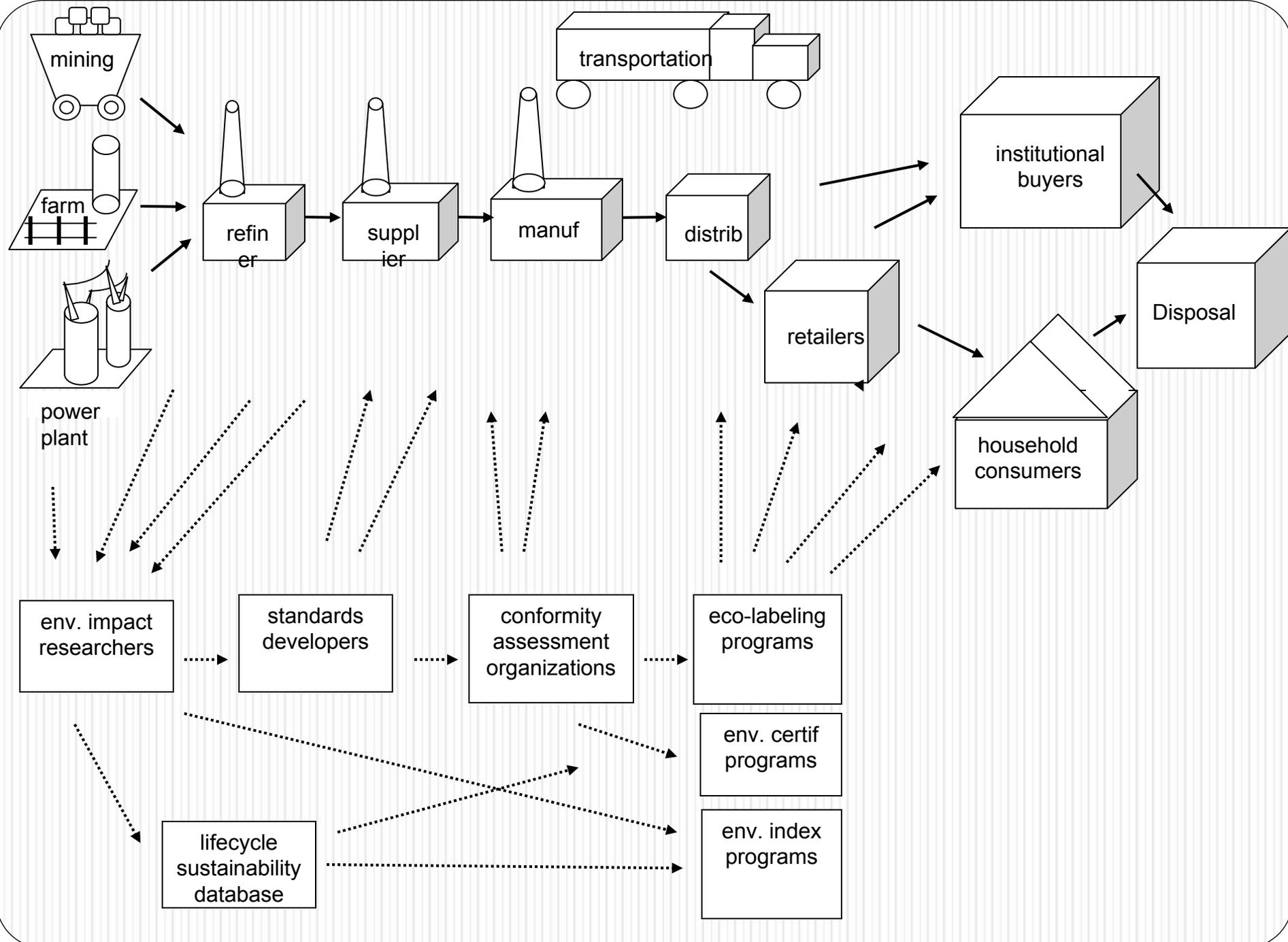
Congressional Hearings

State of California bill

Senator Franken bill

**Federal Environmental Executive's new
Green Executive Order**

Federal Trade Commission



Sustainability Consortium

Leaders

- Dr. Jay S. Golden of School of Sustainability, Arizona State University
- Dr. Jon Johnson of Walton College of Business University of Arkansas

Mission

- Develops transparent methodologies, tools, strategies to drive new generation of products and supply networks to address environmental, social, econ imperatives ... advocates for transparent process and system.

