

**Trust Issues: Aristotle and Message Characteristics in Sustainability PR**

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## Abstract

Companies increasingly engage in CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) through sustainability initiatives. These efforts serve dual purposes: enhancing corporate image through 'green' advertising and potentially contributing to societal good. However, since CSR communication is often viewed with skepticism, it is crucial to investigate which factors and message characteristics influence consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns. Drawing from Aristotle's persuasion techniques, the three pillars, "logos", "ethos", and "pathos", were investigated in the context of four sustainability public relations (PR) campaigns via an interview study with 12 participants. The participants' cognitive routes to persuasion were also inspected, applying the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model, which proposes six dimensions of verification to form evaluations of the campaigns: sensorial, emotional, rational, relevant, beneficial, and social. Of the three philosophical principles, only ethos - appealing to credibility - displayed a distinct influence on the campaigns' genuineness evaluations, most commonly verified through sensory experiences. The interviews also demonstrated that participants unanimously prefer persuasive messages with concrete information over vague ones. A follow-up quantitative content analysis of 15 sustainability PR campaigns indicated that campaigns with emotional appeals constitute the majority of the corpus; however, they often fail to evoke emotions that portray the companies positively. The sentiments were overwhelmingly negative, highlighted by skepticism and distrust. Although hints of positive emotions existed, they stemmed from the participants' faith and speculations about what the companies would do in the future. As a recommendation, PR practitioners were advised to consider the companies' existing reputation, highlight the recovered damages, amplify the existing works, and provide straightforward yet insightful content.

*Keywords:* sustainability communication, public relations, credibility, persuasion techniques,  
CSR

## **Trust Issues: Aristotle and Message Characteristics in Sustainability PR**

Addressing climate change is one of the most significant ethical dilemmas facing contemporary corporations (Dahmann et al., 2017), as they are deemed responsible for the many detrimental repercussions on the environment and societies. (Dunphy et al., 2003, as cited in Lozano, 2012). Under the expectation that businesses should also contribute to society, corporations engage in non-economic activities to showcase their commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Pomering & Johnson, 2009b). McWilliams and Siegel (2001, as cited in Wang & Huang, 2018) define CSR as instances where a corporation goes beyond regulations compliance and engages in activities that might enhance societal good, regardless of their best interests, while The European Commission (2001, cited in Petrovici, 2017) defines CSR as company voluntarily incorporating social and environmental concerns into its business operations and interactions.

From a public relations point of view, CSR can be used as a tool to manage corporate reputation (Pompper, 2017). This concept, often called corporate image advertising, can be used to either enhance a negative image or an already positive one (Loveland et al., 2019a) without promoting a particular service or product the business offers (Pomering & Johnson, 2009a). Therefore, various brands across disciplines have introduced sustainability initiatives or campaigns to establish a sustainable brand identity and as a form of social marketing in which the aim is to fundamentally redirect the consumption behaviors of consumers in a more environmentally friendly direction (Venkatesan, 2022). CSR messages in such initiatives not only broadcast claims on the general value of the business but also report on their altruistic activities regarding environmental protection (Loveland et al., 2019b).

However, the intention behind CSR communication is under scrutiny by the general public (Elving, 2013) as they struggle to tell whether the corporations genuinely prioritize CSR or

merely utilize it as a superficial tool within the confines of their public relations (PR) efforts, lacking genuine commitment or substance (Öberseder et al., 2013). A study by Idowu & Pappasolomou (2007) demonstrates that among the 26 reasons UK corporations engage in CSR, only five can be classified as originating from genuine concerns about the business's societal impact. The remaining reasons focus on serving self-interest, such as managing corporate reputation, relieving stakeholder pressures, compliance with government regulations, and broader social or cultural reasons. Those companies whose CSR efforts are genuine, therefore, must project the perception that their sustainability PR campaigns (also known as "green PR campaigns") are motivated by sincere intentions rather than for purely instrumental gains (Bright, 2006) for the consumer to be able to form judgments on the authenticity of the campaigns (Joo et al., 2019). In CSR literature, "authenticity" is used interchangeably with "genuineness" (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2014) or regarded as the embodiment of "genuineness" (Pérez, 2019). There have been attempts to distinguish between the two constructs, such as the operationalization of "genuineness" by Ngai & Singh (2021). Even so, the conceptual elements of 'genuineness' also varied widely and are a subject of academic debates (Bright, 2006; Godfrey, 2006).

Nevertheless, it is up to the corporations to construct a perception that is beneficial to the success of CSR initiatives (McShane & Cunningham, 2011). The characteristics of the CSR messages in sustainability PR campaigns, from content to positioning, are usually carefully crafted to achieve the PR goal of building a sustainable business image. Because sustainability PR campaigns are essentially corporate image advertising, their CSR messages utilize persuasion techniques to help shape the extent of the message being perceived as convincing (Braca & Dondio, 2023). Schelmeltz (2012) found in an experiment that most consumers favor factual information detailing what has been done over vague future commitments. The provision of such information is later identified by Ngai & Singh (2021) as one of the determinants that

help discern genuineness in CSR communication.

Ngai & Singh's (2021) framework also incorporates the expression of emotions conveyed through the wording of the message content as a variable that affects the genuineness evaluations. The emotions evoked by an emotional message appeal can significantly influence how stakeholders perceive the motives behind campaigns (Chung & Lee, 2017). On the other hand, Andreu et al. (2011) posit that a rational message appeal could be more effective in environmental CSR campaigns. This contrast highlights the complexity of crafting persuasive messages and the importance of understanding the role of message appeal in potentially influencing genuineness evaluations.

In addition to the attributes of the CSR message, other factors can also be significant in aiding consumers in discerning the genuineness of a business's sustainability PR campaign. When used to highlight altruistic endeavors in a sustainability PR campaign, the perceived fit between these activities and the company's core operations could influence how consumers infer motives behind the campaign (García-Jiménez et al., 2017). Similarly, consumers' cognitive bias toward the business regarding previous and current reputation, among others, could result in their skepticism towards CSR campaigns (Pomering & Johnson, 2009a). Their personal characteristics, such as values and lifestyle, are also associated with their perceptions of CSR efforts, leading to different brand-related consequences (Lee et al., 2012).

However, the interplays between the factors and message characteristics are intricate and nuanced. While empirical research has studied individual factors in isolation, their combined influence within sustainability PR campaigns remains unexplored. These elements likely do not operate independently but interact dynamically to shape the consumers' perceptions of campaign genuineness. By delving into these interplays, this study could gather insights beyond isolated factors and message characteristics. This holistic approach not only contributes to the

academic literature on public relations but also offers practical findings that could potentially guide more effective sustainability communications. As skepticism can hinder the impact of sustainability PR campaigns, identifying what contributes to the consumers' perceived genuineness towards such initiatives is vital in strategic and impactful PR practices.

By communicating their CSR campaigns, businesses raise consumer awareness of their social and environmental efforts and evoke emotional responses towards their brands (Andreu et al., 2011). Those who voice their CSR efforts can add value to the brand (Servaes & Tamayo, 2013), positively impact customer satisfaction and subsequently purchase behaviors in certain industries (Emmanuel & Priscilla, 2022; Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2015; Wang, 2018). Hence, corporations aiming to cultivate a solid corporate image must acknowledge skepticism, as negative perceptions can be influenced by the business' attitudes toward environmental sustainability (Mason & Mason, 2012). This knowledge can empower corporations to craft messages that resonate with their audiences, increasing consumer trust and aligning corporate image with expectations for sustainability. Previous studies have only investigated the factors independently in an experimental context, while in reality, the interplay between these variables and message characteristics could significantly influence each person's evaluation of sustainability PR campaigns differently.

Therefore, the following research question is proposed:

*How do consumers perceive the genuineness of the CSR message in corporate sustainability PR campaigns? What persuasion techniques, message characteristics, and cognitive responses affect their evaluations, and how?*

## **Theoretical framework**



## **Corporate sustainability public relations (PR) campaigns and the consumer's evaluations**

The field of public relations (PR) is as broad and full of variety as the many definitions that it has. (Harlow, 1976) was one of the first to attempt to define the field as “a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organization and its publics; [...]” (p. 36). The UK Chartered Institute of Public Relations (n.d.) defines PR as “the discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behavior. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its public.”. Perhaps most recently, public relations is “a strategic communications process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” (Public Relations Society of America (n.d.).

In all of the definitions above, activities in the discipline are seen as something deliberate (Theaker, 2021), where the organization communicates with audiences strategically to maintain a mutual relationship. The discipline that focuses on the business as a whole, rather than on the products or services it provides, is classified as part of ‘corporate advertising’ (Garbett, 1981, as cited in Patti & McDonald, 1985). Despite the heavier focus on reputation and image and less on making a purchase appeal (Kim et al., 2009), the ultimate objectives are still rooted in the business’s relationship with its customers. According to Darling (1975, as cited in Patti & McDonald, 1985), creating brand awareness is considered the most crucial goal, with attitude and behavior changes closely following suit (Sachs & Chasin, 1977, as cited in Patti & McDonald, 1985).

As more corporations are accused of being responsible for the constantly worsening climate and environment (Dahlmann et al., 2017), engaging in corporate advertising activities

that promote the desired “green” image seem to be the answer since such environmental activities often garner the most rewarding market attitudes (Bird et al., 2007). Additionally, when these activities prove effective, they could potentially lead to enhanced environmental performance, increased financial efficacy, heightened competitiveness, and innovation advantages (Cox, 2010).

### ***Green PR - corporate sustainability PR campaigns***

As more corporations embrace the concept of being "green," a new dimension of public relations (PR) comes to the forefront. It highlights environmental or ecological aspects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and positions the company as a responsible environmental steward (Ihlen, 2009), giving rise to a specialized branch of PR termed "Green PR". This approach, defined as "creating and maintaining a positive reputation of an organization or person by giving the public information on their ecologically friendly operations" (p. 141) by Dmitrieva & Glukhova (2023), also encompasses various strategies and tactics. According to Kärnä et al. (2001) and Kirsanova (2015, as cited in Dmitrieva & Glukhova, 2023), these could include activities or statements that promote the corporate image of being environmentally friendly, such as expressing concerns for the environment, the demonstrations of actions committed based on those concerns, showcasing received awards, highlighting their compliance to regulations, and cooperating with other organizations that can help further the cause.

When done with true altruistic motives, these courses of action are in line with the definition of a campaign identified by Rogers & Storey (1987, as cited in Atkinson et al., 2016), which features “an array of mediated messages in multiple channels generally to produce noncommercial benefits to individuals and society” (p. 4732) (Atkinson et al., 2016).

Alternatively, sustainability campaigns related to environmental CSR have also been criticized

as doing nothing but deceive consumers (Nakajima, 2001) for corporate self-serving purposes to improve their reputation (Ihlen, 2009). But whether the real motives of such PR campaigns are self-serving propaganda or authentic concerns, how the PR teams decide to communicate it strategically matters to achieve its goal of persuading their intended audience.

### **Persuasive communications in corporate sustainability PR campaigns**

Persuasion plays a major role in the daily communication activities of a corporation (Panda, 2017). Whether it is for reinforcing the consumers' attitude towards the business or attempting to influence their behaviors, persuasive communication works to achieve these goals via the message (Steinberg, 1999, as cited in Panda, 2017).

Braca and Dondio (2023) composed a comprehensive paper that categorized and gave an overview of persuasion techniques used in persuasive message design. Although the paper was intended for marketing communication purposes, the knowledge is highly likely applicable to corporate advertising as well since the former completely encompasses the latter (Theaker, 2021). The same author also noted that corporate advertising, in turn, exists as a part of public relations; therefore, the insights are equally relevant for application in corporate sustainability PR campaigns.

### ***Influencing consumers' evaluation of campaign genuineness using philosophical persuasion techniques***

One of the categories of persuasion techniques identified in Braca and Dondio's (2023) paper, philosophy, is proposed by Aristotle. By manipulating the three principles "logos", "ethos", and "pathos", which target logic, beliefs, and emotions respectively, the message could achieve its intended purpose of raising brand awareness (Romanova & Smirnova, 2019). Quantitative analysis in the same study pointed out that overlappings exist, and it is hard to establish boundaries between them. In the context of corporate PR campaigns, this translates to

consumers' evaluations of sustainability PR campaigns could stem from the extent the campaigns appeal to them logic-wise, ethos-wise, and emotions-wise.

***Logos: appealing to logic***

It would be considered logical for a company to engage in CSR activities that are somewhat relevant to its sector. For example, an apparel company engaging in sustainable material initiatives would make more sense than focusing on irrelevant humanitarian aid. The fit between CSR activities and the company has been the subject of many studies, all with rather conclusive results: the better the fit, the more positive the brand evaluation (Kim & Lee, 2019). More relevance between the initiatives and the company sector also means the consumers are more likely to perceive the campaigns to be authentic efforts to contribute to society (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Menon & Kahn, 2003; Speed & Thompson, 2000, as cited in Kim & Lee, 2019), which in turn are positively associated with brand attitude. Therefore, if the sustainability campaigns can successfully appeal to the “logos” principle of the persuasion techniques, it is more likely that the sustainability PR campaign will be seen as genuine.

*RQ1: How does the perceived fit of a company's sustainability PR campaign to its sector influence the consumers' evaluation of the genuineness of the campaign?*

***Ethos: appealing to credibility/trustworthiness***

According to Aristotle, one must also appeal to authority to achieve successful persuasion. Based on Riel's (2001) definition of cognitive authority, one is deemed to have authority when the information they provide is thought to be credible and believable. However, in a literature review by Savolainen (2007), the construct “credibility” is also seen as equal to believability and trustworthiness.

The source, rather than the message itself, becomes the focus under the “ethos”

principle of persuasion. A previous study on celebrity endorsement has found that celebrities' expertise and professional achievements can serve as their credentials, making their endorsement more believable to consumers (Choi et al., 2005). In the context of corporate sustainability PR campaigns, it could mean that companies with more perceived credibility in sustainability have an advantage in putting their campaigns in a positive light.

Studies investigating the concept of Consumer Perceived Ethicality (CPE) have boasted similar findings. While it is unclear how consumers form their moral judgments on a brand's CSR efforts amidst different sources of information, Brunk & de Boer (2018) have found that a well-established CPE could severely bias the consumers' evaluation of how ethical a brand is, even in the face of abundant negative evidence. Alternatively, negative CPE also leaves such a burning image that any behavior could be scrutinized and interpreted as "greenwashing". Thus, once a company is able to appeal to the consumer by presenting itself as a trustworthy company, it could positively influence the consumers' evaluation of the genuineness of the sustainability PR campaign.

*RQ2: How does the perceived credibility in sustainability of a company influence the consumers' evaluations of their sustainability PR campaign?*

***Pathos: appeal to the consumers' emotional involvement***

The last principle in Aristotle's principles for persuasion is pathos - utilizing emotional involvement. When something is capable of arousing affective states and feelings, it could significantly influence decisions, especially ethical ones (Ladhari & Tchetgna, 2017). In charity, utilizing a positive emotion congruent with the charity's moral objective increases monetary donations and preferences (Goenka & van Osselaer, 2019). The same study also found that these respective emotions can highlight individuals' moral concerns, influencing decisions to donate. Similarly, investors are more likely to invest in companies seen as having moral and

social responsibilities that align with their personal values (Shahid et al., 2023).

Therefore, it is likely that positive emotions resulting from the congruence between personal values and the sustainability PR campaign would facilitate successful persuasion. Matthes et al. (2014) identified three relevant indicators to conceptualize one's involvement in environmental issues: *environmental concern*, *attitude toward green products*, and *green purchase behavior*. Because this differs from person to person, exploring these individual characteristics can shed light on how nuanced Aristotle's pathos can be when it comes to influencing the consumers' evaluation of the genuineness of the sustainability PR campaign.

*RQ3: How does the congruence between the consumers' personal values and a company's sustainability PR campaign, mediated by emotional involvement, influence their evaluations of the genuineness of the campaign?*

### ***Consumers' cognitive route(s) to persuasion***

As in any form of communication, one must not only look at the sender of the message, the message itself, but also the receiver of the message. This calls for looking into the reception side of the persuasive message in sustainability PR campaigns to understand how it influences the consumers' evaluations of their genuineness.

Hall (1974, 1980, as cited in McQuail, 2010) developed a theory on the encoding and decoding of persuasive messages. According to this, when a message is sent, the intended meaning is 'encoded' in a certain way for specific purposes. Still, ultimately, it is up to the receiver to 'decode' the message, interpret, and understand it. Because of what is described as "differential decoding" (Hall, 1974, 1980, as cited in McQuail, 2010), the receiver could potentially read between the lines and derive their own interpretation of the message. To put that in context, although the companies can utilize different persuasion tactics in their sustainability PR campaigns to portray them as benevolent, the consumers are not passive

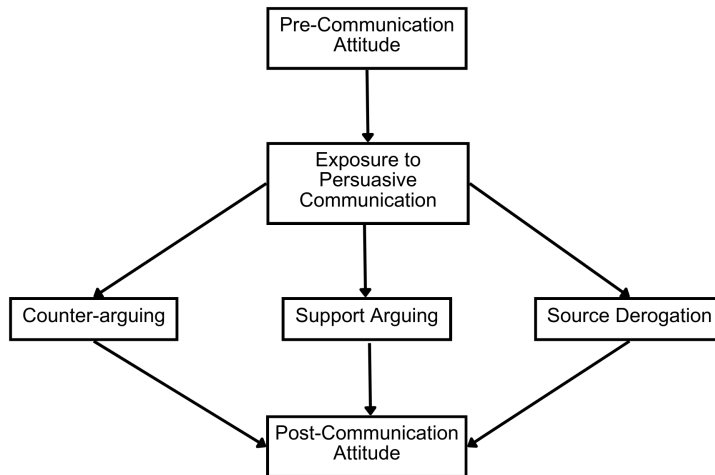
receivers, but rather, each individual plays an active role in reading and decoding the messages.

How people arrive at their opinions on the genuineness of the PR campaign also requires further elaboration. Greenwald (1968) posits that one's cognitive responses to a persuasive message may have a more significant impact on the degree of persuasion than merely recalling the content of the message. When exposed to persuasive communication, such as a sustainability PR campaign, consumers tend to confront influence attempts and critically analyze the information, so questions about the nature of these cognitive evaluation processes become most important. Suppose the receiver is indeed an active information processor. In that case, they can be expected to attempt to compare the external information to their existing structure of beliefs and values before arriving at an attitudinal acceptance of the message (Wright, 1973).

Lutz & Swasy (1977) mapped out Wright's (1973) Cognitive Response Model of the Communications Process (Figure 1) to further illustrate the process. In corporate advertisements, the consumers likely already know about the brand through personal experiences and have previously formed an attitude toward it. After being exposed to the media stimuli, in this case, the persuasive message in a sustainability PR campaign, they are likely to have the following cognitive response: (1) *Counter arguing*: when new information contradicts existing beliefs, a counterargument is presumed to neutralize the persuasive evidence; (2) *Support arguing*: when new information aligns with existing beliefs, the receiver generates responses indicating that their established views support the message. and (3) *Source derogation*: Dismissal towards the source, especially when seen as biased, leading to criticism of the spokesperson, sponsoring organization, or advertising in general (Wright, 1973). These responses subsequently help the consumers find a new position in their attitude toward the brand.

**Figure 1**

*Wright's (1973) Cognitive Response Model of Communications Process*

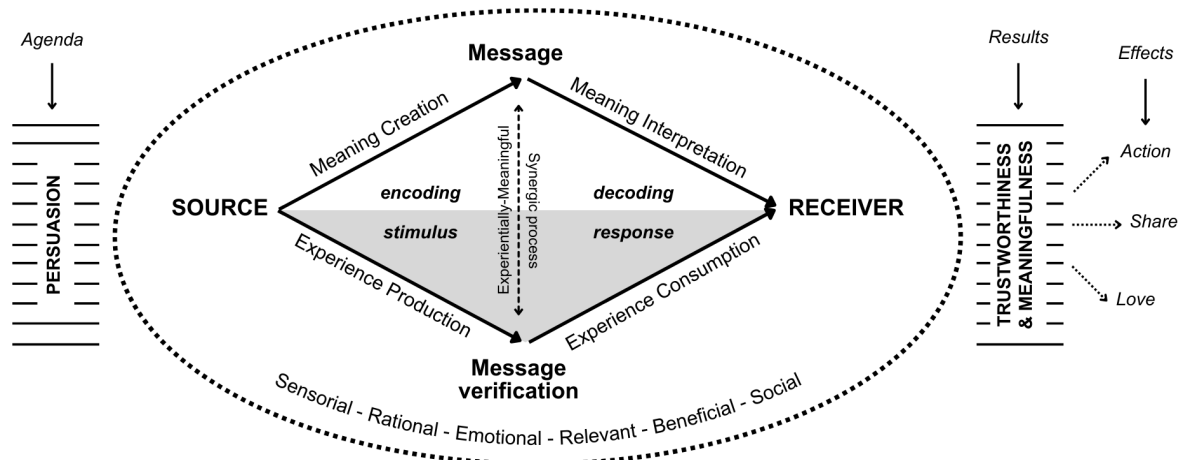


Both Hall's (1974, 1980) encoding-decoding of messages, Greenwald's (1968) and Wright's (1973) cognitive responses coincide with Wijaya's (2011) Experiential-Meaningful Communication Model (Figure 2). He proposes that upon receiving the media stimuli (the persuasive message), the consumers interpret and verify it simultaneously using different dimensions: sensorial, rational, emotional, relevant, beneficial, and social. According to Wijaya (2013, as cited in Wijaya, 2016), a message verified through the sensorial sense is considered more trustworthy because the evidence can be seen, heard, touched, or via other sensory experiences. Similarly, the emotional and rational dimensions are determined by verification through affective experience and whether the message's meaning makes sense.

