



# Making the most of **Ecolabels**

*Information for Producers*

## Careful, greenwashing!

A recent market review in the EU found that 42% of environmental claims made on websites were exaggerated. Misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service is called "greenwashing". It leads to consumers buying products that do not deliver what they promise. This creates confusion and undermines the credibility of ecolabels and the companies using them.

To avoid greenwashing and build trust between businesses and their customers it is essential for producers to provide the right background information when writing their own green claim.

## How to provide **product sustainability information**<sup>1</sup>

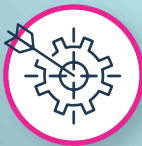
It is important to apply a life cycle thinking approach to identify potential and actual social and environmental impacts (from resource extraction to disposal). Sustainability claims should be based on five fundamental principles:



**RELIABILITY**



**TRANSPARENCY**



**RELEVANCE**

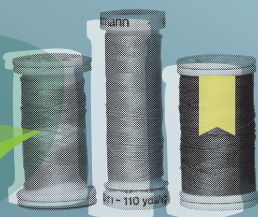


**ACCESSIBILITY**



**CLARITY**

Further, consider all of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability, highlight the long-term positive impact your product or service will deliver, find innovative ways to spread your message, work with partners to enhance your credibility and help consumers compare products.



<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information. United Nations Environment Programme, 2017. [https://app-onet.tbf.dev/sites/default/files/from-crm/guidelines\\_executive\\_summary.pdf](https://app-onet.tbf.dev/sites/default/files/from-crm/guidelines_executive_summary.pdf)

Video. Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information. United Nations Environment Programme, 2021. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOOBn\\_RUKVE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOOBn_RUKVE).