Activities:

- Develop science to support product indexing thru all phases lifecycle.
- Develop peer-reviewed standards & systems for index reporting.
- Research impacts thru product lifecycle, identifying gaps and assessing uncertainty
- Model, report, educate on benefits of new tech and consumer behavior.
- Support underpinning science for scoring system, including algorithms

Sustainability Consortium



Partners

Founders



Members



Packard Foundation/Walton Foundation/Mars

Leaders

- Dr. Kai Lee of Packard Foundation
- Ruth Norris of Resources Legacy Fund
- Abby Dilley, Senior Mediator, RESOLV

Mission

- Convene 18-month, independent, scientific, collaborative assessment of impact and performance of labeling and certification systems, their effectiveness as sustainability tools ...
- synthesize what is known and what new knowledge is required to inform certification systems and stakeholders

Answering:

- What is impact of certification and labeling?
- An effective sustainability tool?
- Under what conditions?
- What are defining characteristics of effective systems?
- When is certification best tool, relative to other approaches?
- How can system design be optimized?
- What are cost implications of sustainability improvements? Which are cost neutral, produce net savings, require stronger policy influence?
- What is potential to “scale up” certification? Barriers?

Packard Foundation/Walton Foundation/Mars

Foundations

- Packard
- Walton
- Resources Legacy Fund

Universities

- ASU
- Duke
- Harvard
- Indiana U
- U of Arkansas
- Vanderbilt
- Yale

NGOs

- Consumers Union
- IDB
- ISEAL
- MSC
- RESOLV
- WWF
- WRI
- USGBC

Packard Foundation/Walton Foundation/Mars

Consulting/Business Associations

- McKinsey
- U.S. Business Council for Sustainable Development
- Natural Marketing Institute
- Turnstone

Companies

- Mars
- Dow Chemical

Government

- EPA
- USDA
- National Academy of Sciences

Keystone Center's Green Products Roundtable

Leaders

- Keystone Center's ...
- Dr. Peter S. Adler, President & CEO
- Judith O'Brien
- Suzan Klein
- Deborah Brody Hamilton
- Eileen Miller

Key Activities

- Develop lexicon, core principles for identifying, producing, differentiating green products.
- Produce consensus guidance for FTC Green Guides.
- Providing consensus guidance on role of government & private sector.
- Other projects as determined by the group.

Keystone Center's Green Products Roundtable

Key Questions

- What analytic framework should be used to understand the many different existing and emerging methodologies, eco-labels and green attributes?
- How can a more coherent approach to differentiating green products better equip consumers to make informed purchasing decisions?
- And how can consumer purchasing power be harnessed to drive product reformulation?
- How to integrate scientific and technical knowledge of existing credible eco-label programs, standard setters, and independent certifiers into any new approach towards differentiating green products?
- Are there overarching principles to guide differentiating green products?
- How should international standards be factored in?
- How might a more coherent approach to differentiating green products coordinate with federal/state regulatory and oversight mandates?
- Is any additional infrastructure needed (e.g., creation of NGO)?

Keystone Center's Green Products Roundtable

Companies

- 3M
- Best Buy
- ConAgra
- Dow Chemical
- Johnson & Johnson,
- MeadWestvaco
- Office Depot
- Staples
- UL
- Unilever
- Unisource
Worldwide
- Weyerhaeuser

Consulting Firms & Business Associations

- Ashkin Group
- Big Room, Inc.
- Business and
Institutional
Furniture
Manufacturers
Assn
- Five Winds
- TerraChoice

NGOs

- ANSI
- GreenBlue
- Green Electronics
Council
- GreenGuard
- GreenSeal
- Green Standard
- ISEAL
- Keystone Center
- Responsible
Purchasing Network
- Sea Choices Alliance
- USGBC
- WWF

Keystone Center's Green Products Roundtable

Universities

- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota

Government

- District of Columbia
- EPA
- GSA
- Pollution Control Agency
- National Assn of State Procurement Officers
- USDA