**Figure 2**

*Wijaya's (2009) Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model*





Wijaya (2013, as cited in Wijaya, 2016) also proposed that a message, however factual it is, would not be ‘sensed’ if it is not perceived to be relevant to the interests and conditions of the receiver. Therefore, under this dimension, message receivers would verify the persuasive message based on how much it is in line with the background, conditions, and problems that are faced by the receiver, personally or collectively. Moreover, because humans tend to respond better to messages that are more beneficial to them (McQuail, 2010, as cited in Wijaya, 2016), it can be assumed that the message is verified based on how much the information provided in the message is beneficial to the receiver. Last but not least, Wijaya (2013, as cited in Wijaya, 2016) also posited in the model that messages are verified via the social dimension, with which the receiver verifies how inclusive and communal the message is, amplifying its credibility and influence through shared experiences and widespread discourse.

The meaning interpreted and responses driven by the stimuli then result in trust for both the company and the message content. Due to the highly individualistic nature of how a consumer interprets and verifies the persuasive message, such message's effectiveness and the following evaluation could differ significantly depending on personal experiences and beliefs.

*RQ4: How do consumers' cognitive responses influence their evaluations of the*

*genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns, considering the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model?*

### ***Message characteristics in sustainability PR campaigns***

CSR messages in general, environmental initiatives included, are rarely not faced with scepticisms (Orazi & Chan, 2018; Parguel et al., 2011), and not without reason. Scholars have identified multiple tactics used to construct misleading information and half-truths in CSR campaigns (Herold et al., 2020). Often, to appeal to consumers, CSR messages are crafted in a way that appeals to its target audience. Different framings can result in different attitudes, emotions, and even influence consumers' behaviors (Bartikowski & Berens, 2021; Cordero-Gutiérrez et al., 2023; Stadlthanner et al., 2022).

### ***Concrete information VS vague future commitment***

There have been somewhat inconclusive results in research on the effectiveness of concrete and vague information in corporate advertising (Kim & Bae, 2016). Regarding environmental claims, the specificity can range anywhere from detailed statistics to unverifiable commitments. The latter can easily mislead consumers into thinking a company is sustainable while it is not. In light of strict regulations such as the Green Claims Directive proposed by the European Commission (2023), more companies are shifting towards providing more concrete information in their sustainability campaigns to portray a more sustainable image of themselves.

Yet, this does not guarantee a positive outcome for the brands. According to (Janssen et al., 2022), whether the consumer welcomes a brand's highly specific sustainability claims depends heavily on their attitude and evaluation towards it, mediated by the preconceived notions of the brand. Relating to the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model by Wijaya (2011), concrete sustainability statements coming from a brand with well-established relationships with the consumers are potentially more likely to be decoded the way it is

intended, more likely to be verified through past positive experiences, and therefore more likely to successfully persuade the consumers that the brand is sustainable.

*RQ5: To what extent does the specificity of environmental claims influence consumers' evaluation of the genuineness of a company's sustainability PR campaign, considering the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model?*

### ***Emotional appeal vs rational appeal***

CSR messages can also utilize language style as a persuasive strategy (Braca & Dondio, 2023). Depending on how one chooses to phrase their message, it could potentially carry meaning beyond its literal understanding of their words. Therefore, different language styles in sustainability PR campaign messages can also influence consumers' evaluations of them differently.

Previous research by Zhang et al. (2014) looked into how the emotional or rational appeal of advertising influences consumers' purchase behaviors and found that preference depends on the sector and audience. In green advertising, such as a sustainability PR campaign, emotions have been used in green advertising as mediators with the hope of influencing consumers' behaviors (Banerjee et al., 1995; Brennan and Binney, 2008; Harvey & McCrohan, 1998, as cited in Yfantidou, 2018). However, rational statements are also thought to be more attention-grabbing and persuasive (Xue, 2014; Zhao & Shen, 1995, as cited in Yfantidou, 2018). Thus, it is still relatively unclear if Zhang et al.'s (2014) findings are generalizable to corporate sustainability PR campaigns. Moreover, whether the campaign is presented with a rational or emotional appeal is also a free choice for the companies.

Messages with rational appeal are easy to identify; they are statements with factual and numeric information (Yfantidou, 2018). However, PR practitioners could opt for rhetorical devices to craft a message with emotional appeal. These modes of communication can be used

for various communication purposes and induce emotions in the meantime (Braca & Dondio, 2023). Therefore, the presence of these rhetorical devices in the sustainability PR campaign could indicate an attempt to craft a message with a more emotional appeal. Some common rhetorical devices commonly used in marketing identified by the same authors are: (1)

*Hypophora*: asking and subsequently answering the same question immediately; (2) *Rhetorical*

*question*: asking a question to prompt the audience to ponder the issue being discussed; (3)

*Epistrophe*: repeating a word or a phrase at the end of successive clauses or sentences; (4)

*Anaphora*: repeating a word or a phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences;

(5) *Repetition*: repeating the same word or phrase multiple times.

*RQ6: What are the appearance frequencies of rational and emotional appeals in sustainability campaigns, considering the use of rhetorical devices such as hypophora, rhetorical question, epistrophe, anaphora, and repetition?*

*RQ7: What emotions do the statements in corporate sustainability PR campaigns evoke in consumers?*

## **Method**

A two-step mixed-method design was used to investigate factors and message characteristics that influence consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of corporate sustainability PR campaigns.

### **Study 1: Semi-structured in-depth interview with vignettes**

#### ***Design***

Using four samples of corporate sustainability PR campaigns as 'real-life' vignettes, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants to investigate their perceptions of the genuineness of the campaigns and the factors that influence them.

In selecting in-depth interviews, their capacity to thoroughly explore participants' perspectives was prioritized over alternative interview formats. Moreover, the semi-structured nature of these interviews provided the flexibility to adjust follow-up questions based on participant responses, enabling a deeper examination of discussed topics or clarification of answers (Brennen, 2022). This interviewing approach is also considered more manageable, as discussions maintain some structure by adhering to the interview guide (Arksey & Knight, 1999) while still allowing participants to articulate what they would like to express vividly.

Vignettes are used in qualitative research as prompts to stimulate and encourage participants to express their thoughts (Törrönen, 2018). For this study, the vignettes were used as provokers to elicit the participants' interpretations of the samples. Ideally, the participants would be able to point out which details in the vignettes affect their perceptions of genuineness in the campaigns and elaborate on their reasoning.

### ***Participants***

The convenience sampling method (i.e., the researchers' social network) and snowball sampling were used to recruit participants. Due to the language of the corpus and explorative nature of the study, all participants were only recruited if they were proficient in English, and no target age range was set. However, the participants should be at least 18 years old and above to participate in the study. The participants volunteered to take part in the study and received no compensation for their participation.

In total, 12 participants (9 females, 3 males) of 11 different nationalities were interviewed. The participants ranged from 19 to 30 years old, with eight participants being 25 years old or younger. Table 1 shows the composition of the participants.

**Table 1***Composition of the participants*

Participant	Age (years old)	Nationality
Participant #1	22	Dutch
Participant #2	23	Chinese
Participant #3	29	Thai
Participant #4	26	Chinese
Participant #5	23	Moldovan, Romanian
Participant #6	24	Vietnamese
Participant #7	19	Vietnamese
Participant #8	20	Bulgarian
Participant #9	23	Romanian
Participant #10	28	Belgian, Polish
Participant #11	30	Dutch, British
Participant #12	25	Vietnamese

**Materials**

Four vignettes were prepared in advance, presented as weblinks and sub-weblinks for the sustainability PR campaigns of 4 companies: Apple, Nestle, Unilever, and H&M (see Appendix A). These companies were chosen due to their popularity, maximizing the chance that

participants were somewhat familiar with them. They were also chosen as representatives of four industries: technology, food and beverage, fast-moving consumer goods, and apparel.

### ***Procedure***

After initial contact with the participants to invite them to participate in the study, an electronic information letter (see Appendix B) and consent form (see Appendix C) were sent to the participants via email or messaging applications. Interview appointments were only made after the signed consent form was sent back. All interviews took place online via Google Meets due to the participants' preferences. The interviews were conducted entirely in English, except for one instance where the interview was conducted in a mix of English and Chinese. All interviews were voice-recorded and on average, 60 minutes in length.

An interview guide was also prepared (see Appendix D). At the start of the interview, participants were sent the vignettes via instant messages and instructed to start visiting the links and reading the content only when asked. They were first asked several demographic questions, such as age, nationality, occupation, and general knowledge about CSR and sustainability PR campaigns. If the participants did not fully understand CSR or PR campaigns, the interviewer would briefly explain the concepts to avoid further confusion as the interview proceeded. After that, the participants were asked to start reading the vignettes and given as much time as needed to study them. They were then asked questions to disclose what they knew about the businesses and prompted to evaluate the genuineness of the sustainability campaigns they viewed. Throughout the interviews, the participants had full access to the vignettes and could consult them anytime.

### ***Data analysis***

The voice recordings of the interviews were automatically transcribed verbatim using Microsoft 365—Microsoft Word's transcription feature (see Appendix E). During the coding

process, the transcripts were cross-referenced with their audio-recordings to ensure accuracy and made necessary edits.

The transcripts were subsequently annotated using ATLAS.ti 24. In this study, the samples were treated with an inductive approach and coded with the grounded theory approach to develop theories grounded in the data (Flick, 2014). Guidelines for data analysis were derived from qualitative research methods for social science (Arksey & Knight, 1999). The samples were first subjected to open coding, in which a portion of the data was carefully scrutinized, and codes were generated freely with categorization. In this case, four transcripts were used. After the initial round, the codes were inspected and compared with each other before either being collapsed or expanded further to form the themes and at least 1 level of code per theme. The first four transcripts were coded again following the new scheme. The remaining transcripts were subsequently coded. The codes were regularly revised throughout the process to fit the annotated data. A coding scheme was documented at the end of the coding process (see Appendix F). In total, eight themes were identified, each with either one or two levels of codes.

## **Study 2: Quantitative content analysis**

### ***Design***

A quantitative content analysis was conducted to identify the use of rational and emotional appeal in corporate sustainability PR campaigns based on the presence of the five previously identified rhetorical devices: hypophora, rhetorical question, epistrophe, anaphora, and repetition.

### ***Data collection***

For study 2, a corpus was collected and consisted of 15 samples of corporate sustainability PR campaigns. The samples were found using the Google search engine with



main keywords such as: “sustainability PR campaign”, “corporate sustainability PR campaigns”, “environmental PR campaigns”, and “corporate climate PR campaign” with the combination of extra keywords in various orders: “sustainability”, “public relations”, “climate” “environment”, “green”. Search results often featured lists of campaigns on blog posts and news articles. From there, the campaigns are deemed eligible to be selected if they meet the criteria that allow them to be classified as a sustainability PR campaign, based on the definition of Atkinson et al. (2016) and Dmitrieva & Glukhova (2023). The campaigns, therefore, must (1) include a series of strategic activities, (2) involve communications to either inform or influence the behaviors of its audience, and (3) allow for the creation and maintenance of a positive corporate reputation. The samples are only chosen if they include texts presented on corporate web pages.

In total, 15 sustainability PR campaigns were selected from 15 companies: Hershey’s, Ben & Jerry, Oatly, Burt’s Bees, The Body Shop, Beko, Corona, Starbucks, Hyundai, Nike, LEGO, Apple, H&M, Nestle, and Unilever.

### ***Data analysis***

A codebook was created based on Braca and Dondio’s (2013) definition of rhetorical devices (see Appendix G). Each item that needed to be annotated was a complete sentence with punctuations. All sentences in the sustainability PR campaigns were selected from the company’s main sustainability webpage, its primary sustainability campaign (if there are multiple), and any sub-weblinks of this campaign. If there were multiple campaigns in one company, the selection would prioritize the one focusing on sustainability, environment, or climate. If the company did not have a campaign specifically focused on these aspects, priority would be given to the sustainability content most prominently displayed on the website. All sentences were selected unless they met certain exclusion criteria as indicated in the codebook. The texts in the sustainability PR campaign samples are copied to Microsoft Excel, each

company separated by a different tab and subsequently annotated based on a codebook.

10 out of 15 campaigns (67%) were chosen randomly to perform a second round of coding one week after the first to determine the intra-coder agreement. This recording was conducted without referring to the initial codes. Subsequently, the codings from the first and second rounds were compared. All codes assigned in the first round were identical to those assigned in the second round, resulting in a 100% intra-coder agreement.

## Result

### Study 1

#### *Logos*

The first research question seeks to investigate how the perceived fit of a company's sustainability PR campaign to its sector influences consumers' evaluations of the campaign's genuineness. Participants were asked questions to determine the fit and relevance between the cause of the sustainability PR campaigns and the industry of the corresponding companies.

Overall, all 12 participants gave a positive reaction when asked about the campaign's relevance. However, there were occasions when participants expressed uncertainty and confusion about the campaign content and questioned its relevance.

*I have a confusion on why Nestle put a number showing the management positions held by women in their sustainability page. I don't know why they did that, and for me, it's irrelevant. (Participant 12, male, 25)*

*Because [Unilever has] a lot of brands in the consumer goods market, [...] I think their campaign is [in general], not really specifically stating anything and [did] not impress me a lot. (Participant 6, female, 24)*

While no one specifically pointed out that fit and relevance are deciding factor that influenced their evaluations of the campaigns' genuineness, a co-occurrence analysis showed that negative attribution exists, albeit rarely. Two participants remarked that the high level of fit is due to the fact that the campaigns were tailored to focus on the aspects whereas company operations have created negative impact. In essence, the sustainability campaigns were seen as a form of damage control to highlight the companies' willingness to contribute to sustainability.

*It feels like they are trying to say that we made mistakes and now we want to change it. So even though we are a fast fashion brand, we really want to enhance our position in protecting the environment. (Participant 6, female, 24)*

*What if they are, like, [...] all of their businesses harm something, do something bad to the environment and they have to fix that by launching that campaign. (Participant 3, female, 29)*

### **Ethos**

The second research question looks into how the perceived credibility in sustainability of a company influences the consumers' evaluations of their sustainability PR campaign. Questions regarding the credibility of the companies were asked to understand where they stand when it comes to trustworthiness. It is worth noting that participants mention the companies' credibility in different contexts: their sizes, their product/services, and their efforts in sustainability. The perceived credibility is formed based on either direct personal experience, or indirect sources such as lectures and word-of-mouth.

In the context of sustainability, the companies have made appeals to their credibility to varying levels of success. A code frequency analysis showed that most participants have more to say on a company's lack of credibility in sustainability than vice versa. The lack of credibility

was found in different contexts, not unlike their positive counterparts. It is also presented in 2 other aspects: that the companies provide insufficient information on their websites and their perceived political stance.

In the case of the former, the participants criticized the campaigns for focusing too much on future goals and commitment without providing ample evidence of what they have achieved in the past. This potentially consolidated the feeling of distrust, as stated by Participant 8.

*[...] I don't know if these projects are some very, very well made campaigns or [if] there is someone in the company [who] really cares about the environment. I don't know if they have the power they need to actually make a change. And this is why I can't explain, I can't describe the company as trustworthy. I don't have the information for it. (Participant 8, female, 20)*

Additionally, if the companies' political stances oppose those of the participants, distrust, and even hatred heavily influenced the perception of credibility, going as far as actively boycotting the companies in question.

*H&M used to support China when they [did] the wrong action to our country, Vietnam. So I don't even think about shopping there. And I don't even follow any of their campaigns or actions on social media. (Participant 6, female, 24)*

*[Because Unilever] supports Israel, so people are boycotting them. So I'm also trying to do that. (Participant 9, female, 23)*

Under such negative influence, the participants may have formed an overarching bad impression of the companies, leading to overt bias when it comes to evaluating whether the sustainability campaigns are genuine or not. Regardless, the establishment of the companies' credibility cannot be ignored, especially concerning how their perceived credibility could impact

the participants' evaluations of the campaigns. Participant 1, for example, repeatedly emphasized how she sees Apple as a highly trustworthy company in sustainability works and that their sustainability PR campaign has the most benevolent motives.

*I do believe that Apple is doing a really good job, [at the time they became popular], they already were working on sustainability, so I do believe that they are trying to work the entire cycle. (Participant 1, female, 22)*

This pillar in Aristotle's principles of persuasion is also somewhat more associated with the evaluation of the genuineness of the sustainability PR campaigns, with Participant 2 stating that they believe Apple's campaigns are done out of real concern for the environment based on their "personal experience that they recycle the used products". This remains the only instance where a participant made an evaluation based on their directly formed perceived credibility of a company. In other cases, participants relied on indirect sources like "sample cases" in lectures (Participant 7, male, 19) and professional "workshop" (Participant 1, female, 22) for their perceived credibility of the companies.

### **Pathos**

To answer the third research question on how the congruence between the consumers' personal values and a company's sustainability PR campaign, mediated by emotional involvement, influences their evaluations of the genuineness of the campaign, questions to investigate the participants' environmental concern, attitude towards green products, and green purchase behavior were asked. In total, the participants focused on 8 different aspects of sustainability, namely recycling, agricultural practices, human rights, climate change, environmental protection, food waste, water, trash separation, microplastics, and others less clearly-defined ones such as fast-fashion in general and minimizing personal impact. Of the 12 participants, four also noted that they do not have explicit concerns for the environment.

There are also different attitudes and purchase behaviors regarding green products that are scattered across the spectrum. While the majority does not necessarily consider whether the product and the brand are sustainable before every purchase, many participants still would consider choosing the greener alternatives for specific categories of products such as food, clothing, or electronics. For better or worse, many participants decided that the economic benefit of saving money outweighs the need to buy sustainable products. Interestingly, a few of them also commented on the relationship between price and products, that they are often more expensive, yet the products are less effective than the regular versions.

*I think when I buy something, it's mostly gonna be about the money, of course. Because of that sustainability, kind of, it's like an afterthought. (Participant 9, female, 23)*

*No, I don't really pay attention to it. Usually I don't choose it because it tends to cost more and I found that some of these products that are labeled as green, they're not that very effective as the normal products. (Participant 10, male, 29)*

Based on the participants' answers, the majority agreed that the sustainability PR campaigns align with the sustainability aspects in which the participants are emotionally involved. However, while there are sentiments of doubt and helplessness in the participants' responses, the accounts have no mentions or evidence pointing to how this involvement influences evaluations on whether the campaigns are genuine or not.

### ***Cognitive routes to persuasion (Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model)***

To understand how consumers' cognitive responses influence their evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns, considering the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model (Wijaya, 2011), the participants' responses are considered both in their literal meaning and also under six verification dimensions as proposed in the model: sensorial, rational, emotional, relevance, beneficial, and social.

The first process in the model is the creation and interpretation of the meaning of the campaign content. Ten out of 12 participants referred to the statements in the sustainability campaigns during the interview as examples of how they understood what was being conveyed. For example, Participant 11 commented on H&M's use of manipulative language. This sentiment was shared by Participant 5 (female, 23) and Participant 8 (female, 20).

*It just felt like a lot of jargon. And more so than [others]. If you read between lines, they're not actually doing very much. (Participant 11, female, 30)*

*[...] They literally just said what they've tried to improve so far [was] only the circular approach. Which is already good, but they didn't. They also said that it's not even developed enough yet. (Participant 5, female, 23)*

*I think if you're not comparing it [with other campaigns], it's enough, it's efficient. But if you start really digging into it, I feel like everything is just repeating and repeating. There is no new explanation and no new data, no new goals, and no new argumentations. (Participant 8, female, 20)*

Additionally, the responses were investigated under the six verification dimensions that the model proposed. A code-document analysis indicated that almost all participants used sensory verification to verify what the campaign content claims. A code co-occurrence analysis gave more detailed insights into how the participants feel during the process. All in all, while verifying the message using the sensory dimension, feeling distrust was extremely prevalent, followed closely by being skeptical of the claims made by the companies in their campaigns. Due to what they have seen, heard, or experienced in the past, participants expressed negative emotions towards the campaign. It even acted as the final nail to the coffin in their evaluation of why a certain campaign was considered ingenuine.

*The Apple one, I feel like, to be honest, [curse word]. I mean, I just have a feeling they*

*did that for themselves, not for the customers or for the world. If they want to do that for sustainability, they can make the product really better. (Participant 3, female, 29)*

The rational dimension was also a popular dimension used by the participants to verify the campaign content. Here, participants used logic to critically examine what was being conveyed and form judgements based on the feasibility of the claims, although the outlooks varied.

*I think they are on their way because some of them show the numbers comparing 2023 to 2022 and then you can see a big progress. So it will make me feel like they will continue to have this progress in the future too. (Participant 4, female, 26)*

*I think it was with the Apple campaign that I saw something about the fact that they're green around their production of those smartphones and that. At that point, I was like: are you serious? I know this industry. It's not a clean industry. It's easier said than done. [...] I think this is a bit of a stretch. (participant 10, male, 29)*

Applying the Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model, it can be seen that the participants' responses contained both implicit and explicit accounts of whether they find the sustainability PR campaigns genuine or not. Amidst the overwhelming sense of distrust and skepticism, a few participants also expressed hope and faith in the companies' future commitment based on verification via the sensory dimension.

*From the numbers that they gave me, I think that they are really trying to achieve what they're doing. (Participant 7, male, 19)*

*Nestle, I [think so too] because I don't have a reason to believe it's false. I've never heard or seen an article or something about misleading greenwashing. (Participant 1, female, 22)*



### **Concrete information and vague information**

The participants unanimously preferred more concrete information featuring detailed data and statements on what has been and will be done in the sustainability PR campaign. When the content of a campaign was considered to provide concrete information, it easily created a positive impression and evoked feelings of trust. On the other hand, participants showed a wide range of negative emotions when the campaign content was vague, such as distrust, doubt, skepticism, and uncertainty. As stated by Participant 2 (25, female): “I just don't get it because I didn't see what they do, what they did to it.” and echoed by Participant 9.

*The other three have again a lot of information, a bit vague in some parts as well.*

*Because I see these numbers and I'm like, I don't really know what that means. I see a percentage, and that doesn't tell me anything, you know. So that's why I would like to see more videos or evidence that they are actually doing these things. (Participant 9, female, 23)*

Interestingly, despite concrete data being initially defined as detailing numbers and information that provide data, participants could still consider it vague and misleading, ultimately affecting their judgment of the genuineness of the sustainability PR campaign. The campaigns were often evaluated as ingenuine because the participants thought the numbers were forged, exaggerated, and meaningless.

*So starting with Apple, they [...] make me feel like they are that genuine. [But] they don't explain the approach they use, they just show the progress, the changes they made regarding materials, let's say how their products are already 50% eco-friendly, but compared to the other [campaigns], they're really lacking in terms of information and argumentation. When I read it for the first time, it seemed very genuine and I really liked it, but after reading Nestle and Unilever, I think that the Apple sustainability program is*

*too calculated. It seems like just another marketing strategy. (Participant 8, female, 20)*

*For H&M. Well, they have some data, but I'm not sure if those are real numbers or not, because I don't see how those numbers are actually realistic. Because they say that they have collected like 1100 tons of clothings in the last 10 years, and for me that is a little bit exaggerated.(Participant 12, male, 25)*

## **Study 2**

### ***Rational appeal and emotional appeal; emotions evoked by the campaigns***

To answer research question 6 on the appearance frequencies of rational and emotional appeals in sustainability campaigns, 15 corporate sustainability PR campaigns were annotated to determine whether rhetorical devices are presented and their frequencies. Of the 15 campaigns, rhetorical devices were not found in 6 (40%) of them. The remaining 9 (60%) campaigns have at least one instance where at least one rhetorical device is present, indicating that the majority of companies have attempted to craft a piece of content with an emotional appeal.

In total, 16 instances where various rhetorical devices appear were identified. Hypophora took up the majority, appearing 9 times (56%), anaphora accounts for 4 cases (25%), and rhetorical questions 3 times (19%). Epistrophe and repetition were not presented in any sustainability PR campaigns in the corpus. Apart from cases with hypophora and rhetorical questions, which were present in single questions in every single instance, each case of anaphora was made up of multiple sentences instead of multiple clauses within one sentence.

The participants expressed a wide range of emotions during their interviews. Using sentiment analysis, the emotions were further categorized into three categories: positive, neutral, and negative. The first category contains seven emotions: excited, hopeful, intrigued,

impressed, touched, trust, and general good feeling. The neutral category is reserved for neutrality. Lastly, the rest of the emotions belong to the most prominent categories, negative, including annoyed, confused, distrust, hatred, overwhelmed, skeptical, uncertain, doubtful, and unimpressed.

ATLAS.ti code distribution diagrams indicated that all participants expressed a wide array of emotions throughout the interviews. Negative emotions, such as the overwhelming skepticism, distrust, and being impressed, stemmed from the companies' perceived lack of credibility. While more positive emotions, such as being impressed, are sometimes associated with the content of their campaigns. Despite the overwhelming negative sentiments, every participant displays at least once a hint of positive emotions, with trust taking the lead. A word frequency analysis reveals, apart from filler words such as "like," that this emotion is most associated with the word "think" with 34 occurrences. A more careful read-through showed that this is due to the participants' speculations on the future, with a positive sentiment that the companies would eventually succeed in their initiatives.

## **Discussion**

### **Conclusion and theoretical implication**

CSR activities are now a part of corporate operations, and with that, sustainability PR campaigns are now a common practice for various reasons. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate how consumers evaluate the genuineness of such campaigns to effectively communicate the company's values, goals, and achievements. By looking into factors that consumers use for the assessment and message characteristics, this study can contribute to the growing literature on CSR communication in PR. The results from the two studies indicated that despite carefully crafting the message and applying persuasion techniques, there is not a single formula to positively influence the evaluation of the genuineness of corporate

sustainability PR campaigns.

Study 1 investigated how philosophical persuasion techniques influence consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns. Drawing from Aristotle's concepts of 'logos', 'ethos', and 'pathos', Braca and Dondio (2013) suggest that campaign messages are more likely to be persuasive and perceived as genuine when they effectively appeal to these pillars. However, this study's results indicated that despite successful individual appeals to these elements, consumer evaluations of genuineness are not guaranteed. Consumers seem to evaluate genuineness holistically, relying on personal cognitive responses rather than assessing the cumulative impact of all factors.

The logical fit between industry and campaign initiatives does not necessarily enhance genuineness evaluations positively, since a high degree of congruence may be seen as strategic damage control to mitigate harm caused by the companies' operations. This skepticism could potentially be rooted in the initial level of credibility attributed to the company. A study by Zasuwa (2019) corroborates this notion, demonstrating that consumers' trust in a company significantly influences how they perceive the company's motives for having a sustainability campaign. Specifically, lower levels of trust could trigger causal thinking, prompting consumers to interpret the campaigns as driven by hidden agendas. In fact, this interview study identified many perceived ulterior campaign motives, such as profit gains, market competitiveness, and greenwashing.

Lastly, when appealing to consumers' emotional involvement in sustainability, Matthes et al. (2014) did not explore how consumers are driven by self-interest and economic benefits. Even though they found that attitudes towards green products significantly relate to attitudes towards the persuasive message, the findings of this study do not support these results. This discrepancy is potentially due to the overwhelming sentiments powered by the perceived

credibility of the companies themselves. The overlapping use of logos, pathos, and ethos is often hard to discern (Romanova & Smirnova, 2019), but one pillar likely carries more weight than the others. Regardless of their findings that appealing to emotional involvement occurs most frequently in persuasive techniques, using ethos—appealing to the company's credibility—could potentially be more effective.

Further investigation into the cognitive routes to persuasion, based on Wijaya's (2011) Experientially-Meaningful Communication Model, suggests that consumers might predominantly use their sensory experiences to verify claims in sustainability campaigns based on either direct personal experience or indirect sources of information. Upon exposure to the campaign content, the consumers' attitude could change depending on how the information is processed. This finding aligns with Wright's (1973, as cited in Lutz & Swasy, 1977) Cognitive Response Model, which posits that consumers actively confront and analyze persuasive messages before forming attitudes. The most common cognitive responses observed were counter arguing and source derogation, while support arguing were not observed. Interestingly, the concept of Consumer Perceived Ethicality (CPE) might explain this. Suppose the consumers have already held a preconceived negative notion that the companies are not credible in sustainability work. In that case, it is only fitting that any initiatives would still be scrutinized in a negative light and interpreted as greenwashing (Brunk & de Boer, 2018). In essence, consumers have no reason to actively seek verifications to support the campaign claims, which contradicts their existing beliefs. Instead, they are more likely to look for congruent associations to their negative attitudes and support their points of view via various verification dimensions. In doing so, the consumers could also engage in source derogation, an alternative to counter arguing to further discredit the companies.

The established credibility of companies plays a significant role and aligns closely with the consumers' perceived ethicality and how they actively choose to support their

pre-established perceptions. It underscores the complex, multifaceted nature of consumers' genuineness evaluation of sustainability PR campaigns, that appealing to Aristotle's persuasion principles only is insufficient in persuasion, and how (the lack of) credibility triggers cognitive responses that likely reinforce pre-established perceptions. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on CSR communication within the field of public relations by elucidating the nuanced factors that influence consumer assessments of sustainability messages, and provide a valuable framework for future research to further investigate the dynamic mechanisms through which different aspects of credibility impact consumers' evaluations of sustainability PR campaigns due the significant role that it plays.

Study 2 investigates the frequency of rational and emotional appeals in sustainability PR campaigns. Similar to previous studies stating that green advertising often relies on emotions to influence behaviors (Banerjee et al., 1995; Brennan and Binney, 2008; Harvey & McCrohan, 1998, as cited in Yfantidou, 2018), this study also found that emotional appeals were more prevalent than rational appeals. However, during the interviews conducted in Study 1, it was observed that the majority of emotions evoked were negative. However, they were not attributed to the message appeal. This suggests that using emotional appeals might not always yield the desired results. Additionally, in the wide range of emotions evoked throughout Study 1, negative sentiments were overwhelming despite the presence of positive ones. A plausible explanation could be that emotions triggered by other factors, especially the lack of credibility, may overpower those resulting from the campaign content, especially since negative emotions are often more exaggerated than positive ones (Levine et al., 2009). This imbalance underscores the challenge for sustainability PR campaigns in effectively managing emotional responses to achieve desired consumer attitudes.

The existence of positive emotions, such as trust and hope, amidst the overarching negative sentiments also implies a different communication strategy is at play. While many

dismiss the talk-action mismatch in sustainability campaigns as greenwashing, Christensen et al. (2013) proposed that it could also be seen as aspirational talk and see the disparities between words and reality as something acceptable and a driver for change. This ambiguity in messaging not only acknowledges consumer skepticism but also leaves room for optimistic perceptions of progress toward sustainability goals and for various ways of interpretation. Hence, the consumers experience hope and trust in what is communicated as a result, while not necessarily persuaded by the campaigns.

The ambiguity inherent in aspirational talk (Christensen et al., 2020) also underscores the prevalence of vague statements in sustainability PR campaigns. Positive sentiments persist despite consumers' preference for specific information and skepticism towards unclear claims. It is possible that messages with lower levels of specificity are more well-aligned with the consumers' general future aspirations, which could potentially override initial skepticism and contribute to positive attitudes toward the campaign. Thus, understanding how varying degrees of specificity and persuasive messages influence emotional responses can provide insights into enhancing the effectiveness of sustainability communications. After all, given the complexity and interplay of these techniques, results are often more nuanced than clear-cut.

### **Practical implication**

This study offers valuable insights to PR practitioners working on CSR communication in general and corporate sustainability PR campaigns specifically. Results from the two studies highlighted the interplay between factors that influence evaluations and how the campaigns are assessed, which are relevant in crafting effective sustainability PR campaigns. PR practitioners are thus advised to consider the company's existing reputation when writing campaign content, as perceived credibility weighs heavily on consumers' assessments. Similarly, the company's current standing in sustainability also affects how the motives of the sustainability efforts are

perceived. To maximize the chances of being seen as genuine, it is suggested that campaigns logically fit the industry or sector the company operates in and that activities should aim to recover what is damaged and build on what is already existing.

Due to skepticism and pragmatic economic considerations, consumers remain largely divided when purchasing green products despite successful appeals to their emotional involvement and personal values. This gap prompts companies to invest more in product research and development to offer better green product alternatives. Sustainability PR campaigns should aim not only to advertise the company's achievements, but also to serve as useful content for consumers to educate themselves on sustainability. Through this, the company can establish itself as a trustworthy source of information in sustainability, further increasing credibility in this aspect.

Consumers prefer concrete data accompanied by detailed explanations, particularly when the sustainability campaign highlights the company's achievements. They are very likely to verify this information based on their personal experiences before making an evaluation. Since numbers can be misleading, PR practitioners should take care to place them in appropriate contexts. It is critical to remember that average consumers are likely to skim information on websites rather than carefully scrutinize the wording; therefore, messages should be straightforward and insightful, regardless of whether one chooses to use a rational or emotional appeal.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations of this study warrant further exploration in future research. Firstly, participants recruited for this study ranged from 19 to 29 years old and were primarily Bachelor's, Master's students or recent graduates from various countries. Despite their generally high levels of English proficiency and educational backgrounds, none of the participants had



English as their mother tongue, which occasionally led to grammatical errors. Consequently, some linguistic nuances may have been lost to these second-language speakers of English. Given the focus on how the content of persuasive messages influences evaluations, fluency and the ability to grasp subtle language cues are critical. Therefore, a suggestion for future research is to study a more specific group of participants with clearly defined language requirements that match those used in the campaign content.

Another important aspect that was not fully considered in this study is the time participants spent reading the vignette materials. This oversight implies that participants may scrutinize content to varying degrees. Assuming that participants who spend more time also read and analyze information more carefully, future studies should account for this to better understand how extended reading time of persuasive messages could potentially influence evaluations through more elaborate message processing and analysis. Additionally, a follow-up study on attention span and cognitive resources could also shed light on how these factors interact with individual differences in information processing styles. Understanding these dynamics will provide nuanced insights into optimizing communication strategies for sustainability PR campaigns, ensuring messages resonate effectively across diverse consumer profiles.

Lastly, this study is exploratory in nature, focusing on individual opinions of sustainability PR campaigns without directional hypotheses that lead to more conclusive and generalizable results. Nevertheless, it has provided valuable insights into the factors and message characteristics influencing consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns. These findings can inform future research and practice, prompting more targeted investigations into the strategic use of persuasive techniques in CSR communication. Moving forward, incorporating quantitative methods or experimental designs could establish correlations between consumers' evaluations, persuasion techniques, and message characteristics, thereby

deepening our understanding of their complex interrelationships across various CSR communication contexts.

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## Appendix A

### Study 1 - Lists of vignettes used in the interviews

#### List of vignettes

*Note.* For companies featuring multiple links, each subsequent link leads to a sub-webpage within the same campaign as the preceding link.

#### **1. Apple (Technology)**

- a. <https://www.apple.com/environment/>

#### **2. Nestle (Food & beverage)**

- a. <https://www.nestle.com/sustainability>
- b. <https://www.nestle.com/sustainability/nature-environment>
- c. <https://www.nestle.com/sustainability/nature-environment/approach>
- d. <https://www.nestle.com/sustainability/nature-environment/regenerative-agriculture>

#### **3. Unilever (Fast-moving consumer goods - FMCG)**

- a. <https://www.unilever.com/sustainability/>
- b. <https://www.unilever.com/sustainability/nature/>
- c. <https://www.unilever.com/sustainability/nature/regenerating-nature/>
- d. <https://www.unilever.com/sustainability/nature/unilever-climate-nature-fund/>

#### **4. H&M (Apparel)**

- a. <https://hmgroupp.com/sustainability/>

- b. <https://hmgroup.com/sustainability/circularity-and-climate/>
- c. <https://hmgroup-prd-app.azurewebsites.net/sustainability/circularity-and-climate/circularity/>
- d. <https://hmgroup-prd-app.azurewebsites.net/sustainability/circularity-and-climate/recycling/>

## **Appendix B**

### **Study 1 - Information letter**

Dear Sir/Madam,

You have expressed your interest in participating in the thesis study to investigate consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of corporate sustainability public relations (PR) campaigns. The primary objective of this study is to understand which factors and message characteristics will affect the consumer' evaluation of the genuineness of the campaign. This study is conducted by Y Dinh Dang, a Master's student at Tilburg University, for their Master's thesis for the Communication and Information Sciences program.

The study will be conducted in the form of one-on-one, in-depth interviews. During the conversation, you will be presented with sample sustainability PR campaigns and asked questions regarding your thoughts, past experiences, emotions and your evaluations them. The interview is expected to take approximately 1 hour and can be scheduled at a convenient time for you, whether during weekdays, weekends or evenings. Depending on your preference, the interview can take place online or in person. During the interview, the researcher will audio record the conversation for future transcription and take notes manually using a laptop or pen and paper.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and not compensated. You are free to withdraw or end the conversation at any time without providing a reason. All personal data that can lead to identification will not be known to anyone other than the researcher, and it is possible to request the deletion of data by contacting the researcher, their thesis supervisor, and the thesis second-reader.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this research study. If you have any



further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the researcher at this email:

[y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu).

Sincerely,

Y Dinh Dang

Master's student at Tilburg University

[y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu)

## **Appendix C**

### **Study 1 - Informed consent form**

Thank you for your interest in this research study to investigate consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of corporate sustainability public relations (PR) campaigns. This study is conducted by Y Dinh Dang, a Master's student at Tilburg University, for their Master's thesis for the Communication and Information Sciences program.

Before you participate in this experiment, it is required that your written declaration, stating that you have been informed about the study and are willing to participate, be obtained. This is called "Informed Consent". Below you will find information on how the data collected during the interview will be handled to guarantee your privacy and what the study entails.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The primary objective of this study is to understand which factors and message characteristics will affect the consumers' evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaigns.

#### **Study duration**

The one-on-one, in-depth interview will take approximately 1 hour.

#### **Study details**

During the study, you will have a one-on-one conversation with the researcher. During the study, you will be presented with "vignettes", which are samples of sustainability PR campaigns of different brands and given ample time to examine them. After that, you will be asked questions about your thoughts, past experiences, and emotions relating to the brands, the campaigns and your evaluations of them. You will have access to the vignettes throughout

the conversation to refer to if needed.

### **Participants' rights**

- Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your participation is not compensated.
- You are free to withdraw from the study, end the conversation, and skip any questions during the study without having to state any reason. You will not suffer any negative consequences for doing so.
- Your conversation with the researcher during the study will be voice-recorded. During the interview, the researcher will take manual notes using pens and paper, or on a laptop.
- The information collected in this study will be treated confidentially. Your data will be stored using a participant ID. Any personal details collected before and during the study that could lead to identification will not be accessible to anyone other than the research, their thesis supervisor, and the thesis second-reader.
- You can request the deletion of your data by contacting the researcher using the following email: [y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu) (Y Dinh Dang).

If you agree to the information in this informed consent form, please sign your name in the designated space. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the researcher at this email: [y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:y.d.dang@tilburguniversity.edu) (Y Dinh Dang).

Date:

Signature:

## Appendix D

### Study 1 - Interview guide

#### Opening

- Self-introduction
- Thank the participant for agreeing to participate in the study
- Explain the goal of the study and the participants' rights as stated in the information letter (The goal of this study is to understand which factors and message characteristics will affect the consumer' evaluation of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign.)
- Obtain their consent for digitally recording their responses, as stated in the informed consent form
- Remind the participant of their rights, as stated in the informed consent form
- Collect basic demographic data: age, gender, nationality, occupation

#### Core questions

##### ***1. Overview: knowledge of CSR and corporations in vignettes***

- Are you familiar with the term “corporate social responsibility”?
  - (if yes) Could you try explaining it in your own words?
  - (if no) What do you think it is referring to?
- Are you familiar with the term “sustainability” in a corporate setting?
  - What is it about?

- When you hear the phrase “corporate sustainability PR campaign”, what do you think it is referring to?

- What do you think is included in such campaigns?
- What are your thoughts on such campaigns?
- Can you give an example of such campaigns that you have seen before?
- Do you have a name (company) in mind?

## **2. Philosophical persuasion techniques: *logos, ethos, pathos***

(Presents vignettes, instructs participants to only look at the names of the corporations, do not read anything else yet.)

- I have prepared for you here some samples of the sustainability campaigns of 4 different corporations. Have you heard of their names before?

- Can you tell me what you know about each corporation?
- (What sector/industry they're in?)

(Give participants time to examine the vignettes)

### **A. *Logos: perceived fit***

- Based on what you have read, can you tell me what each PR campaign is about?
- Do you think the cause that the campaigns address are relevant to the companies? / Do you think what they are saying in the campaigns are relevant to the companies?

- Which one is and which one isn't?
- Why/Why not? (for each one)

- Do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits the cause they are addressing?
  - How did you come to this opinion? (Can you point out the part(s) of the campaigns (text, image,...) that make you think so? ) (for each one)

**B. *Ethos: bias towards the corporations***

- Do you have any past experience with any of these corporations? (As a consumer/employee?)
  - How was your experience with them?
  - Are you a frequent customer of these brands?
- How often do you patronize these brands?
- What do you think of them as corporations?
  - Do you think they are trustworthy?
  - When did you start thinking that? Is there a story behind this opinion?
- Before participating in this study, have you ever considered these brands as “green”, “sustainable”, or anything similar?
  - Since when? Why/Why not?
- Before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in CSR activities?
  - (If yes) What are some activities that you know? What do you think of those activities?

**C. *Pathos: appeal to emotions, emotional involvement***

- Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

- Which area? (pollution? material? environment?,...)
- Do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more “green” or “sustainable” when shopping?
  - Can you give an example?
- Do you consider whether a brand is “sustainable” before purchasing from it?
- Do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns is in line with your personal values?
  - In which way?
- Looking at the campaigns here, is there a part that evokes emotions?  
(positive/negative/neutral)
  - What emotions? Why?

### **3. Campaigns evaluations**

- Do you think the campaigns will achieve what they say they will achieve? (evaluate one by one)
  - Why/Why not?
  - Which part of the vignettes made you think so?
  - Is there any reason (outside what is seen in the vignettes) that made you think so?
- Do you think the campaigns have achieved what they say they have achieved?  
(evaluate one by one)
  - Why/Why not?