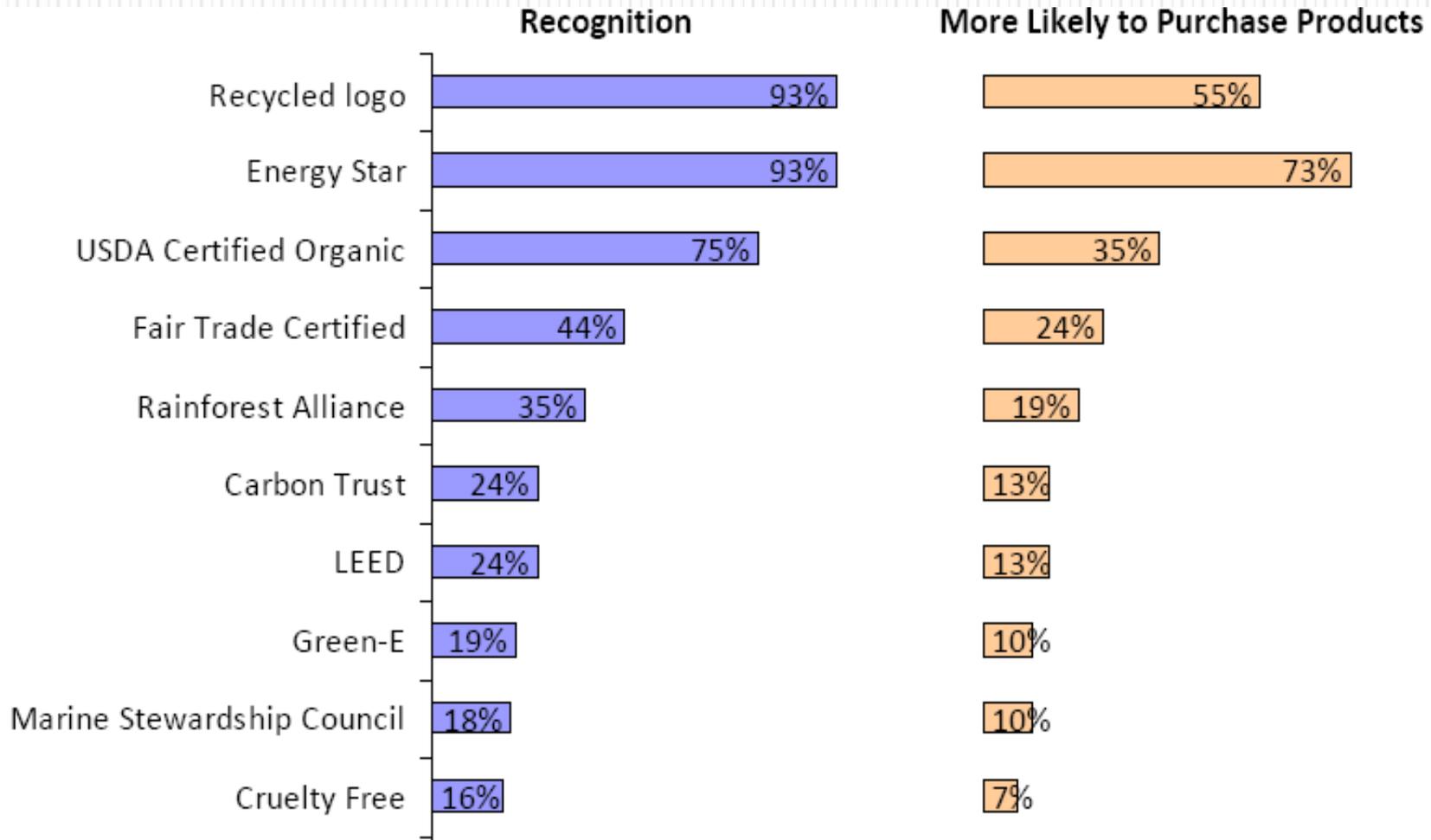
Foundations

- Johnson
- Overbrook

BACK POCKET SLIDES

What eco-labels are recognized & valued?

(from Natural Marketing Institute "Green Certifications: A Consumer Perspective", 2009)