- Which part of the vignettes made you think so?
- What do you think of the way the companies talk about them?
  - Do you think they provide enough information?
- Which campaign(s) do you prefer? Could you rank them?
  - Why?
- Which campaign(s) do you think are done out of genuine concern for the environment?  
Why?
  - Why do you think so? Evidence from the vignettes? From outside the vignettes?
- Which one do you think is NOT done out of genuine concern for the environment?
  - Why do you think so?
  - If you think they are NOT genuine, what do you think the campaigns are made for (i.e. motives)?

### **Closing**

- Is there any comment you would like to make regarding the PR campaigns samples that you've seen? Any minor details/thoughts/opinions are appreciated.
- Is there anything else you would like to share regarding the topic we discussed today?
- Thank the participants for their time



## Appendix E

### Study 1 - Interview transcript

#### Participant 1

Interviewer:

Hi, thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Now the goal of today is to understand which individual factors and message characteristics that will affect your evaluations of the genuineness of the sustainability. PR campaign. So yeah, I already received your consent form, so I'm pretty sure you already know what your rights are and that I will be recording, voice recording this meeting. So that's great. Should we get started? Awesome. I'm just going to collect some basic demographic data first. So how old are you? I'm 22. What's your nationality? I'm Dutch and what is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm 22.

Interviewer:

What's your nationality?

Participant:

I'm Dutch

Interviewer:

What is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm currently studying communication information sciences.

Interviewer:

OK, moving on. So there will be three sets of questions in this interview. And the second one, we will have three subsets, but each of them only contains like a few questions. So it's not going to be too long. The first set of question I'm going to go through some overviews over the background so I can understand if you are familiar with this topic. So the first question is, are you familiar with the term 'corporate social responsibility'?

Participant:

Yeah, I actually did some research on it in my pre masters at Erasmus University. So, I worked with it.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Could you try explaining it in your own words?

Participant:

Well, how I see it is like behaviors that organizations do to try and add something else to the world instead of just going for profit and earning money, which is obviously I think for most companies their #1 goal but also to add something else, to leave some world a better place than they found it. I believe that's a mission from Apple. They're very strong, willing to do so. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Also now moving on, are you familiar with the term 'sustainability' in a corporate setting?

Participant:

I guess so. How I see it is that about, like, sustainability in a corporate setting, for example, our university? We don't have cups anymore? We don't have plastic cups. The plastic cups we do have are recyclable, and the other ones are from paper. Is that what you mean?

Interviewer:

Yeah, I'm more interested in how you understand it. So it doesn't matter how I how it is actually for me. I just want to understand if that word pops into your head, how would you understand it.

Participant:

OK, I understand it like the the little things company do. Yeah, for example, like getting rid of the normal plastic cups and getting everyone a recyclable one or packaging, changing the packaging of food in the restaurants to more paper or certain other types of recyclabl, maybe even silicone.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Now, so when you hear the phrase 'corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is referring to?

Participant:

Oh, I think it's referring to, is it internal or external campaign?

Interviewer:

External.

Participant:

External. Yeah. So I think companies showing, they're showing their target audience or maybe people they want to reach for future employment that they are working on a sustainable way. So I also think it's showing you do good but also showing you do good so people know you do good and that also profits are returns back on your profit, maybe even expand your profit.

Interviewer:

Now when you think of a campaign like this, what do you think is usually included in it?

Participant:

I have to think about it, like, yesterday I was watching YouTube and I saw an advertisement of a company that if you buy a certain product they will donate a certain percentage or amount of money from that product to a company that builds trees. So I think it is not social. I think also on television I saw a advertisement from Shell which is the gas oil company about how they are trying to increase their, I don't know the English word, I like if you have an electric car, like, electric car battery stations, yes. Yeah. So I think it's also social but also traditional social media channel.

Interviewer:

What are your general thoughts on campaigns like this?

Participant:

Well, because I did some research on it at a research university. I also did research on greenwashing. So I am, when you see those campaigns I think, yeah, I almost think immediately about the greenwashing, so, because everyone wants companies to do good and be green, so they do it and they show it off to make more profits. So to me, yeah, I always think it's risky. You have to be really good at providing the evidence that you are actually sustainable

or green or trying to be. Because a lot of companies say a lot of stuff and a lot of companies say a lot of stuff that's not true.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK, great. That's the first set of questions done. Ah, moving on to the second one. Now you've already seen all the links I sent to you and there are, as you can see, there are four companies there. So Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Now my first question is. Are you familiar with these four companies?

Participant:

Uh, yes. Do I have to open the links or no?

Interviewer:

Not yet.

Participant:

OK yeah, I'm familiar with all of them.

Interviewer:

OK. Could you tell me which what you know about each company, for example, which sector or industry that they're in and anything that you think might be interesting to share?

Participant:

Well. It's actually funny because I have not saw the links before. I just opened them, not I didn't open the link but I opened the message in which the links are. The first one is Apple, which is really funny because I already mentioned Apple being sustainable. I know they're in technology, they have a lot of different products. Air earbuds. Tablets, phones. iPads.

Computers. Nestle, I know Nestle from chocolate, but I think it's it's more broad than I than I even know. Uh, Unilever is also. Like another company of a lot of things, and now they have a lot of different brands that are sold in the Netherlands that are part of Unilever. And. H&M I shop there regularly. I like it. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Clothing. OK, great. So now. Each of the links is actually, sorry all the links for each company is actually a web page or a sub web page of the same campaign. So basically. Oh, they only have one for one web page for like this campaign and then for Nestle there's like more information spread out through a sub web link. So that's why there's four of them. Now I'd like to ask you to just go through all of them. Take your time, take all the time you need. When you're going through them, you don't have to memorize or anything, but do try to read through what they have done, what they say they will be doing. Basically all the information that they're providing and yeah, come back after you're ready. And of course you will have access to it throughout the interview, so like even if you forget something, feel free to go back and like, look at it again. But for now, just take your time and go through all of them.

Participant:

I will. I will start. OK, I'm back.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Thank you for your time. OK. I will now move on. Could you briefly tell me what each PR campaign is about?

Participant:

Oh, they focus more on what they are planning to do. Or what their goals are?

Interviewer:

Goals. Yeah, but like you also read about, so like for example, you would say some are focused more on materials and some are focused more on, let's say forestry, so like, just quickly, like basically yeah, aspect of focusing on.

Participant:

Oh, OK. Yeah, I see. Yeah, well, I believe Apple is focusing on everything because they also have like the it's all circle about it about packaging, using recycling and then on and on and on. So and I do believe that Apple is doing a really good job, they are like, at the time they were, they became popular, they already were working on sustainability, so I do believe that they are trying to work the entire cycle, like, a circle of life. I don't know how they call it, but they focus on everything. And um, the second was not Unileve no, it was Nestle. Yeah, Nestle was a bit vague to me because I really like that Apple have had everything like one link and everything was ordered and Nestle was just a little bit vague to me. I saw they were focusing on trees, but also planet, you know, like what is planet? Like what are you focusing on? They're like little broad to me and I'm going back to it now. Yeah. Protecting biodiversity, yeah. To me, this is really vague. What they are doing. And also they aim to do, they plan to do by 2030. They do this, they want to do that but they don't show what they are doing right now or what they already have like accomplished in. The last five or ten years. And also what I don't like at the Nestle sites like I believe is the second link, they show a quote and then the CEO with a picture of the CEO. Yeah, you know, this is greenwashing to me. Unilever, you know, I hate Unilever. Because they are, they said they were already, sustainability is already on their agenda for like the last two decades. But still, if you look at their sites and the links, they still don't show anything. They show an action plan. They show their goals. They're ambitious. There are plans. They use like all kinds of words for the same thing, but they don't show what they already have done and what

they already have accomplished for climate change, materials. Yeah, I don't know if that's what you're heading to if that's. Yeah. I don't know what I have the answer because it's a lot of pages. Am I doing OK?

Interviewer:

Go on. It's OK. Go on. No problem.

Participant:

Yeah, Unilever love their plans, but maybe it will be nice if you are like using this to show what you're doing, and your state what you already working on, your sustainability for the last two decades. Why not show your results? So it raises some suspicion. Like did they not accomplish any reliable results or what's the problem? Why are you not not focusing on the results? And H&M. Yeah, this. Yeah, I like H&M. The website, it was pretty clear what they focus on. They have like a lot of topics, but they are combining one model, the circular products, materials supply chains. So that's also it makes it more focused. But I don't trust the campaign. Because I'm also taking part in another study for a bachelor students who's doing communication Information sciences, and she also focused on sustainability and greenwashing in fashion and in her research, she states that H&M is importing clothes from the same cities and the same bad circumstances that AliExpress is using so, I don't trust H&M. But they use nice words. They are trying to get to you and really get you in the feeling, get you in the mood that they're doing good, they're doing great. But they are not.

Interviewer:

Ah, so you already identify what they are are, let's say working towards now and which cost that they are addressing. Do you think the cost that the company's address are relevant to the company itself?



Participant:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Each of them.

Participant:

Oh. OK, let's start it with Apple again. How do you mean relevant to the company itself?

Interviewer:

So, like, do you think the cause of the, let me try to rephrase it again. Do you think what they are addressing in the campaign, the cause that they are addressing in the campaign is in line with their business?

Participant:

OK. Yeah. I think for Apple it is because they also because Apple is focusing mostly on technology and they also state that they are trying to make the technology and the chips and all the relevant technical parts of the phone or whatever more sustainable. So I think. Apple is. Nestle. Yeah, I know. Nestle mostly from chocolate. So if they focus on like cacao, like the chocolate farmers, yeah. But still. I don't know what you're trying to gather with your question. I don't know. What you're looking for?

Interviewer:

Let's say that my question is trying to address whether what they are doing is relevant to the business. So for example, you would say that. Ah, how do I put this nicely? So for example,

if you're saying there's McDonald's. And let's say their chicken farm. Then what they are doing at the chicken farm would be relevant to their business because they are selling chickens.

Participant:

Yeah, OK. Yeah.

Interviewer:

But. So yeah, I'm talking about the relevance and then the next question, I'm just going to let you know the next question first. So like it is going to make it less confusing. The next question I was planning to ask would be do you think what they are doing in the campaign fit the cause that they are addressing? So my example for this would be let's say for McDonald's. It makes sense to have a chicken farm, but it probably isn't going to be suitable or fitting for them to have, let's say, a free range chicken farm because they require so much resource and they are not as efficient as, let's say, chickens put in a box. So that that is a that is an example that I would give to sort of like clarify the questions a little bit.

Participant:

OK. Yeah. OK. Now it makes more sense with McDonald's example. I think what Nestle does is relevant to their company because Nestle is in chocolate, but also in food and they focus on actually cultural practices, so. I don't know exactly what Nestle makes except for chocolate, but I think it there must be something with agricultural practices so I think that is relevant for sure. Unilever. I saw Unilife focusing on less plastic and Unilever has a lot of products that are packaged in in plastic, for example, soap or shampoo. It's always in plastic bottle. So I think that is really relevant for their organization for other products. H&M. Yeah. Like I said, they focus on like the materials and the different kind of materials they use in their

clothing. So yeah, if they would use sustainable materials or recycled materials. Yeah, of course, that would be. Very relevant to the materials for their next clothes, you know.

Interviewer:

Great. Now again, the next question, do you think what they're doing in the campaign is suitable with the cause that they are addressing?

Participant:

Uh. I think so for for Apple. Again, I really think so because they are going through the the whole circle. Again, they're from packaging to recycling. They're doing everything. So I think that is really suitable for their, for the company and for the products and also for the customers. Again your question?

Interviewer:

If what they are doing in the campaign itself fits with the cost that they are addressing.

Participant:

OK. Yeah. I think at Nestle it also because they focus on sustainability and they do the agricultural practices, so I think. That will definitely help the cause of like being sustainable, but on the other side there's way more to do than being sustainable and only the agricultural practices, but I think what they're doing is definitely helping the cause. Also for the biodiversity. Yeah, I think and Nestle they are doing everything they can to work on their goals. Unilever, yeah. Unilever is still a bit vague to me. So I don't because they do not really state what they have accomplished in the last 20 years. I don't know what they are doing now is is benefiting. Their campaign, because I don't know what they're doing. I only know what they are planning to do, what they want to do, what their ambitions are. So if the Unilever has a job to do to make

sure to communicate more clearly to people visiting this site or these links to make sure that they know what they have already done. Because I think Unilever has done a lot already because they are so big and so focused on this for the last 20 years. But they don't state clearly what they have done. Uh. And H&M. Yeah. Again, I don't believe H&M. I don't believe that they are sustainable. So I don't think what they're doing in their campaign is in line with their goal.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Now the second subset. You mentioned you are very familiar with these brands, so do you have any past experience with them as a consumer?

Participant:

Well, I had an old iPhone. It was. The iPhone 4. It was my first phone and I got it from my dad. But it was the the last my first and last experience with Apple, simply because I think they're too expensive. But I do think their products are of great quality. But yeah, I don't want to spend that kind of money on the phone or iPad. Nestle, I think I've eaten a lot of chocolate from Nestle as a child. Even now I think I do. And also the other products. Unilever. I just wash my hair this morning with Andreon, which I know is from Unilever. So I have a lot of experience with Unilever. H&M. Yeah, I think I bought there more when I was like maybe four years younger or so because I don't like their style anymore. They have maybe only the basics, but I don't really like that H&M has become more like skater or tough old baggy, oversized. Or crop tops, it's one or the other. You don't have normal clothes anymore at H&M, which I don't like.

Interviewer:

Awesome. That's great. You already answer the next two questions about like how frequent you buy from them. So that's great. That's great. Yeah. OK. So that was your experience. Now, what do you think of them as corporations?

Participant:

Uh, I think Apple is really nice. I think they are selling really high quality products, but also for a high quality price. Yeah, if if you have the kind of money you want to spend it on the phone, I think you have a really good Nestle. Besides the chocolate, I don't really know what kind of companies are from Nestle. Maybe ice cream? Well, I like the chocolate. Unilever. Yeah, I like the company. They have a lot of different brands that I buy weekly or monthly at Jumbo or any other supermarket. H&M. Used to like them, but not anymore due to their change of style and the clothes they sell and also the other research that I'm participating in that told me that they are just using the same materials as Shein and AliExpress Express.

Interviewer:

Great. Great, great, great. Great. Now do you think that they are trustworthy?

Participant:

Based on these links or?

Interviewer:

No, just your personal feelings.

Participant:

I think Apple is trustworthy. I think they have good quality products that you can build on and they are, yeah, they work. Nestle. Yeah, except for chocolate. I'm not really familiar with Nestle so I don't know if they're trustworthy. Unilever, think they are. But this yeah, the links. Maybe after this experiment I think they are less trustworthy because they are so vague on what they already have accomplished, but I still think they are trustworthy because they do a lot of sustainability and they have a lot of ambitions. But now I want to know what they already have

accomplished. So maybe after this interview. I'm going to look it up and see if I can find any. H&M. Yeah. In the context of PR sustainability campaigns, I don't think they are trustworthy at all.

Interviewer:

At all. OK, great, great, great, great. Now, before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Apple, I considered Apple as green. That was actually because of a workshop I did about storytelling and they used in campaign video on YouTube from Apple about sustainability and about their plans and about how fast they already want to approach it because they plan to do it at 2030 almost there. So I think they are sustainable. And I also would before the interview, I would consider them or label them as as green and sustainable. And I still do.

Interviewer:

Awesome. And not the other 3?

Participant:

H&m, no, that's because of the other study I'm participating in. Unilever and Nestle, I have not really considered that. I have not considered it before the interview.

Interviewer:

OK. Great, great, great. Great. Now, before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

Apple I was. Yeah, because of the video they showed me during the workshop storytelling. Unilever, I was not familiar, but I'm not surprised they are doing something because they are so such a big company. The same for Nestle. And H&M I knew that because of the previous or the the other study.

Interviewer:

Yeah, now this set of question is mostly about you. Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

Yes, to some extent. Because I'm a student, I don't have a lot of money to spend, so sometimes I wish I could buy more sustainable clothing or more sustainable products or food or whatever, or biological food, or, you know, vegetarian or vegan. But yeah, it's money most of the time. Sustainable clothing or sustainable everything is more expensive. And yeah, I don't have that much money to spend. Maybe in the future, when I have a job and more income.

Interviewer:

You mentioned that you should care about sustainability. Is there a specific area or aspect in sustainability that you pay more attention to than others.

Participant:

Um. I think clothing because of the forced child labor there is in a lot of cheaper brands. Yeah, I think it was a wake up call I had during the other study. So I think I focus more on that. Yeah, I think that is that it is.

Let's say money is not in the equation. Do you do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable when shopping?

Participant:

I wouldn't know because of my budget, I am not looking that way when I'm in the supermarket or in the store. But I think if I have enough money, I think I would see myself buying more sustainable products. The McDonald's example, more free range chicken instead of, yeah. We have stars, so the more stars, the better quality of life the chicken has had before. Yeah, it got killed or slaughtered, so I think I would focus more on that, especially food. If I have more money now, I focus mostly on clothing. If I have more money, I would focus on more sustainable food products as well.

Interviewer:

Do you often consider whether a brand is sustainable before purchasing from it? So not only the product, but like a brand as a whole?

Participant:

No. I consider the products, the clothing or in the supermarket like the chicken. But I don't really consider the entire brand behind it.

Interviewer:

Of the four campaigns you saw, do you think what is portrayed in the campaign is in line with your personal values?

Participant:

Not H&M.

Interviewer:

OK, that's for sure.



Participant:

I think Apple because they're really stating clearly what they're trying to do for the entire process of making the products and shipping them to using them and then recycling them afterwards or throwing them away in a recycled way. So I think Apple they really impressed me because they focus on short term and they focus on the entire process. So they are really hands on.

Interviewer:

Looking at the campaigns while looking at the campaigns, was there any part that evoked emotions? It can be positive, it can be negative, it can be neutral, anything.

Participant:

Well, Apple evokes positive emotions because they are so hands on in doing the entire process. Nestle, neutral, it didn't really evoke anything. Unilever, It invokes confusion because of the... Yeah. How they state that they are already working on sustainability for 20 years, but they don't really state what they have done. So it's confusing me and H&M, it evoked red flags and greenwashing.

Interviewer:

So you mentioned Apple is positive. Is there any like specific emotion or just general positivity?

Participant:

I think impression because they are wanting to complete it o obtain their goals within six years. And also yeah, because they're working on the entire circle of their product.

Interviewer:

Let's go over the campaign 1 by 1 again. Do you think the campaign will achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

Oh. I think Apple because they want to do so much. I don't really know if it's possible. But I looking at their website, now at the link, I see that they already accomplished a lot. So I think it would be possible, but I also would not be surprised if they will not achieve their goals within six years because they have such ambitious goals. Nestle because they they want to focus everything, like the agriculture things, they want to focus on biodiversity. They want to focus on everything, which makes me think they won't achieve their goals because they don't really focus on something. I don't think they will achieve because they want so much. It's so broad. Unilever I don't think they will achieve their goals within the time limit they give themselves because they also want to focus on plastic, on climates, on nature's life. They want to focus on neighborhoods, livelihood for their people. I think if they would pick one and focus on one of them within the next six years. They will definitely accomplish it because Unilever has enough money and people and they have enough resources to fix it. If they would focus on one thing. Uh, I think the same for H&M, because they also focus on too many things. But also H&M does no clearly states the year or time spent, they will not have their goals accomplished. Wait, for circularity and climate, they have a year. It's 2040. But for the other focus areas they don't have a time span so. Yeah, if you don't have a time span of course you will reach your goals somehow, but maybe within 500 years, but you will reach them.

Interviewer:

Is there any reason outside of what you see in the website that also influence your opinions?

Participant:

Yeah, apple. Because besides the storytelling workshop and the video they showed me there, I already also in my bachelor study when we had topics about CSR, corporate social responsibility, they also a lot of times took Apple as an example. And yeah, Unilever and Nestle not really. Uh. Maybe Unilever because like, remember when we had the job fair like last year in October Unilever was also there and there was a standee and also flyers about climate and what they were doing to reduce climate change and their climate footprint. So maybe that. H&M. Yeah, my opinion is negatively influenced by the other study I'm participating in.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaign has actually achieved what they say they have achieved? As you can see there are like also reports and a few pieces of information mentioning what they have achieved so far. Do you think those numbers are real?

Participant:

For Apple, I think it is. Nestle, I think it is too because I don't have a reason to believe it's false. I've never heard or saw an article or something about misleading greenwashing. So I think it's true. The same goes for Unilever. Because I've never saw something being rushing related to Unilever and also think if it was greenwashing and people would find out about that, they are fucked. Their entire reputation goes. H&M. I don't believe it's true, especially for the materials and stuff.

Interviewer:

Which campaign do you prefer? And could you rank them?

Participant:

My ranking is well, I think they're definitely Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M.

Interviewer:

So like just the same order?

Participant:

Yeah, maybe Unilever and Nestle on the on the same place, but if I have to choose than it's Nestle second because they are more clearer about what they already have accomplished and Unilever is not at all.

Interviewer:

Which campaign do you think are done out of genuine concern for the environment or for sustainability?

Participant:

I think Apple because the guy who started Apple, his name was Steve Jobs, I believe when he started his company and he had one of like the first big presentations revealing an iPhone, he already talked about sustainability. So I really believe that is in the core values of of the organization because they already started with it, so it has been growing in the organization. Nestle. I do believe it. I do believe they started it out of genuine care for the environment and the biodiversity and all the things they state. But also I think it's not really greenwashing, but they do want to show off because they focus on so many parts of sustainability that they want to be like, we focus on restoring nature, we also focus on water. We also focus on this. We also focus on that. We also focus on biodiversity. So they do love it and really show off. But I think it's still from, a good place. The same from Unilever, because they also focus on climates, nature, plastics, living wages. They also focus on a lot. H&M, I think. It's just really greenwashing. They just want to show that they are sustainable in the hope that they can sustain, obtain or enhance the amount of clients or the amount of profit they make.

Interviewer:

Why do you think that they are doing the greenwashing? What is the motive behind the greenwashing?

Participant:

Well, because sustainability is such a large topic on political agendas, but also companies it everywhere. So I think if you don't. I think H&M thinks if they don't post something about it or if they don't make a web page, then they will lose clients. Especially Zara and Berska and other big competitors of them are doing it. I don't know because they are But especially if those competitors are doing something about greenwashing, they will have to, otherwise they will lose clients to their competitors.

Interviewer:

Is there any comments you would like to make regarding the campaign samples that you've already seen? Any minor details, thoughts, opinions are appreciated.

Participant:

I think I've shared all my experience and ideas.

Interviewer:

Anything else you'd like to share regarding the topic we discussed?

Participant:

No, but I have to round up.

Interviewer:

Yes, we're done actually. So thank you very much.

## **Participant 2**

Transcript

Interviewer:

OK. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal of this study is to understand which individual factors and also message characteristic will affect the consumer's evaluation of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign.

Now I already received your signed consent form, so I'm sure that you already know your rights. Again, everything is anonymous. You will be voice recorded. I will take notes and yeah, you're free to skip any questions or end the interview whenever you want. Just let me know. And then OK, let's get started. Now the first question. How old are you?

Participant:

25.

Interviewer:

What is your nationality?

Participant:

Chinese.

Interviewer:

What is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm a student.

Interviewer:

The first set of question we're going to go over some general knowledge about the topic just so I can understand if you're familiar with them. It doesn't matter if you if you don't, so don't worry. OK, first question, are you familiar with the term 'corporate social responsibility'?

Participant:

Yes.

Could you try explaining it in your own words?

Participant:

I think corporate social responsibility means that every corporation has, because they have like impact on the society and it also means they have the responsibility for the society.

Interviewer:

Are you familiar with the term 'sustainability' in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Not very much, yeah.

Interviewer:

What do you think it is about?

Participant:

Sustainability is like 环保, like, trying to be environmental friendly, the production they produce or the concept they are trying to convey to the consumers. The other companies they

want to like cooperate with might also would choose the companies that are more sustainability or something like them so it's better for the Earth.

Interviewer:

When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is referring to?

Participant:

I think they want to. attract the people that care about it and show the things they do is good for the Earth, good for the environment. They wanted people to be their consumers and they also want to convey that kind of concept. That's why they do these PR things.

Interviewer:

What do you think is usually included in a campaign like this?

Participant:

Like some advertisement, or online or offline activities so consumers join them in their workshops or something. Yeah I think that's it.

Interviewer:

What are your thoughts on such campaigns?

Participant:

I'm not very interested about these things because if they didn't show me they really helped the environment, sustainability and I feel like it's something nonsense. .

Participant:



Yeah. 我要转成中文, 因为有的时候很多事情, 如果我觉得他并没有, 比如说他想做到一个可持续, 他想要做一个比较环保的这种这种概念, 但是如果他给我的感觉没有落到实地, 没有真的做到做成这样子的话, 没有让我看到很实际的东西, 我就不会觉得它我就只会觉得它是一种吸引消费者的方式, 然后我也不会被这个事情所吸引。嗯。我并不会因为他做一些广告啊或者是什么, 就觉得噢他真的好像真的在做一些什么事情, 并没有。啊哈。噢

Interviewer:

Can you think of such a campaign in mind?

Participant:

No, I can't, 因为我从来没有关注过。

Interviewer:

OK. Now, if you look at the links I sent you, there are four companies there: Apple, Nestle, Unilever, and H&M. Could you tell me quickly what you know about each corporation? For example, which sector or industry they're in?

Participant:

Apple is. 一个手机产品制造商, 一个电子产品制造商。然后还有什么, 他们industry还有什么来着? Nestle. 雀巢吗. It's a 食品制造商. Unilever is a brand that I never heard before. H&M 是快销品牌.

Interviewer:

OK. Now you I'm gonna ask you to go through each of the link one by one, but you see, for Apple there's only one link, so it's pretty simple, straightforward. For the others, all of them have 4 links each. So the first link is the first page of the sustainability campaign, and then each subsequent link will be the sub link of that campaign. Take your time as much time as you need

to go through them. Just look at what they have been doing, what they say they will do. After that we can come back and then I'm going to ask you a few questions about it. You will have access through it all throughout the interview, so at any point, you can just go back and check what they say and then answer my questions.

Participant:

Oh Unilever 就是联合利华, of course 有听过.

Interviewer:

So what sector are they in?

Participant:

They produce a lot of productions not only like shampoo. Conditioners, 生活用品.

Interviewer:

So, based on what you've read, could you tell me what each campaign is focused on?

Participant:

For Apple, I think their focus on the recycling because, 就是他们会把会回收以用户的旧手机, 然后把旧手机里面可以用的材料再拆解出来进行一个再利用, 这是我对他们这个网页的一个主要的印象。And they talk a lot about low-carbon shipping wars. Yeah. Something like low carbon, I just don't get it because I didn't see what they do, what they did to it.

Interviewer:

What about Nestle?

Because they are in the food production industry, so the most focused on in the agriculture area protecting the forest and encourage the farmers to use more environmental friendly 技术 tech. Unilever focused on the climate. And H&M the recycling of clothes and make it to new clothes.

Interviewer:

Do you think the cause that the campaigns address are relevant to the companies.

Participant:

Of course. All of them.

Interviewer:

Could you briefly explain why you think so for each company?

Participant:

For Apple because 他们是手机生产商, 然后他们他们如果从是从可持续性的角度来考虑的话, 一定是他们生产这些电子产品所需要用到的材料是否环保, 以及这个材料回收回来我们要怎么利用它, 所以觉得这是relevant的。

Interviewer:

What about Nestle?

Participant:

AndNestle because they focus on 如何去就是生产生产制造这个粮食这些吃的东西的过程, 那么跟生生产制造粮食他们肯定就是和农业相关。所以我觉得他们强调在农业方面如何环保, 如何可持续也是很大的relevance。然后Unilever就是生产一些生活用品的, 所以这些生活用品的包首先他们的包装很多都是塑料, 所以它会强调一些塑料的。塑料的一个。卡住了可持续利

用, 然后 yeah that's it. H&M他们是卖衣服的。对, 首先要说他们用的布料是来是很环保的, 然后其次就是回收一些衣服。然后这些衣服的再利用就是感觉是一个他们嗯这四家公司我觉得他们。在sustainability这方面宣传自己的方式是在一整个供应链上他们的上游的来源是什么然后下游是什么这一个循环他们在这个循环里能做什么来维持这个sustainability.

Interviewer:

Do you think what they are doing in the campaign fit what they are fit the cost?

Participant:

First Apple, let's see what they are addressing. Recycle and renewable materials, clean electricity and low carbon shipping. I don't quite understand what the net emission to the low carbon shipping is. So I don't get it. The only thing I can get on that page is the recycling of old electrical products and make new ones. And they also said they are eliminating plastic from packaging and making it more compact. I didn't feel like that. Oh yeah, it's maybe it's just they changed all of the plastic to the 纸盒.

Interviewer:

Nestle?

Participant:

Yeah, they're trying to protect the forest and they're focused on regenerative agriculture. Yeah, I think they're doing well. For Unilever, their aim is to focus on climate, nature and plastic and livelihood. I see they have a lot of reports on what they want to do and what they already did. So I think it's great. H&M, They are focused on reduce their impact on the climate, what I see is that they are planning to recycle the raw materials from the supply chain. But I didn't see how how they protect the water.

Interviewer:

Did you come to this opinion by comparing their values and mission statement to what they actually did?

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Do you have any past experience with any of these companies as a consumer?

Participant:

Yeah, I have all of their products.

Interviewer:

How was your experience with them generally?

Participant:

就是我手机, 平板都是Apple的. Nestle, when I was young and it was said that Nestle is a very good brand, that their milk is very good. It's good for us because you know, China we face, 嗯, 就是我们以前有那个很严重的就是奶粉的事件, 我中国有很一些奶粉的品牌给小孩子喝了之后头会变大, 还会然后那个奶粉里面有激素, 因为小孩就会提前发育。对他们影响很大, 所以呀雀巢在中国有较好的声誉reputation. 然后Unilever嗯然后以后的话感觉是一个总公司, 然后他下面有很多非常多不同的品牌。我觉得应该用过他们的产品Dove都应该也是吧。H&M,. I brought the clothes there, but not very much.

Interviewer: As corporations, do you think they are trustworthy, for example?

Participant:

For Apple, I think they are trustworthy. Because it's like compared to Huawei or other Chinese 手机制造商 we are facing, you know 那个叫什么来着？审查啊。Which made me feel like even though we have云上贵州，就是呢iPhone他们把他们有一个数据库，他们把中国所有的用户的数据库都存在嗯中国的一个省的一个一个地方，而没有存在美国他们的总部。所以如果中国政府想要嗯，获取我们的数据的话其实是有办法获取的，但是至少还是 an American company, they still have some regulations need to follow. I think the Nestle is trustworthy because that's what I was told when I was young. We feel like 国外 is better than than our own. Unilever also think it's still great because it's a very big company and they have a lot of different products and different brands. H&M, , 我对这种快销品牌其实很有很有意见。嗯。Because I think even if they want to say something about sustainability, they themselves is not a sustainability company, right?

Interviewer:

Before participating in this study, have you ever considered these brands as green or sustainable?

Participant:

Yeah, for Apple, I think they're a great brand because they see they have a lot of promotion. Nestle and Unilever I only bought their their products. I've never seen their some advertisement or something so I don't know about it. And for the HM because they are fast fashion so I don't think they are green at all. Absolutely not. Interviewer:

Interviewer:

Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

Yeah, I think I am. 我很少购物, 就是我只会买我的生活的必需品。

Interviewer:

Is there a specific area which you focus on?

Participant:

我很少购物, 就是我只会买我的生活的必需品。And I also know after I came to the netherlands, I will, 垃圾分类。 My god, so sorry for that. 就是就是 I 了解了之后, 我觉得他们不像是国内那种他就是政府让你垃圾分类, 结果他自己最后都没有做好, 但是我觉得经过我的一些了解, 我觉得这边是会做好垃圾分类, 所以我就会垃圾分类, 但是我就知道这些人他们不会做的。 So I think i'm more sustainable compared to them。

Interviewer:

Do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable when shopping?

Participant:

I don't think so, because sometimes they add a label on their products like they are green or something and they will be more expensive. I mean if I have enough money of course I will choose, but now I don't.

Interviewer:

Do you consider whether a brand is sustainable before purchasing from it?

Participant:

I once saw the video in Indonesia, because in Indonesia there are a lot of like waste from the sea and they use these kind of waste to make some packaging 包装盒 or something, I think it's a great idea, but I don't know which brand they are and they also use coconut shells to make something useful. Maybe that I will buy from.

Interviewer:

Do you think what is portrayed in the campaign is in line with your personal value?

Participant:

I would say based on the things they want to portray is, yeah, I think it's in line. .

Interviewer:

In which way?

Participant:

For Apple and H&M, one of the points they want to convey is the recycling. That's 想法一致. And for Nestle and Univeler, they want to protect the forest, it's good, thats what I wanna do if I have the ability to.

Interviewer:

Looking at the campaigns, is there any part that evokes emotions in you? It could be positive, negative, neutral, any specific emotions?

Participant:



所有的公司都要说吗？还是只要说让我感觉到 emotion 的 company. I want to start with H&M. Because they are like fast fashion company. I don't think they what they do are protecting the environment. I can only say 我还要切成中文. 就是他们的他们的生产也好, 他就是他整个公司的业务, 就是从从 sustainability 的角度来说就是你. It's harmful, so i think what they do, 他们做的事情对环境的伤害是一百分的话, 他可能他做一些这些事情. 做一些他们强调从三线的热点或者回收衣服呀, 或者是呢采用一些比较环保的材料, 只是对这些环境就是把这个负的一百分变成负的九十分左右吧. 可能因为我从最根本上就是不是很认可他们的公司的生产发展方式. 不知道怎么说, 让我想一想下. 就是我之前在就像是之前给你举的那个例子, 就是我之前在中国的时候, 然后那个政府让我们去做垃圾分类, 然后我没有做就有点像, 但是我本来就不认可他的. 他做这一整个事情的初中不是不是也不是, 我不知道怎么说, 能不能跳过这个？

Interviewer:

Should I say that you feel distrust?

Participant:

Yeah. Distrust.

Participant:

Because the the clothes is not 我觉得他的画面的衣服并不是我们生活的必需品, 就是我可以从各个地方买衣服, 我们可以从二手店或者是说一些更环保的那种衣服店里买衣服就是快消品快销品牌 fast fashion. 不是我们唯一的选择, 但是如果说嗯但是像雀巢或者是联合利华这种品牌就是会涉及到我们生活当中. 必须的东西. 然后像嗯苹果的话, 我觉得也是因为手机现在对我来说也是无法物理生的嘛, 所以这三个是生活的必需品, 但是衣服不是所以如果我有的选的话, 我会选择更好的. 然后你, I don't know if you can get it.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I did. Were there any emotions that come up for those three other campaigns, or is there none?

Participant:

Yeah, I think there is another thing for Unilever and Nestle is that they want to help people to earn a living wage, which I think is great and like financially support some farmers to promote in the transition. I think they're doing something good to help people, not just to help themselves. And I have no specific emotions for Apple.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaigns have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Participant:

Let's see. Apple they said, there are six parts. They said they they have already achieved the first one which our most significant product emissions reductions to date with the Apple Watch line up. I don't know about it, so I don't think so. And the second one is percentage reduction in 二氧化碳。Yeah, I do believe only this one.

Interviewer:

What about the other three?

Participant:

Nestle said they have. percentage of management positions held by women. Yeah, I believe that, OK. It's not enough, but it's almost 50%. Plastic packaging designed for recycling, I believe that one also.

Interviewer:

Would you say that you will believe that if they give you a specific numbers?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, true.

Interviewer:

OK, great. We can move on to Unilever.

Participant:

I also believe Unilever because they have reports about it. Even though I didn't read it.  
With HM I don't believe it.

Interviewer:

Now moving on to the future, do you think the campaigns will achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

就是他们的目标相对最高, 其实是我们可以看见, 比如说他真的有在回收一些东西. I think this part they won't achieve, but some of it we can't see it. And I feel like they can list any words, any numbers they want. So I don't believe this part.

Interviewer:

Is there any reason outside of what is seen in the campaigns that also influence your opinion?

Participant:

Well, 我之前有跟你讲过, 就是像中国人他们都会觉得国外的品牌比国内的要好, 因为这个其实也是一个事实。就是呃像国内的本土的一些公司生产商他们进他们出口的东西。的质量会比他们销售在国内的东西的质量要高, 因为因为出口比如说他想要卖东西到欧洲, 然后欧洲会有自己的, 比如说一些食品会有自己的食品审查标准, 然后这些食品检查标准会比国内中国的要严格一些。所以他们就嗯两边的生产质量会不一样。So that will influence my opinions on Nestle and Unilever. Apple嘛, 就是他们会回收大家用过的手机 That's what I see. It really did. So I think it's very good. With H&M, 就是我去逛街的时候总是会给我一种他们衣服的质量很不好的感觉。

Interviewer:

Which campaigns do you prefer of the four that we show you? And could you rank them?

Participant:

I think the first is Nestle, because both Nestle and Unilever, they have very mature systems about their the goals about sustainability. But I can't say anything. Nestle and UNilever 他们把他们的网站给看起来很像是一种报告是的, like report? They have a lot of numbers and some graphs. So it made me feel like they are very serious about these things and really make an effort to do this. First Nestle, seconfUnilever and then it's Apple. The last one is H&M. They show that they want to do it. It's the way they show. it. I mean, Apple is more concise, but I personally prefer something like a report.

Interviewer:

Which campaigns do you think are done out of real concern for the environment? And why do you think so?

Participant:

Apple, Nestle and Unilever?

Interviewer:

Any reason why?

Participant:

For the Apple is all based on my personal experience because they recycle the used products. Yeah, that's it. Nesle and Unilever, they gave me a lot of data, made me feel like they're trustworthy.

Interviewer:

Which one do you think is not done out of real concern for the environment?

Participant:

I think it's because they didn't give me any data about it, but they said their ambition is to achieve net greenhouse gas emission.

Interviewer:

If they are not done out of real concern for the environment, what do you think the motive is?

Participant:

Money, of course they want more customers and make profit, right? Because nowadays a lot of people care about sustainability and they might think that if they show people that they do a lot in sustainability. People are more inclined to buy their things, their products.

Interviewer:

That was the last question. Now I'm just going to move on to closing. So is there any other comments you would like to make regarding the campaigns that you've seen? Any minor detailed thoughts or opinions?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Anything else you'd like to share about this topic we discussed?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Thank you so much for your time.

### **Participant 3**

Interviewer:

OK. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. As you already know, the goal is to understand which individual factors and corporates are anyway message characteristic that will affect your evaluation of the genuineness of sustainability campaign. OK, so I already got your consent form. Yeah. So I'm pretty sure you already know. You're right. And so feel free to skip questions and interview and it's all anonymous. I will voice record. Yeah. So, OK, great. Let's just get started. I'm going to first ask you a few basic demographic questions. So how old are you?

Participant:

29.

Interviewer:

29 And your nationality is?

Participant:

Thai

Interviewer:

Thai and what is your occupation?

Participant:

Student.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK. There will be three sets of questions and the second set of questions, there were three subset of questions. It's it sounds like a lot, but each set only has like a few questions. So don't worry too much about it. The first set of question is going to be an overview to see if you're familiar with the topic. So OK, first of all, are you familiar with the term 'corporate social responsibility'?

Participant:

So I heard something about CSR. Is it the same thing?

Interviewer:

Yes, that is CSR.

Participant:

Oh yeah. So I heard some, and I think when I was studying, when I was in bachelor.

Interviewer:

Could you try explaining it in your own words?

Participant:

So I think it's about like the company doing something for society, but at the same time for the marketing purpose. But like do good for the society, give back to the society.

Interviewer:

Are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Not really. I know the word 'sustainability', but in the corporate I'm not really sure what it is.

Interviewer:

Could you try explaining what 'sustainability' is about?

Participant:

I think it's something like for a long term result. It's to do something for the, yeah Yeah, it's long term results, not just like short time, it's just, better result in the long term, effect, something like that.

Interviewer:

When you hear the phrase 'corporate sustainability PR campaign', what do you think it is referring to?



Participant:

I think it's some kind of marketing that gives some kind of benefits to society in the long run.

Interviewer:

What kind of activities do you think is usually included in a sustainability PR campaign?

Participant:

So like the activity that I always see is like you clean, you pick up the trash, picking up the trash from somewhere or like plant the trees. Something like that. And I saw one in Thailand. It's like, there is a drinking bottle, drinking water and on the label they put some kind of announcements about like maybe, finding a lost child. Like, did you see someone like this? He is missing, like missing person. I don't know if it's like the sustainability or not, but it's something like that. Like they do it for free, just help society.

Interviewer:

What do you think about such campaigns?

Participant:

What do I think about the campaign? Yeah, it's not something like selling promotion. So I think it's good. Just help society just like, free channel to help society, like use corporate money to do something for society, not my tax.

Interviewer:

Is there any specific company in mind that you remember seeing them doing CSR activities?.

Participant:

Yeah. Do you know PTT is like? Petroleum Company in Thailand. So PTT is kind of a big company. So they all they went to the, I don't know the word in English. It's like the place nearby the beach but not the beach. But they have some kind of trees that help you protect the land. So they planted that kind of tree like, so they have a problem where the sea, like, comes too much to the land and then we keep losing the land. So they plan this kind of tree. for like, protect the waves from coming to the land.

Interviewer:

Yeah, OK, awesome. I know exactly what you're talking about.

Participant:

And I think that also help the environment, like some kind of species animal, they can stay there also, so they also help the animal and also help the people at the same time.

Interviewer:

So you already see that I sent you a bunch of links. There are 13 in total. And as you can see, they are categorized into four different companies. For Apple, it's pretty straightforward. There's only one link, but the other three companies you see there are multiple links. Now what is important to remember is that each subsequent link leads to a sub web page within the same campaign as the previous link. So for example, as you can see here, link A is the landing page, it's the original page of the campaign, but because there's too much information they have to put it in like the next page, the next page, the next page and that's what links BCD is about. But all in all, ABCD belongs to the same campaign. But don't open them yet. I just need to ask you one more question before you can open it. So you see that the four companies are Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Have you heard of their names before?

Participant:

Yeah, I think I'm familiar with these companies. I think I use their products.

Interviewer:

All of them?

Participant:

Yeah, I think so.

Interviewer:

Great. Could you tell me quickly what you know about each company? For example, which industry they're in?

Participant:

So Apple it's like technology stuff, gadgets. Nestle is like drinking, like kind of think about daily food or something like that. So Unilever is like the shampoo thing, the shampoo stuff that I can think of. H&M is about clothing.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. So good that you already know about them now? Uh, please go on and start reading the link. Read what they say in the link one by one. Please go through all of them and take as much time as you need. And yeah, just go through them to kind of understand or what they say they want to do what they say they have done. And then like all of the things that they say, basically whatever they put on the website, go ahead and then, yeah, take as much time as you need and then come back and then we're going to discuss about.