Major EPA initiatives on sustainable products

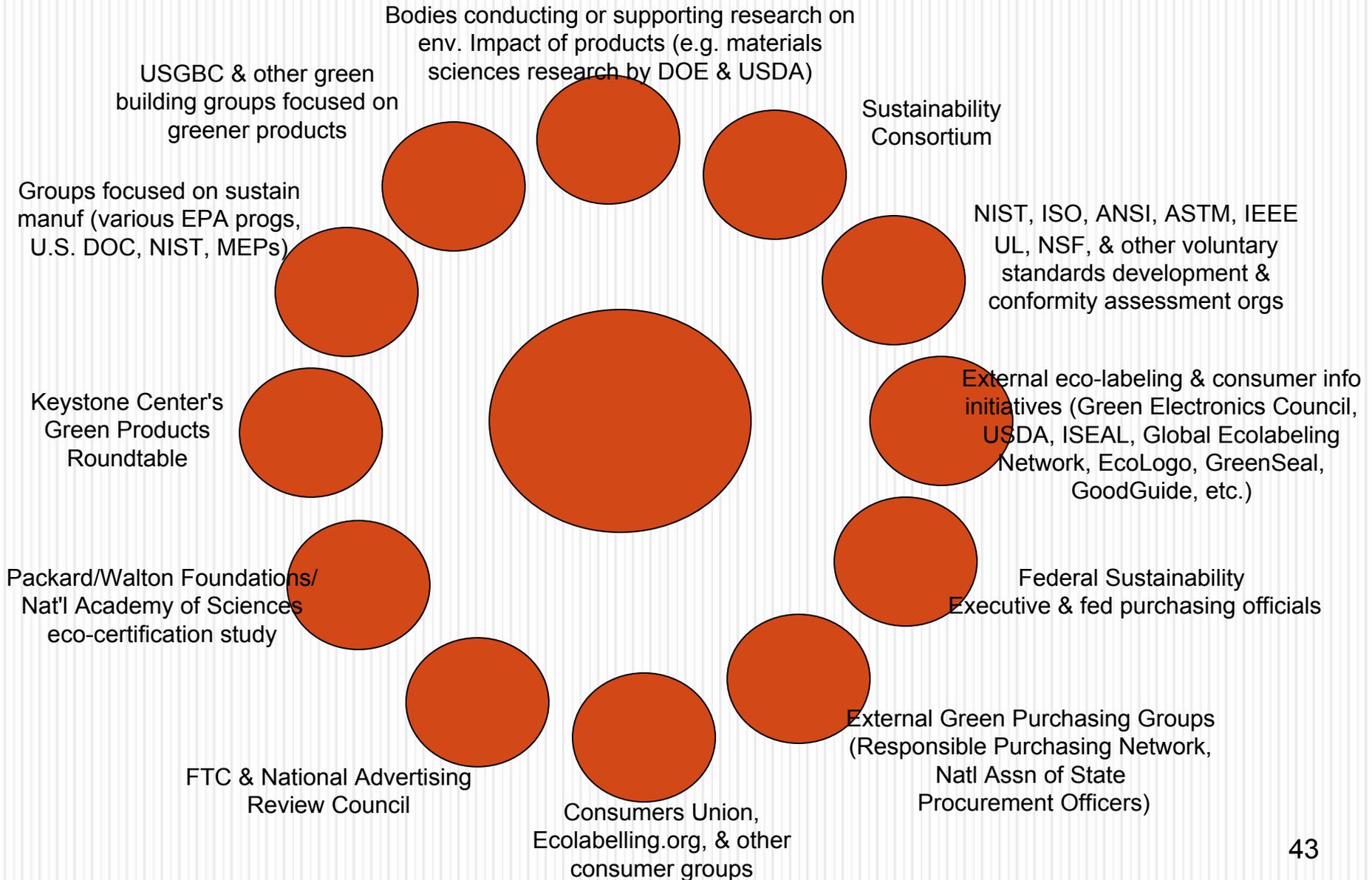


**Environmentally
Preferable
Purchasing**

**Lifecycle product
sustainability
analysis**



Key Stakeholders/Partners



Seven “Sins” of GreenWashing

(from Scot Case of TerraChoice, Global Ecolabeling Network & Canadian Gov EcoLogo Program)

Green-wash (green'wash', -wôsh') – verb:
the act of misleading consumers regarding
the environmental practices of a company or
the environmental benefits of a product or
service.