Participant:

OK, so I don't have to go like further? I just read the one page that they show up and just leave it? Like they have a 2024 report..

Interviewer:

Yeah, no need. Just just read what is on that web page after you're done. You don't have to click anything, move on to the next link that I sent you, OK?

Interviewer:

Based on what you have read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign focuses on?

Participant:

I think it focuses on environment, most of them. Apple, recycle like just, reuse their own device. Yeah. And they can give the discount for the customer to like exchange the old device to a new one.

Interviewer:

What about Nestle?

Participant:

Nestle is about, I think it's about, how to do the farming thing. It's like the way to do the farming but not deforest and still maintain the quality of the water, soil, air or something like that. Like do the farming without harming the environment.

Interviewer:

Great, Unilever?

Participant:

I think that about the, how to say, the packaging, the yeah, they try to, like, don't use the plastic or something that can be recycled. I think it's like similar with the second one, Nestle.

Interviewer:

And H&M?

Participant:

It's also about recycle the clothes. So because they are fast fashion, I think and they think they'd try to reuse the products. Basically, they want to like, reduce waste from the production.

Interviewer:

Do you think what the campaign is talking about, like what they focus on, is relevant to the company?

Participant:

Relevant to the company? I think everything is relevant to their company because they try to focus. What if they're like, let's say, how to say? So some, like all of their business harm something, do something bad to environment and they had to fix that by launching that campaign. For example, Apple. How they produce the device is also like use a lot of plastic and anything like that, so they try to come up with the campaign that fix this kind of problem. And also Nestle and Unilever, when they do the farming to make the products or something like that. And I think they thought about, yeah, you destroyed the forest because you do the farmland so they come up with that kind of event, that kind of CSR to fix that kind of problem to like, yeah,

we destroyed it, but we fixed it. That kind of... Yeah, yeah, we did it, but we we tried to like, make it come back to the normal.

Interviewer:

Do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits what they are focusing on?

Participant:

What they are focusing on? I think they don't really want to fix the problem, that they really want to fix the mindset of people looking at them. So like, yeah, I know that you look at me like I'm a fast fashion, but yeah, I am. But I I try to fix this. I try to let me look at me better way. I'm not like 100% doing this, but we also got affected a little bit.

Interviewer:

Yes, but yeah, yeah. But that, that, that's also a great evaluation. But do you think what they are doing is, like, suitable to what they are focusing on, like, is it a good fit?

Participant:

I think it's. Fit. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Because they just fix the the problem by doing something that directed the problem. I mean, like, the plan. They plan. Yeah, I think it fits. Because like Apple, they have problems about product waste, like, devices. So they come up with a campaign try to reduce the material thing.

Interviewer:

Do you have past experience with any of these companies as a consumer?

Participant:

As a consumer? Let me think. Ohh I never traded. I don't think I have it. I don't. I don't think I have it. I don't have it.

Interviewer:

You don't use any of their products?

Participant:

I mean, yeah, I use their product. Yeah, yeah, I use all of them.

Interviewer:

Yeah, all of them. OK, great. Generally how is how was your experience with? With them, with the company, I mean, yes.

Participant:

About the company. For Apple, I think when I opened the product, I think I got less from them, but I pay more. For example you buy iPhone, you don't get chargers anymore. And the packaging, everything come in paper. Yeah, I think they tried to changed. They changed that. But Unilever and the other one, Nestle, I didn't feel, and I just feel like they just do normal. I mean, the package is the same.

Interviewer:

Great. Uh. What about H&M?

Participant:

H&M? You mean my feelings for the products?

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah. How was your experience with the brand?

Participant:

Yeah, and the quality is bad. OK. Yeah, but the price is. Yeah. Better than Shein, like, higher than Shein, but the quality is, yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. Umm. OK, awesome. Are you a frequent customers of these brands?

Participant:

You mean, sorry. What did you say again?

Interviewer:

Are you a frequent customers of this brand?

Participant:

For Apple, yes. Because when I think about changing the device, just Apple. And for Unilever, I think so because a lot of my shampoo, if I look from what I have right now and I look, maybe it's a different brand, but after that just take a look and yeah it comes from Unilever. But sometimes I didn't realize that I used Unilever. And for the Nestle, I think so because many product I think is also Nestle. H&M not that much. I mean, I look at the products and I buy at Shein because they're cheaper.

Interviewer:

As corporations, do you think that they are trustworthy?

Participant:



For the products, based on their products, I think so. The quality of the products that I use, yeah, they are trustworthy.

Interviewer:

All of them?

Participant:

H&M I don't. Because they are fast fashion. So when they are fast fashion, I have only, like, how to say, the minus. the negative thoughts on them already. Because the type of the business. And Apple, its quality for me is positive, but for the price, it just keep going up insane.

Interviewer:

What about the other two?

Participant:

The other two. I'm just neutral, I don't, like, they're good or bad. It's just, because, the products are just daily use. It's not something like expensive or something that I have to think much when I have to buy. But I think the products is good for the price.

Interviewer:

Before participating in this study, have you ever considered these brands as green, sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Not at all. But for Nestle and Unilever I don't think they are bad and destroy the environment to be honest. I would just think because what they sell, because I was thinking if I

don't have them, I don't have things to use, so I didn't, I don't have like minus thoughts on them, something like that. So I don't think they are bad.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Does it mean that you..? So my question was, have you ever considered this brand as green or sustainable? So does it mean that you don't see them as a green brand or do you just not think about it?

Participant:

I don't think about anything. Yeah, but H&M, I think they're like, because the business is fast fashion, they definitely destroy something the environment. Just H&M.

Interviewer:

OK. So for H&M, it's definitely not a green brand in your in your head? .

Participant:

Yeah, yeah. But other thing no I don't, I don't think that much.

Interviewer:

Now, before participating in this study, were you aware that these brands engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

No, I don't know that they have. I know they have CSR, but I never looked at what they did, Because I think that every big companies had to do this kind of marketing.

Interviewer:

So you are aware that everyone has CSR?

Participant:

Yeah, I was thinking like, every big company had CSR.

Interviewer:

But you don't know the exact details of what activities they do?

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, no.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK, this set of question is about you.

Participant:

Oh a little bit. I know that Apple have trading, like trad- in the products. But I don't know that is CSR. I just see it as a normal marketing plan.

Yeah. OK, great. Awesome. OK, this set of question is about you. So just feel free to go off. Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

No, I don't care that much. We're gonna die soon.

Participant:

Ohh that answer. Oh my God. .

Interviewer:

No, no, no, no, no, no answer is good or bad, just be just be real. Just be true, you know.  
OK. Do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable when shopping?

Participant:

No, like I think like some companies try to be so clean. I feel like this is, they try to do something, they try to hide something behind tha. I have a bad image for the company who do too much about this. Like, if you don't, if you don't destroy something that much, why do you have to try that much to fix it?

Interviewer:

Ah, interesting. OK, interesting. Interesting. Do you have an example of such a company or such a product?

Participant:

So for example, like a petroleum company, so like you make the fuel. So basically, maybe you already harm the environment. And they try to, how to say, greenwashing, is that that word, They try to, like buy we're friendly to the environment or something like that, but your product is basically destroying the environment. Yeah.

Interviewer:

In great example, uh, OK. Now, uh, OK, so that was about the product. Now, do you consider whether a brand as a whole is sustainable before buying products from that brand?

Participant:

A brand is sustainable When I buy I really don't think about what they got sustainable or not. I just buy it like because want that product. Not considered about sustainable at all. Oh I'm so bad.

Interviewer:

No, no, no. It's OK. Only the product. OK, great. Let's see. OK, so you already read the campaigns. Do you think what they say in the campaign is in line with your personal value?

Participant:

For me, for Apple, I feel a little bit like they try to reduce costs for the company, but it's not that much benefit me. Yeah, for example that like, for example, no charger for you because we want to save that kind of plastic use or something like that. But you didn't. But you also, like, sell at a higher price than the cheaper one. So what is the problem? And you sell the charger separately. So I think it's just, yeah, your profit, your benefit is not benefit me at all, no matter what you produce the product anyway.

Interviewer:

Hmm. That's some great insight. Uh. OK. Yeah. So that was Apple. Yeah, that was a great insight on Apple. So what about the other ones? Anything that is in line with your no value?

Participant:

Yeah. For, like, from, for me, like I told you before, Nestle and Unilever, I don't think they have some kind of bad image for me. At all. I don't think that they do the farm and they make the packaging in like in plastic is bad, for me. OK yeah. Yeah, for H&M. Yeah, I think that they try, but it's not in life, but like I don't think they're sustainability at all. I mean like how many, I read

that they didn't reuse that much percent, but they keep produce news close anyway, every season, every month.

Interviewer:

So is it correct that I understand that? You do not feel that any of them align due to the benefit that they say doesn't actually benefit you as a consumer.

Participant:

Yeah, I think so, yeah, just benefit themselves.

Interviewer:

OK. OK, only benefit themselves and not the consumer. Great. Wow. OK. Last question in this set, looking at the campaigns here, is there any part that evokes any emotions in you, so it could be positive, negative, neutral like any emotion at all?

Participant:

The Apple one, I feel like, to be honest, bullshit. I mean, like, I feel like. But if I just have a feeling they did that for themselves, not customer or for the world. Yeah, like that. If they want to do that for sustainability, you can make the product like really better. Like we can use a long time, like battery can stay for the long time. We don't have to share the phone that much. So we reduce the production. You don't have to like, buy the phone every three years, right? If you really want to do that about sustainability? Yeah. I feel like bullshit. Yeah, but. Yes, for the Nestle and Unilever, I don't have some kind of thoughts or evoke me in something, I'm like yeah it's just normal, they try to be more friendly to the environment, which is good.

Interviewer:

H&M?

Participant:

Uh, bullshit. But it's not bullshit as much as Apple.

Interviewer:

Why do you think they're not as much as Apple?

Participant:

Yes, sometime because maybe they sell, I mean like, when the the out of season, like, new collection come there like maybe like decrease the piece. For the clothes. Yeah, maybe it's not that much. I understand. like at the same time, I understand they are fast fashion. So I understand that they have to do like that. They have to produce a lot of new clothes. Yeah, but for Apple, it's like, you launch it every year. Nothing improved at the product that much like, maybe better camera, a little bit. And then you talk about sustsainability, for what? like that is, it's not, yeah.

Interviewer:

OK, I see what you mean. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Does what you mean like for fashion, then it's inevitable that they produce a lot, but for Apple....

Participant:

It's. Yeah, Apple is like, you can do better. Like the frustration.

Interviewer:

OK. OK, great.

Participant:

Like, you don't have to launch the product every year like, right? Like you don't have to have a new iPhone every year, that people have to share the phone every year. You just do it for good, for 20 years. It's also possible that you can do. Yeah, because it's a little bit like, my benefit or your benefit. But when look it just your benefit and not my benefit. For the, and not for the environment at all, because what did you do is like not good for the environment at the same time.

Interviewer:

I see. Interesting. Uh. Great. OK. Last set of questions already.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaign will? Oh, no, sorry. Do you think the campaign have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Participant:

I think they have achieved but I don't know if it really have the effect for the environment, like maybe it's just a number. Then maybe they reduced the emission of the carbon dioxide. Yeah, but like, what if, I don't know. It's like, did the world change if they're doing that? For me, I had that feeling.

Interviewer:

How did you come to this opinion?

Participant:

I don't know. It's like. People just, make the number to make some kind of attractive to their customer or potential customer. Yeah, I don't know. Like, I don't know, like I have. They have a number. And then what? Can you tell me how many percent that you increase or



decrease, change to the environment? What has changed? For example like the carbon dioxide they make for example like 1,000,000, they say reduce 20%, but the eight 800-thousand that they produce is maybe like really fucked up the world. So it's a little bit changed, but it's still a lot. Or something like that. You understand? Like I don't feel. Yeah. It's like, yeah, you changed a lot, but still.

Interviewer:

So does it mean that you do not look at the numbers?

Participant:

I look, but I don't feel, there is no effect on me, the number, the number.

Interviewer:

Ah. Have no effect on you, but what you see in the world does?

Participant:

Yeah, it's like, how do you say you can just, you have to tell me, like, so or this number, what is changed? But instead of telling me the number, tell what you change, what affect the world in the world, not the number. Number, it just make impression I think. But we cannot do anything from that impression.

Interviewer:

Great. Wow. OK. Interesting. OK, moving on. Do you think the campaign will actually achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

Like Apple say, 2030, they're gonna do something, right? I think so. I think they can achieve because they keep increasing the price, so people will not buy the product anymore. And then yeah, they can decrease. Yeah, I'm gonna fuck up your thesis. Yeah. Yeah, I think so. I think maybe people also notice about the sustainability. People think more about the sustainability in the future. It's not about only the company make it happen, people also make it happen. So like they buy not much. They didn't buy much like the past. They didn't buy much product. So people change their behavior. Also, you know not only this. Not only the effort of the company is the effort of the people, the buyer, customer also.

Interviewer:

What about other companies?

Participant:

Yeah, I think because of fast fashion and I think we got the trend of the fashion is not, like, fast fashion is out. So the behavior of the buyers change, so they cannot do that fast fashion anymore, still fast but slower fashion maybe. Yeah. So maybe that help that, yeah, they'll reduce some kind of pollution, whatever. And for Unilever and Nestle? Right. I think it's about the farm, I think I'm not sure. I think Unilever, they talk about the farmland. or Nestle, they talk about the farmland. When they get the product from the farmer and then they have regulation like, OK, if you don't do, if you don't follow this kind of regulation. We we we will not buy you the product to make our products, like you are not my supplier anymore. Maybe. Yes they can achieve the goal that they set.

Interviewer:

Interesting. So that that's for the, that's for Nestle. And what about Unilever?

Participant:

So about the packaging, right, more of them talk about the packaging. To be honest, like, I saw many products in the packaging and sometimes it's hard for me it's it's not Unilever but for example Starbuck, they change the straws to paper. To be honest, like you don't have to change, just keep the plastic. But can you change something like how to manage the trash? Maybe way, way better? It's out off the topic.

Interviewer:

Give me a second. What is your question again?

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaign will achieve what they say they will achieve for Unilever?

Participant:

For Unilever. Yeah. Yeah, I think if they're thinking to change the packaging, they will. If they want to do it.

Interviewer:

Is there any part in the campaign like in the website that makes you think so?

Participant:

Of the campaign that they can achieve. Yeah, maybe. like they have some kind of past results that they already did before. For example Unilever I think they say in 2015 they already achieve this type of thing. So maybe in the future they can also achieve.

Interviewer:

So any reason outside what is seen of the website, for example in real life past experience, whatever you saw on the Internet that also made you think so?

Participant:

That they can achieve, let me think. I mean, is that like they already changed some packaging already in some kind of product, so maybe this can be the indicator that they are really changing it. So if they keep doing it in more products maybe they can reach the kind of goal that they have set.

Interviewer:

Do you have the same evaluation with the other brands or is it only Unilever?

Participant:

Oh. So Apple, I saw that they kind of change a lot of things from the packaging or something like that. But at the same time they're changing one product. At the same time, they add some kind of product, so I'm not sure that they can achieve it.

Interviewer:

What do you mean?

Participant:

I mean, like I told you before, the charger, they say you buy iPhone, we don't give you charger because we save environment maybe because the previous phone you already have charger. But you also sell the charger. I mean you reduce one, but you still maintain one or sell extra another one. So I'm not sure that one can be, I'm not sure.

Interviewer:

What about Nestle and H&M?

Participant:

Nestle, so as i told you, I don't have bad image about them. So what it is is mostly about with the farmer. Not with the, not with the customer. For me. What I looked at that campaign. So I think if the marketing or the team can cooperate with the farmer, I think they can do. It depends on them.

Interviewer:

Great. H&M?

Participant:

Yes, because the I say yeah, because the, the, the fashion trend is changing for the customer itself. They don't want to do fast fashion anymore. So maybe they will. Maybe rebrand, let's say. Maybe they can be fast fashion thats not fast, like slow down a little bit because people care more about the world, yeah. Not me, but like someone else, younger generation.

Interviewer:

So only if they want to, they can change if they want to, you mean?

Participant:

That I think H&M they change because the customer, don't want them to be the fast fashion..

Interviewer:

So only change because the customer wants to. Yeah, interesting. Interesting. Very interesting. Ah. OK, which campaigns do you prefer? Could you rank them?

Participant:

I think Nestle is going to be number 1. Mm-hmm. And then number 2 is gonna be the, what is that, Unilever? Third. I think H&M. Yes. And then Apple going to be last.

Interviewer:

Oh, interesting.

Participant:

Yeah, my ranking is fucked up right?

Interviewer:

Could you explain why you ranked them like that?

Participant:

OK, I think I put Nestle at first. Nestle they cooperate with the farmer, like with the supplier. Right. So if they put, I think it's easier because Nestler and the supplier have some kind of benefit together. So, and Nestle is a big company. If theyset some kind of regulations. OK, you have to do the farm like this. You have to do and reduce carbon dioxide emission like this, so we can buy your product. So I think the farmer will adapt, will adapt when will adapt and then we can do this with Nestle.

Unilever that I think they do more in the packaging of the product. So, I think it's. easy like your company, you change the product. And for H&M. I think they do the something like reuse the clothes right, that you can bring the recycled clothes. I think it's. Yeah. I don't know. I don't know. Like, I think it's easy. It's just so easy and you can. bring their own clothes and then you get discount from H&M. Is is it look like Apple but an Apple kind of bullshit because. How can I say? Would you give me?

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah. Take time.

Participant:

I don't know. I feel like because the product is not expensive. So for the H&M, so I can feel like it's easier for that compared to Apple to make it sustainability. How can I say that?

Interviewer:

What do you what do you mean? What do you? Want to say?

Participant:

Ohh, let let let let me let me let me think. Let me think. My brain is dying.

Interviewer:

Yeah, no problem. No problem, no problem.

Participant:

Yeah, fast fashion, right? But at the same time, you can likely use or tthe products and you. Yeah. I don't know. Like I I have. I I only I I really hate Apple because that kind of promotion. So I I really hate them like you try to like. Yeah, we do it for you. But it's, Apple make me feel like you didn't make it for me. There, but I rank them to the last one.

Interviewer:

OK, got it. Yeah, I see what you mean, yes.

Interviewer:

Which campaigns do you think are done out of real concern for the environment?

Participant:

I would say the one is with the farm. I think it's Nestle. Hmm. Yeah, because this, because in the Netherlands they also have the problem about the pollution from the farm. Like so in the Netherlands, they try to stop farming because they have a lot of, like, emission of carbon dioxide. So I think Nestle maybe comply with the this kind of regulation that really happened right now in the Netherland or in the Europe in over the world. That maybe come from the concern of the real environment issue from what I think. Unilever is also, yeah, the packaging. But other two H&M and Apple? I don't think so. They they just want to fix thei image. That's it.

Interviewer:

OK. So you think Apple and uh, H&M is for fixing their own image? Yeah. Seeing their own image. Interesting. And you mentioned that Unilever is also the same because they want to comply with regulations or why they?

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I think so, because in the NL, you know, , the plastic packaging, they have some kind. Of. Strict regulation or?

Interviewer:

Ah yes.

Participant:

Yeah, OK. Got it. With that kind of thing.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Awesome. Wow, OK, you answered the other questions already. So we're moving to closing. OK. OK. Awesome. Are there any comments you would like to make



regarding the PR campaigns that you've already seen? Any minor details, thoughts, opinions are appreciated.

Participant:

I don't know for me like CSR sometime it's kind of bad marketing plan for me, if you like, you are fixing, in my thought. It's like, ohh, you already fucked up thing and then, I will fix it. And in my thought in my thoughts. So that is. What I think about the CSR like, you try to be good, but like, you already did something bad already. How about you don't do something bad from the beginning?

Interviewer:

Is there anything else you'd like to share regarding the topic we discussed today?

Participant:

Nope. Nothing anymore.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Thank you for your time.

#### **Participant 4**

Interviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal of this study is to understand which individual factors and message characteristic that affects the consumers evaluations of genuineness of sustainability, PR campaign. Now I already receive your consent form, so I'm pretty sure you're aware of all your rights that it's completely anonymous and. I will take notes. This will be voice recorded and you are free to skip any question or end the interview at any.

Time. Uh. Awesome. Great. Let's get started. So I'm just going to start with some basic demographic data. So how old are you?

Participant:

I'm 26..

Interviewer:

What is your nationality?

Participant:

Chinese.

Interviewer:

What is your occupation?

Participant:

Student and waitress.

Interviewer:

OK, there will be three sets of question in this interview and the second set of question there will be 3 subsets of questions, but each of them only contains a few short questions, so it shouldn't be too long. OK. The first one, it's going to be, you know, just an overview to just to see if you're familiar with the topic of today, OK. And my first question is, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Yeah, I heard of it. It's basically if they care about anything other than the lucrative part. So they don't only focus on earning money, but they also care about. How their product or service affect their society and they take responsibility of it.

Interviewer:

Are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

I think it means two way. It can mean sustainability and for the environment. But it can also mean the business model if it's sustainable. Enough for them to last for a long time, but the business will last for a long time.

Interviewer:

Great. When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

About making some advertisement or doing some promotion thing like newspaper news article like those kind of thing to make people feel like they are a sustainable company and care about sustainability. I guess it means more like environmental sustainability.

Interviewer:

Yes, and that would be the topic of our interview today. What are your thoughts on campaigns like this?

Participant:

Yeah. Like sometimes you cannot tell whether it's whether it's just for PR purposes, they just want the people to want themselves to look like that, to look that good, or they are actually doing those kind of things.

Interviewer:

Does it mean that you feel confused?

Participant:

Yeah, confusion. But I feel like I would definitely be affected by this kind of Information. I will feel like they are taking care of the environment to some extent.

Interviewer:

Can you give an example of such campaigns that you have seen before?

Participant:

I feel like especially when I when I was trying to apply for job, I would go to their company website and they always have a page for social responsibility and they always have a section for how sustainable they are. I worked at Bosch before. And they, uh, emphasize that a lot, but I didn't feel much while I was working. But that's what they been telling people.

Interviewer:

Could you give more examples of what the campaign at Bosch is like?

Participant:

For example, so they will make some video to let people know how the company is like like those like 2-3 minute video and they would like at some point they would talk about what

product or how they produce those products like the factory line, how they manage it to be sustainable, to be good for the environment. This kind of thing.

Interviewer:

I'm going to send you something. Don't open any of the links yet, so as you can see I have prepared links from four different companies have you don't open any of them yet. Just some quick questions. Firstly, have you heard of these companies before?

Participant:

Yes, all of them. Yes, all.

Interviewer:

Could you quickly tell me what you know about each corporation?

Participant:

Apple is famous for their electronics product. iPhone. iPad. Mac. iPod. And then Nestle is a like a food brand. They have coffee and different kind of drinks. Maybe also food. I don't recall. OK. And Unilever., it's like PNG they have like everything basically. Skin products, shampoos. Yeah, just the product people use every day. And H&M is a fashion brand, fast fashion brand.

Interviewer:

OK, uh now, uh, I will quickly explain. Explain what the links are for. So as you can see for example with Apple there's only one link. That means that every single information about their sustainability PR campaign is within that link. OK, for the other three companies, the reason why we have four different links is because they didn't put all information of the same campaign into one website, but rather spread it out into like sublinks.

Interviewer:

Within the website. So instead of making you having to click through certain things, I just took the liberty and put the links out for you. So after you finish reading content of this website. Just move on to the next website and know that they are from the same. Campaign. OK. You do not have to click anything or download anything or read anything that is not relevant to. What is the main content on the website? Am I making sense? OK, so just take as much time as you need. Go through all of them. You don't have to memorize.

Interviewer:

Anything because you will have access through it throughout the interview to refer back to if you need anything. Yeah. Basically just try to go through it, see what they say, their goals, their value is what they have been doing, what they are planning to do.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Now, based on what you have read, now we're going to evaluate each company a one by one. OK? So based on what you have read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign is about?

Participant:

Uh, so Apple? It's about. They are all about sustainability. Apple, Apple it's about like, can I look back?

Interviewer:

Yes, of course. OK.

Participant:

Let me see. Yeah, Apple, it's about. What they did to make the whole. Flow of producing the product a more sustainable. And then they also have some examples. But I feel like it's the same for every. For everyone, for every campaign, and they all give the same they all give people tips on how to help them to be a sustainable company. Have to join the action like things like that. And they're talking about the technology they use and what they have accomplished and what they are going to do.

Interviewer:

What about the other three?

Participant:

Nestle. It's more about on a production site it's more about. Bio something something I don't remember. It's more I feel like for Apple it's more like the technology side, but for Nestle it's more about like green, in the forest. and how people in the farm can do it more sustainable. Unilever has a similar approach. They also talk. About the same thing like bio something something biotechnology. H&M it's more general. I feel like they're talking about climate, water, biodiversity, but then they also go specific into their product line. It's also how they're going to make the production of all the clothes more sustainable and also tell people where you can go to recycle your clothes.

Interviewer:

Do you think that what they are saying in the campaign are relevant to the companies?

Participant:

I think so because they are being quite specific about. I feel like being specific. It's very important to give the a feeling that it's relevant instead of just talking about something really broad. Maybe for the H&M something they say it's because. they're talking about water, a little bit broader than the others..

Interviewer:

Do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits what they are trying to address?

Participant:

What do you mean?

Interviewer:

Well, you already read about things that they are doing and stuff. Do you think the actions that they do, the activities that they do fit what they are focusing on?

Participant:

Yeah, I feel like, yeah. I mean at the same time. I also feel a bit suspicious about it. I feel like are they actually doing it especially for H&M, because we heard a lot of bad news about fashion brands in general. So towards I, I feel like they are quite relevant and also what they say it is. What was the question again?

Interviewer:

Do what they do fit what they're trying to address?

Participant:

Yeah, I feel like from what they tell us it it. I feel like that, but it's just like I don't know if, like, actually they are doing that. Yeah.



Interviewer:

Great. OK. Is there any specific part in the campaign, in the text or image that you see that made you think so?

Participant:

For example for Apple, I feel like it's it's always, it's about all the details they provide. Like the more details they provide, they give us the feeling of ohh they're actually doing it. Uh, because like, for example, Apple, they are talking about really specific thing. For example, in the RECO you have in the recover recovery phase they are talking about a robot they create to make the recycle thing more efficient like these kind of details and then also the numbers they gave like Nestle, they gave a lot of numbers and also. Unilever also gave numbers and also nice video. I also like the video, but I realize HN, H&M, it's more general than the other three. They don't give a lot of they. They do have some numbers, but but maybe it's the way they put it, like it doesn't give a feeling that they are. You know, they're not doing as good as the other three companies. But maybe it's also because I have the pre-existing thought about fashion brand being bad in doing sustainability thing.

Interviewer:

So do you have any past experience with any of these companies as a consumer?

Participant:

With Apple yes, H&M, yes, Nestle, yes. And Unilever, yes. So all, yes, yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. How was your experience with them generally?

Participant:

Apple. Very nice. Although the products sometimes have some small bugs, but in general it's really nice. And also I heard that the service also really good. I feel like I don't have that much contact with the people working there, but more of the product and then the products are fine. I use the lip balm all the time from Unilever, and Nestle I cannot recall because I feel like it's a long time ago I bought product from them in China but not here anymore. It's mostly like I think they also have milk tea or something like that. Yeah, just, just more like a more neutral feeling and for and H&M. Yeah, it's. It's it's kind of like buying things from China and like we know fast fashion is not good, but we will still go buy it because it's cheap and they all have they, they have like various style of clothes. But I I also feel like they are promoting that they care about sustainability. Also make me feel a bit better to buy things from their shop. It's kind of like lying to myself, although I feel like maybe it's not true, but maybe they're actually doing something. You know, you never know, OK.

Interviewer:

So how often do you buy from this brand?

Participant:

Apple not very often, maybe. Once every 3-4 years. When I need to change my phone and Unilever may be quite often a few times a year because, you know, like shampoo, lip balm, you always have to change it like everyday stuff. And Nestle, I I cannot recall the last time I bought things from them and H&M last year. Yeah. I go to second hand shop more often now, because they are cheaper.

Interviewer:

What do you think of them as corporations generally? Basically, I'm asking, do you think that they're trustworthy?

Participant:

Trustworthy. Uh. Apple, yes. Unilever, it's all right. It's a difficult question. Nestle. I don't know much about Nestle, so I don't know how to say, how to talk, yeah. Let's see. H&M, I think H&M may be the worst among all of them, but the all the previous contacts are with them. They were all pretty good. Yeah, it's just, uh, it's just the sustainability part. I don't know if I do care that much about it, but you know, as decent human being you do, you have to care a little bit about it. So in this way, I should say, H&M is the worst.

Interviewer:

Is there any reason that you have that that influenced this opinion, whether they're trustworthy or not, or they're a story behind it?

Participant:

Uh, I think not like story per se, but it's more like what people talk about them. It's like, yeah, people all been talking about fashion brand. We always see different kind of articles or like social media posts about how fashion, how bad fashion brand is especially fast fashion brand, how not sustainable they are. The whole industry, not even the one specific company. It's the whole industry. So I feel like if we're talking about sustainability, you just automatically think that fashion brand, they won't do any good for the, for the, for the Earth. And Unilever, they have so many products. So I I feel like we we we all would be a little bit suspicious about it too. Because they have so many products and then. And Nestle, I don't know much about it, so. I can't say anything, but I do vaguely remember I heard something bad about them? But I don't remember what exactly. It's also about like, uh, production, something like that. And Apple, I do feel Apple has a really good uh brand uh evaluation in general. For people because they have good product and then they also emphasize sustainability a lot. Yeah, but maybe recently people

have worse brand evaluation. Because they're creating products, but not much has changed. Every time they release a new phone. Yeah, but in general I. Feel like Apple is fine.

Interviewer:

Before participating in this study, have you ever considered these brands as green sustainable or any similar attitudes?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Why not?

Participant:

It's just when when I think about them, I won't connect them with green directly. Maybe they do. If I think carefully, I will. I will, I realize. Ohh. Maybe they they do have something to do with sustainability, but it's not the thing that you would directly think about. When we talk about Apple, when we talk about Unilever, Nestle or H&M, especially H&M, it's like the opposite of sustainability.

Interviewer:

Before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

Yeah, I feel like more or less, yeah. Because in my perception, all the all these kind of big companies they have, they always have a section about sustainability. They always talk about sustainability and always trying to do something about sustainability.

Interviewer:

Great.

Participant:

I feel like especially Apple and H&M because I feel like I have most contact with them and I know hmm, they have a big box in their store. You can recycle clothes there, although I don't know if they actually recycle it, but I know you can sometimes get discount if you go recycle there. And I also know Apple always have the recycle plan for your phone.

Interviewer:

Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability? No, no, no.

Participant:

I mean, I mean, I mean I do want to care about it, but I'm not rich enough to actually care about it. I am doing the most I can do. During my own situation and maybe I do care about sustainability but just not that much.

Interviewer:

Is there a specific area that you focus on?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more?

Participant:

Oh wait, I think I do because I recycle stuff, not recycle. But I will separate the the trash. I will separate trash. Yeah. Although I'm not doing it pretty, pretty good. But I'm separating plastic and paper stick. Do I choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable when shopping? No, because they're always more expensive. Yeah. It's like the same thing as pinktax. If they say ohh, it's for women, it's always more expensive. If it's green, it's always more expensive. You can even tell from their packaging. Because they have to be green, so they have to like buy more expensive. The thing to create a product, but it's just more expensive that I cannot afford. Maybe when I'm rich, I care more about it.

Interviewer:

Is there is there an example of a product that like you remember that has like a normal version and a green version but like in the end you still choose the normal version?

Participant:

If a bio product can be considered as a green product, like in the supermarket, they always have bio version and the regular version bio version is always more expensive, yeah.

Interviewer:

So do you consider whether a brand in general is sustainable before purchasing from it?

Participant:

Yeah, I think maybe. Yeah, I think. I do. But it's more like, when you think about brand, there are different metrics and then sustainability would be one of them, but it won't be the main. It won't be the the only thing I care about. It won't be the main thing I care about. It's more like if they are sustainable then they can have maybe plus one point or something like that.

Interviewer:

Do you think what is portrayed in the campaign the campaign is in line with your personal values and if yes, in which way?

Participant:

I do think so because my personal value is that I want to be a nice person and being sustainable is one way to be a nice person. So if they are doing that event and I am buying product from them, then at least I feel good myself, I feel like, oh, they're supporting they they're doing something to make the world better, which make me the same kind of person, you know. It's like when you buy a product, although you don't care about sustainable thing in the beginning, but then when you are using it and then you read something about that, but you will feel good, you feel like, oh, I'm supporting this.

Interviewer:

Is there any specific parts that evokes emotions so it could be positive, negative, neutral emotions, but like, yeah, just. Is there any specific part when looking at it that you have emotions?

Participant:

I think especially the video in Unilever. But I feel. Like it's because the the the, the video itself, the music, the way they say it. They make you feel ohh .

Interviewer:

Oh, So what exactly do you view? What exactly do you feel? What emotion?

Interviewer:

Excited. A little excited to be a part of this action. I also feel good, I would say. In general, I feel the best about Apple because they don't have that much text and I don't really, uh, read that much and they have really good structure of everything they tell. But then I have some negative feeling about reading the other pages because too much text especially Nestle. Too much text. And some of them are so small and make it difficult to read.

Interviewer:

What exactly is the negative feelings? Could you give a name?

Participant:

Annoyed. Oh, wait, I think there's a better word. Irritated. Yeah, just because there's too much text. Yeah. But I also feel good. About the thing they do, just reading them.

Interviewer:

What exactly do you mean by feel good?

Participant:

Feeling touched a little bit like this big company. They do care about the society, but at the same time also fee a bit suspicious.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaign has really achieved what they say they have achieved?



Participant:

Apple. Maybe 70%. Because a lot of details are given and numbers. And generally the good feeling maybe also affect my judgment.

Interviewer:

Good feeling. So where where did the other 30% go?

Participant:

Yeah, it's just me being a little bit suspicious about it. So I would give it some room. I don't know if they're actually doing it, but I would say 70% and for Unilever, yeah. Maybe 60 to 70. I would say. Yeah. Nestle, a little bit lower, but also around the same. And H&M's, I don't know. I think they will, they are doing the worst among all of them.

Interviewer:

Interesting. So which part of the website that makes you think so? Don't focus on the website for now. Not OK. External factor.

Participant:

OK. I feel like for Apple it's the. All the icon, it's just the general design, very clear. They tell everything very clear. So it's I feel like it's more accessible for me to read everything. I think that's the most important part about my evaluation, because it's most accessible, most easy to read. And they highlight everything they have. They highlight every important parts like the numbers. And the stuff they do. A lot of images, yeah, accessible. And I think Nestle is the least accessible one because some of the texts are really small and they don't do that good on color coding. Because they are all using green. And they just put a chunk of text there. Yeah. And it's

sometimes it's difficult to find the thing they want to emphasize. And I think H&M is doing alright, but it's also just a lot of text.

Interviewer:

What about Unilever?

Participant:

Unilever. They're not doing better than Apple, but they are doing better than the other two because it's also the color they use, the way they structure the the page. Also the the font they use.

Interviewer:

So any reason outside of what is seen on the website that also makes you evaluate them like that?

Participant:

Yeah, I I feel like just the uh general, what people think about these, everything I read before, good news, bad news about them.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaign will really achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

I think they are on their way because some of them, they show them, they show the number compared like 2023 comparing to 2022 and then you can see a big progress. So it will make me feel like they will continue to have this progress in the future too. Yeah. I feel like for H&M is the recognition that they at some point they say that actually we are not doing that good,

but we are going to do this. So it's the acknowledgement of they are not doing that good right now and saying that we need to cooperate together to make the supply chain better, better way shifting the whole paradigm that they have right now. So it's like the acknowledgement of what they are not doing good so well right now. And for Unilever? I can't recall that much anymore and need to... Yeah, I feel that this one is a little similar like they talk about the challenge that they have and then the plan, what they're going to do in the future, the goal they set up.

Interviewer:

Any reason outside the website that also made you think so that they will achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

Not really. I think for Apple and H&M, it's about the recycle box that they have and the recycle plan that they have in Apple for phone and recycle box in H&M stores.

Interviewer:

Which campaigns do you prefer? Could you rank them?

Participant:

It will be the first one, Apple. Second one, Unilever. Third one, Nestle. And H&M is the last.

Interviewer:

Could you quickly explain why you ranked them like this?

Participant:

I think it's the same as what I said before. It's more like the way they structure it and the way they make it accessible for people.

Interviewer:

Now which campaign do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and why do you think so?

Participant:

I feel like they all give me the feeling of that. Because as I said, they they give a lot of details of what they did, what they're going to do. And all the the those words that I don't know, like biodiversity, deforestation free, like this kind of word.

Interviewer:

So you do not think that there is any campaign here that is not done out of real concern for the environment?

Participant:

I feel like, hmm, maybe because of the. I feel it's half and half. Half, half like half like part of them, maybe they actually care about the environment, but part of them is just for the PR purpose just to look good and for H&M, I will be more suspicious because of how the world talk about them.

Interviewer:

Is there any comments you'd like to make regarding the PR campaign samples that you've already seen for example and in minor detailed thoughts opinions?

Participant:

I would just say it's better to do it like Apple in one page and then just highlight all the important stuff. Don't put chunk of text because I don't think, if their purpose is to show it to their customers, I don't think the customers will actually review everything.

Interviewer:

Anything else you'd like to share about the topic we discuss?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Awesome. That would be all. Thank you for your time.

#### **Participant 5**

Interviewer:

OK. Well, thank you for participating in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and corporate social responsibility message characteristic will affect your evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign. So I already have your consent form. I'm pretty sure you're already informed about all your rights. It's going to be anonymous. I will voice record this and you can skip question or end the interview anytime. All right, let's get started. So just some basic demographic data. First, how old are you?

Participant:

I'm 23.

Interviewer:

What is your nationality?

Participant:

I'm Moldovan and Romanian.

Interviewer:

Moldovan and Romania. And what is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm a student.

Interviewer:

Great. OK, so there will be three sets of question in this interview. The second set will be slightly longer because we will be going through some of the links and also there are three subsets of question. But either way it's only going to be a few questions. In each set, so it won't take too much time. OK, the first set we're going to ask a few questions just to see if you're familiar with the topic. So my first question is, are you familiar with the term 'corporate social responsibility'?

Participant:

Not really.

Interviewer:

What do you think it is about?

Participant:

Corporate social responsibility. Maybe the responsibility that companies have over providing. Like good products or like uh, for the people, for the customers.

Interviewer:

Are you familiar with the term 'sustainability' in a corporate setting?

Participant:

I guess, yes.

Interviewer:

OK. What do you think it is about?

Participant:

So if they say that the company is sustainable, then they have to prove them proof right about like what they're doing to make the company sustainable.

Interviewer:

Awesome. When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

So promoting the companies, not sustainability to the customers, the customers know that the company is sustainable and what steps they're taking to be sustainable.

Interviewer:

What kind of activities do you think is usually included in campaigns like that?

Participant:

[prolonged silence]

Interviewer:

No problem. Could do you remember seeing any similar campaigns like that before?

Participant:

I did have an elective about sustainability where we had to look into greenwashing and find companies that do that. So in that case, I kind of researched a bit about that topic.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Any company that particularly stand out for you?

Participant:

It was H&M and there was this coffee company called Keurrig.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So. Good thing you also looked into H&M because it is one of our companies today. OK, so that is the first set of questions already done. Thank you. Now, moving on to the second set, before we start, as you can see, I've already sent you 13 links. There are four companies, and for each set of links they all belong to the same sustainability PR campaign. It's just for example in Apple you see they only have one link. That's because they put all the information in one website. Sometimes the information they just keep putting it into sub links and sublinks and sublinks. So that's why we unfortunately have to link four of them, but they all belong to the same campaign. So later when you go through it, please just focus on the text and the image that is like the main part of the page. On the website, you don't have to worry about. Like any downloadable reports or any other links that leads to somewhere else. In other words,



you do not have to click anything, just go through each of them and basically read what it's on there. Participant:

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Just one quick question. You see: Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Are you familiar with these four companies?.

Participant:

Uh, I'm familiar with Apple, Nestle and H&M, not with Unilever..

Interviewer:

Could you quickly tell me which industry the the other three companies in?

Participant:

Sorry, what industry they're in? Yeah. So Apple is technology, Nestle is like consumer because I don't know. Yeah. And H&m is retail. .

Interviewer:

Now please take as much as you as much time as you need and just go through all of them. And while you do so, you don't have to memorize them. Just quickly go through and see what they what they say their value is what their goal is, what they say they have done, what they say they will do. And yeah, just basically go through that and then later I will ask you some questions about them and you can always go back to double check if they actually did that or say that or not. So yeah, no pressure to memorize and take as long as you need.

Participant:

And do I just do all of them at once?

Interviewer:

Yes.

Participant:

OK. Perfect.

Interviewer:

OK, based on what you've read, we're going to evaluate them one by one. So based on what you've read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign is focused on?

Participant:

Uh, well, I noticed uh that Nestle, Unilever and H&M focused a lot on agriculture especially. Uh, and in Apple, I feel like. They focus more on like recycle than renewable material, so like to minimize the footprint.

Participant:

And I feel like in for Apple they actually like, let's say what they achieved. And like give proof of it, whereas the other ones it's mostly like their aims and stuff like that.

Interviewer:

Mostly aims great. Now do you think that what they are saying in the campaign are relevant to the companies?

Participant:

Definitely for Apple, yes, for sure. UM. Yeah, I feel like for Apple and for H&M, it was pretty, pretty relevant because it was about what they actually sell. So like clothes or technology work for, I mean for Nestle as well, kind of. But they also went into like a lot of general information, I feel like. So it was not specific to what they do. And you know well, as I said, I don't really know the company so.

Interviewer:

Unilever actually for produce fast moving consumer goods. So think of other brands like Dove and like basically shampoos, toothbrush, toothpaste like all of those things that we use, they are all they all, even though they're in different brands, they all belong to Unilever.

Participant:

Ohh.

Interviewer:

Why do you think Apple h&M are more relevant than the others?

Participant:

Because uh, they actually focus on the products they sell. And for example, Apple already like they what what they've done so far for example, they said that more than 97% of their packaging is already fiber based, so it's like not an aim, but what they already did. Umm. And H&M. I mean, they didn't do as much progress I feel like, but at least they all have, like, specific goals. For example, to go more into a circular. UM, what's it called like? UM, circular approach. Their industry like has operated in a linear way, like for example making the clothes and then weighting them, and now they're trying to like not just waste all the garment, but reuse them and recycle them.