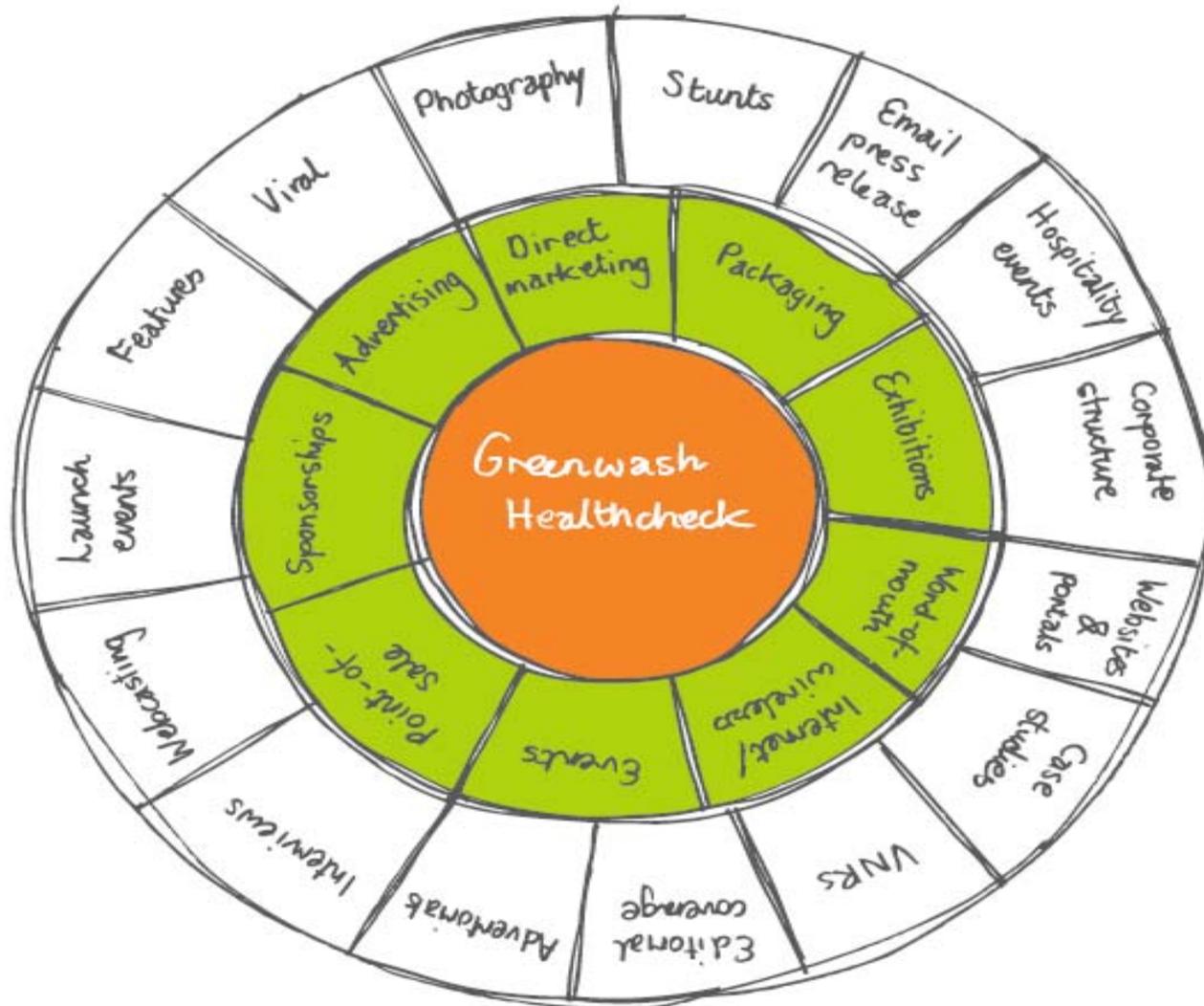
Interdependence of Sustainable Product Functions

Green Products Program



Marketing channels susceptible to greenwash

(from BSR's *Understanding & Preventing GreenWash*)



EPA Sustainable Products Network (SPN)

Office of Air & Radiation

- Jill Vohr • ENERGY STAR
- Katharine Kaplan • ENERGY STAR
- Verena Radulavic • Climate Leaders
- Eric Werling • Indoor AirPlus
- Lauren Burton • Indoor Env Div
- Sherri White • Indoor Env Div
- Bob Axelrad • Indoor Env Div HealthySeat

Office of Pollution Prevention & Toxic Substances

- Clive Davies • Design for the Environment
- Katharine Vokes • Design for the Environment
- Emma Lavoie • Design for the Environment
- Heidi Karp • Green Suppliers Network
- Catharine Manzo • Green Suppliers Network
- Tom Murray • Green Suppliers Network
- Cate Berard • Federal Electronics Challenge
- Holly Elwood • EPEAT
- James Darr • Env Preferable Purchasing (textiles, carpets)
- Alison Kinn-Bennet • Env Preferable Purchasing
- Mary McKeil • EPA Standards Executive

Office of Water

- Virginia Lee • WaterSense
- Stephanie Tanner • WaterSense

Office of Solid Waste & Emergency Response

- Jeff Kohn • IAC Partnership Programs Workgroup
- Clare Lindsay • SPN Coordinator
- Priscilla Halloran • Product to Service Transition
- Sara Hartwell • Sustainable Packaging, WARM
- Angie Leith • materials management
- Jenny Stephenson • Sustainable Packaging

Office of Research & Development

- Bob Thompson • National Risk Mgmt Research Lab
- Diana Bauer • Office of Science Policy

Office of Policy, Economics & Innovation

- Derry Allen • Environmental Stewardship
- Linda Zarow • Partnership Programs Coordination
- Stephan Sylvan • Partnership Programs Coordination • SPN Coordinator

Regional Offices

- John Katz • R9 • EPEAT
- Vicky Salazar • R10 • product stewardship