Interviewer:

Do you think what they are doing like the activities that they are doing fit what they what they are trying to address?

Participant:

I feel like for Apple, yeah. And then H&M, Not completely sure. Same for Nestle, it's mostly like their aim more than what they actually did. And they do talk a lot about biodiversity and nature. But specific activities I'm not sure.

Participant:

I mean they they also put like difference from 2022 and 2023? That, like the key ingredients they source from farmers like, are more regenerative now. But yeah, but again still it's mostly aim after that.

Interviewer:

Does it mean that do you mean that they do not give you enough numbers?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah. Of what they actually have now they like, they give a lot of numbers for their aim. But not what they actually have done so far.

Interviewer:

What about the other two?

Participant:

So Unilever also, they have very specific goals which is good because the majority says like by 20-30 whereas H&M. I think their goals were like goals. So by 2040 a lot of them. Alright. Hmm. And regarding their activity. They yeah, they have, like the Unilever Sustainable Agriculture code. So apparently it was their tool to sustainably store like their material so they are implementing this. And then they also had regenerative agriculture. Like, those are principle, yes, so basically. Oh, this is part of their sustainable agriculture initiative platform. OK. And for H&M? I mean, they just say that they worked in 2021 with, like several partners on keeping workers in the loop which wa moving to a circular fashion system. And creating a fair, inclusive fashion industry. But other than that, I don't think like they give a lot of. achievements of what they've already done and machinability.

Interviewer:

Do you have any past experience as a consumer with any of these brands?

Participant:

Oh yes, most of them.

Interviewer:

So generally, how was your experience?

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

With them. With with the company I mean. With yeah, with their product, with the company.

Participant:

The company specifically. Yet, to be honest, I've had a fair my fair experience with all of them. I didn't run into problems or anything like this.

Interviewer:

How often would you say do you buy from these brands?

Participant:

So I guess most often would be univalent or I don't know if it's Unilever, Unilever, yeah, Unilever, sorry. And H&M. OK.

Interviewer:

Do you think these corporations are trustworthy?

Participant:

Yeah, that's what I'm not sure about because. I feel like all of them do take a lot of aim that they want to achieve, but they also you can also just be greenwashing. Except the H&M. I'm not sure about that one.

Interviewer:

Any reason why you don't particularly trust H&M?

Participant:

H&M's based on what I've read about them more than like my own experience, you know.

Interviewer:

Before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green, sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Uh, yes, I already knew about Apple that they're trying to be sustainable and about Nestle. Yes, I think also. But yeah, the other ones. No, not really.

Interviewer:

No. Great. Uh. How did you know about apples and uh, Nestle being a green company?

Participant:

Based on mostly ads. OK, awesome.

Interviewer:

OK, so that also answers my next question already. So, OK, moving on, do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

Uh, yes, I would say so.

Interviewer:

Is there any specific areas or focus that you care about when it comes to sustainability?

Participant:

For example, electricity. And like I do try to like not travel by car for example, or yeah by other means of transport, but mostly like by bike, especially in the Netherlands or like walking.

Also, I'm trying not to eat as much meat. And using less water like the less water as possible basically.

Interviewer:

When you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or more sustainable?

Participant:

Not really, no.

Interviewer:

Is there a reason why?

Participant:

Well, for H&M, I wouldn't really know because they don't say that. Like for a specific product. But yeah, I guess I I just don't really pay attention to that.

Interviewer:

Do you usually consider whether a brand is green or sustainable before you choose to buy their product?

Participant:

Yes, usually I do some research about it. So for example there is this kind of new brand of clothing, mostly sportswear, it's called Pala. Every product, every piece of clothing is made from already like recycled material.

Interviewer:



Looking back at the campaigns that you already read, do you think what they express in the campaign is in line with your personal values? And if yes, in which way?

Participant:

Uh, with my personal values, you mean regarding sustainability? Yes. Umm. Well, yes, I would think so, especially because a lot of them stayed the importance of nature agriculture in preserving our ecosystem, right. So that's really important. And a lot of them also say like they're gonna their aim is to become like 0 carbon emission, which is really, really, really cool, so. I think those are the most.

Interviewer:

While reading through the campaign, is there any specific part that evokes any kind of emotion? It could be positive, negative, neutral, anything.

Participant:

The for example for Apple, they said that 12.8 million devices and accessories are sent to new owners for use. Like in uh 2023, worse than. Mm-hmm. Well, that's really, really cool.

Interviewer:

Would you say you're impressed?

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK. Anything else?

Participant:

That, for example Unilever, permit to invest €1 billion. I think they already invested it in the sustainability and climate in Nature Fund, which is really cool.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So I see that most emotions are quite positive. Is there anything that is more neutral or negative or not at all?

Participant:

Negative. I'm not sure because I mean, because they're mostly trying to portray a positive image of themselves. So I feel like it's kind of hard to find something negative.

Do you think that the campaign have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Participant:

For Apple, I think maybe not all of their aims yet, but I think yes. Nestle. I'm not sure about this one. I feel like they mostly just give their goal and not what they actually did. What country? Unilever, yes, I think so. H&M, no.

Interviewer:

Any reason why?

Participant:

Yeah, 'cause literally I feel like they didn't really do much progress in the the sustainability area.

Interviewer:

Is that evaluation based on what you've read on the website?

Participant:

Yeah. YAlso, because they literally just said what they've tried to improve so far, which was only the circular approach. Which that's already good, but they didn't. They also said that it's not even developed enough yet, so.

Interviewer:

Is there any external reasons that also influence your evaluation?

Participant:

Yeah, maybe I'm a bit biased for Apple. I don't know because I like it, but I I'm not sure.

Interviewer:

That's all right for Apple. We're human, after all. It could be a bit biased for Apple. OK, but not much for the other three companies.

Interviewer:

Do you think the campaigns will actually achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

Yes, but the problem is how am I gonna know? I think based on what Apple did so far, I think they actually will achieve their goals because they're pretty consistent with it.. I feel like Nestle and Unilever as well because they have like specific goals and they already like invested in many activities and actions to do so. I feel like so I can't really be sure. Umm. Based on just

what I read. UM. Yeah, and H&M I do believe they're gonna improve. Uh, like, there's this visibility, actions, especially with with the circular approach. So I think it's going to become better every year.

Interviewer:

Again, any other external influence in your life observations that made you think so? .

Participant:

Yeah. No..

Interviewer:

Which campaigns do you prefer? More? Could you rank them?

Participant:

I'll do Apple first. Then Unilever. H&M, and Nestle because I don't really consume their product, yeah. I think it's mostly how I how I use them like. How often I use them I guess.

Interviewer:

Which campaign do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and why do you think so?

Participant:

I feel like, oh. To be honest, I feel like most of them seemed pretty sincere about their sustainability goals and their concerns. But I'm not sure if that's just for PR or.... You know, like you can't really tell. I guess all of them to a certain extent.

Interviewer:

Is there any other comments you'd like to make regarding, you know, all of the links you already saw? Any minor details, thoughts, opinion?

Participant:

No, that was pretty interesting to read about.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Uh, anything else you'd like to share about the topic?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Thank you so much for your time.

## **Participant 6**

Interviewer:

OK. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. So the goal is to understand which individual factors and message characteristic that will affect the consumers evaluations.

Interviewer:

Of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign so. Yeah, I've already got your consent form, so that's great. And I'm sure you're aware that you know. Uh.

Participant:

About the contacts of the. 30.

Interviewer:

And as well as your rights that I will voice record this, you can skip questions and this and any time. Yeah, and everything will be anonymous, so.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Awesome. I'm just going to start this off with. OK, I'm just going to start this off with some basic demographic question. So how old are you?

Participant:

I'm 24.

Interviewer:

4. And what is your nationality?

Participant:

I'm from Vietnam.

Interviewer:

What is your occupation?

Participant:

While I'm currently working for the court.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK, so there will be three sets of question in this interview. The second set will have three subsets, but all of them are really short, so don't worry too much about it. The first set is going to go over just some overview to see whether you're familiar with the topic that we're doing today.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

First question, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Yeah, I think so.

Interviewer:

Could you try explaining it in your own words?

Participant:

Well, in my perspective, that term specifically means that the corporates try to enhance their image. About their responsibility toward social maybe people. Maybe environment. That's all that is all I understand about it.

Interviewer:

Great. Now, are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Could you briefly explain it in your own words?

Participant:

I think uh, it only happened in those big uh corporate or big company in some local companies in Vietnam, they don't. I don't think they usually care about those things, so they usually launch those sustainability campaign means that they will exclude some activities or programs to try to follow some purpose. For example, for the care of environment they will try to maybe decrease the amount of paper used in the corporate to protect the environment. Like the set of the the set of actions to pursue their purpose.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So have you heard of the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign?

Participant:

I think so.

Interviewer:

OK. What do you think of this about?

Participant:

I think they mostly care about their image and the popularity of the brand or the company they try to run those campaigns to like widely market their position in the market or some some company they actually care about the environment that I can see through their actions or those PR campaigns.

Interviewer:



Great. Now you mentioned there are some actions in. In. The campaign what do you think? Could you give me some examples of what those actions could be?

Participant:

OK, so I will not like specifically state any campaigns. I will say it in general for example. For example, a company care about the situation that people using water sources so they will launch a campaign that use theirr profit to try to find the source of water for the people and they show the images, their videos about their. Actions, for example, they could try to connect. To those people who have. UM, large amount of money and ask them to, you know, work with and then they will pursue the the source of water from somewhere else and then transfer those to the the area that need them like that.

Interviewer:

What are your thoughts on campaigns like this?

Participant:

I think it's cool. Like all the campaigns, you need to have purpose to do something right, and then those purposes may focus on the sustainability. So why not?

Interviewer:

Is there perhaps a a campaign from a specific company that comes into mind?

Participant:

Can I skip it? I don't remember.

Interviewer:

All right. Moving on to the second set, so I will now send you a list of link. Don't open them yet, I'm just going to explain something first. OK, good. So as you can see, I already sent you links a set of links, but they are from four different companies Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. So my first question which is don't open them yet. My first question would just be, have you heard of their names before?

Participant:

Thank you. Except for the last one, I'm familiar with those first one.

Interviewer:

You have never heard of H&M.

Participant:

H&M. OK, OK, I miss. Uh. Heard that? Now I know H&M, the candy company, right?

Interviewer:

Ah, no, H&M and the fashion brand.

Participant:

Uh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm sorry. Yeah. The fast fashion brand that compete. With Zara, right?

Interviewer:

Yes.

Participant:

Interviewer:

OK, that's good. Quickly. Could you tell me what you know about each company?

Participant:

For Apple, I use all the gadgets from that brand. I was an Apple lover for since I was like 5 years old when I first used the iPhone 3. I swear to myself that when I grow up, I will use all the gadgets from Apple. And the second company, can you please remind me, Nestle. Yeah, Nestle well. Well, yeah, When I was in high school, I used. I used to drink Milo a lot. Unilever, Consumer products, right? They own like most of the brands on the market. And H&M I wasn't really shocked there. When when it comes to the past, H&M used to support China when they had the wrong action to our country, Vietnam. So I even think about shopping there. And I don't even follow their any of their campaigns or actions on social media.

Interviewer:

OK, so I'm going to quickly explain the explain the links before you move on. So as you see here for Apple, for example, there's only one link. That's because their entire campaign and all the information is in that link. Nestle, on the other hand, they have the we have four different links because for example in link a that is the first page that is like the landing page of the campaign, and then each subsequent link is also from the same campaign. But like they put it on a sub web page. When you read through them, make sure you focus on the content. You do not have to click on anything else or download anything. Please just focus on the content itself. So you will have as much time as you need to go through all of them. Focus on what they say, their goal, their value, is what they have done, what they say they will do, and like any other relevant stuff. Don't worry about memorizing any of them. Throughout the interview, you will still have. Access to them and go back to look at them before answering my question. So for now, just take as much time as you need and read through them.

Participant:

OK. Interviewer:

OK, great. Awesome. Let's move back to the interview. Based on what you've read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign is focused on?

Participant:

Well, I was mostly impressed by Apple, uh. Let's not let's let's not talk about uh your evaluation for now. For now, just like tell me what they are focused on based on what you've read.

Participant:

Well, so Apple, they focus on their products. Like their campaigns, I can mostly see that, uh, they PR by their products like they said that uh, our products will be our confirmation for our purpose, like that? And Nestle global, they focus on human. And uh, I think uh climate change and protecting the nature. Like about the environment and people. For Unilever, I think they are interested in plastic reduction and agricultural supply chains, something about farming and human rights. For the H&M. I think they think they're mostly concerned about the climate transition plan and social impact. Like the wages and their workers representation in the supplier production.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great now. Do you think the campaigns are relevant to the companies?

Participant:

Yeah. I think so. First one for H&M. They used to be claim about the action toward the workers for payment and the poor working condition. Now they talk about their sustainability program, they focus on being equal. They want to change in the, you know,

industry. They focus on their workers more like it. It feels like they are trying to say that we made mistakes and now we want to change it. So even though we are a fast fashion brand, we really want to. Enhance our position in protecting the environment. Like that. From Unilever? Uh, because they are, they have like consuming products, so they mostly focus on production? I think so. Because they have a lot of brands in the consumer goods market, so they, they. I don't know how. To say it. I'm not really sure about Unilever I think their campaign is kind of not really stating out anything and not impressed me a lot. So can I move to Nestle? So I think Nestle do the right thing because they are F&B industry, so they focus on the nature and their materials. I think I was mostly concerned about the raw materials that they are aiming because like all the things we consume. It needs to be in the good standard for our health. So the focus on the raw materials, which is good and they also focus on waste reduction because. F&B is kind of large and uh, we consume food everyday. And I think the package, uh, from the goods, it are a lot so. By focusing on wage reductions, I think it's the right thing to do and it's relevant to their aim. For Apple, I think this is the most clear and transparent campaign because they let the product speak out. Because they manufacture electric electronical gadgets so they focus on, you know, reduction in emissions. Because I know that in the manufacturing progress. They will usually like emit a lot of CO<sub>2</sub>, so they want to cut out on that footprint and that's good. And the products I was, I was impressed by this detail. They said that they focused on recycled. And renewable materials and as you know that when they launch their new products like the products like iPhone 15. Uh, they mention a lot, uh the design and about the material that could help the environment. So I think it's relevant to the campaign.

Interviewer:

Do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits what they are trying to address?

Participant:

As they show, I think so. But but if but if for those people who are not really concerned about marketing, we're not really interested in learning about marketing. I think Apple is doing a good thing doing the good way, because all of the information that they want the consumer to know are well presented on one main page only. And they just need to scroll and then all the informations are in their mind.

Interviewer:

What about the other three companies?

Participant:

Well, because other companies, if I'm a lazy person, I will not like, tend to click on another pages that lead to other datas. I want other datas on one main page only. For example like Apple they give. Or, uh, the clue on the page. Like, OK, how many percent? Uh, what the exact amount that they did. Or the for example, they said that over 55% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions across our carbon footprint since 2015. The data is already clear, transparent financially, they also gave. Uh. Later so I think. Yeah, it's clearer than Nestle and Unilever. I don't find comfortable looking on their page. So it the the information uh doesn't come into the my mind much. And H&M. Uh, I don't think that I can see any uh data on the main page and uh, what they said are in general, not really specific.

Interviewer:

Does it mean that you don't see any data that actually tells you what they are doing right now, so you could compare?

Participant:

On the on the main page at least. H&M said that they want to. Uh, focus on, say, and equal. And then I see some information. About biodiversity. Uh, about? For the circularity and climate, they said that they want to become the net zero across our value chain by 2014. Uh, and I see information about that statement too. So I think they. Or clearly know what they are saying. OK.

Interviewer:

That's the next question also done. OK, the next set of question is going to focus more about you. So do you have any past experience with any of these brands as a consumer?

Participant:

Yes, except for H&M, like I said.

Interviewer:

How often do you buy from them?

Participant:

For Apple, their products are usually. Not easy broken so. I use them like for a long time. I only pursue. Uh, I only pursue the products when I need. A new one. But for for. Your information I used the iPhone, iPad and MacBook and airports from this brand. It's kind of it can be counted as many, right?

Interviewer:

What about Nestle and Unilever?

Participant:

Nestle. I stopped buying things from Nestle for a while. Because now I don't want to consume uh F&B products that contain sugar in it anymore. Unilever, I usually buy. Let me check on their products. I think mostly I mostly. Pursue the makeup line from Unilever. Please wait a little bit. I think I am in love with Dolph exfoliation cream.

Interviewer:

What do you think of them as companies? Or other word. In other words, do you think they're trustworthy as a company?

Participant:

Because I used to learn about the companies. How they act when they comes to? Uh, social. So I don't think I can trust them all. Like, we cannot trust everything they said. What they want, what they want. Us to what they show us is what they wan us to see.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Umm. Now, before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green, sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Not really, to be honest.

Interviewer:

Not really. Why not?

Participant:

Because I mostly focus on the products. And I care about the environment. But not the way. Another way.



Interviewer:

Environment in other way. Great. Before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

I think I have heard of, though some of those campaign paints about sustainability.

Interviewer:

Which company specifically? Unilever and Apple, never an apple, could you? Could you quickly tell me what campaigns you heard about what they are like?

Participant:

Hmm. As I said, I read about the materials that made for those iPhone line and I know that they care about the environment, about the carbon dioxide emission cut out and for unit level. I heard some of those campaigns. That they. Uh. Donate to the people. When I was a kid, I'm not sure that I remember those clearly. Great.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Next one, do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

Actually yes.

Interviewer:

Great. Which area is there a specific area of sustainability that you care about more or you focus on more.

Participant:

I think human rights and Environmental Protection.

Interviewer:

Great. OK, now when you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

I think if.

Participant:

I'm the person who buy who like? I tend to. Judge a book by its cover, so I usually buy those products that have colorful, impressive packaging. And if I see some see some products that that are as I mentioned and they said that, OK, when you buy our product, we will try to save this thing this thing this thing I think I will choose them.

Interviewer:

Great. Is there an example of such case?

Participant:

I remember. I used to buy something from Nestle. Some FNB products, I'm not sure it's a cafe or something. And they said that they focus on fair trade, they support the farmer. They try to do the best skill of the money of wages for the farmer when they pursue the raw cafe like that.

Interviewer:

And that was the reason why you chose that specific product instead of.

Participant:

Yeah, I was impressed. By that information and I wanted the farmer to be treated fairly.

Interviewer:

Deliberately interesting. Great. Now, that was about the product, right? So now let's consider the brand as a whole before you buy something, do you consider whether that brand is sustainable or not?

Participant:

I don't think so.

Interviewer:

So only on the product but not on the brand.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Now do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns that you saw? Is in line with your personal values. I'm sorry. Do you think what? Do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns that you saw is in line with your personal value?

Participant:

Maybe, maybe.

Interviewer:

How so?

Participant:

For example, I I don't really like H&M, but they said that they focus on being equal. And then I read more about it. And I think, OK, I care about fair and equal too, and they're trying to fix the problem from the past.

Interviewer:

What about? Of the three companies.

Participant:

For apple. They focus on the material that made of that the products are made of. And they are good for the environment I care about the environment. And I'm afraid of the. The amount of carbon dioxide emissions, and they said that they try to reduce it as much as possible. So I think it's a lie to my interest.

Interviewer:

Nesting with leather.

Participant:

Nestle for Nestle. Next, focus on the raw materials. They aimed at 100% of the key religions volume to responsibility sources. I care about the farmer or tree. And how the materials are collected, so I think. Nancy is doing good thing, OK.

Interviewer:

Unit 11.

Participant:

Unilever. They care about human rights too. And. I have some friends that working for Unilever. And they said working at Unilever and not talking about any campaigns. But I'm talking about it in general. Because they said that they focus on the human rights and they focus on their workers, right? And in fact, some of my friends said that they are having good time working at the university, so I think. Uh, you know, level is right about what they said on the social media and on the uh page.

Interviewer:

Great. Now looking at the campaigns and what you read word, was there any part that evokes emotions? Anything positive, negative, neutral, any emotions?

Participant:

No. I don't feel anything. When I read the pages, I only care about the words the data. Their way of presenting, that's all.

Interviewer:

So does it mean that, let's say the text, the image and the way that it does not have any emotional impact on you?

Participant:

I'm not an emotional person.

Interviewer:

Not emotional person. Great.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Last set of questions.

Participant:

MHM.

Interviewer:

I think the campaign will achieve what they say they will achieve. Evaluate them one by one. Oh, sorry, I think I should start with the password. So do you think the campaign have actually achieved what they say they have achieved? Evaluate them one by one.

Participant:

Tired of hard for me to look? The individual. You mean? But I'm. I'm sorry. I'm not really understand about a set of questions like you want what you want me to do.

Interviewer:

Well, I I want to know about your feelings. Your evaluations. Do you think that, for example, Apple have actually achieved what they say they have achieved? And the same with Nestle, Unilever.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

For Apple, yeah. As I mentioned, they brings me the data and they said that 20% reduction in product transportation emission. It is accomplished compared to 2022, so it clearly

it clearly means that. They are just not saying they brings on brings in the actions. And for the past. Uh, I used to use uh. Several lines of uh, apples and. And even though they said about the materials they used to make the products on their pages and on the social media channels, I actually. Mentioned it in real life.

Interviewer:

What do you mean by that?

Participant:

They always say that their materials are easy to be recycled. And renewable. M. And they are. They made iPhone from. Titan. I think it's good. And. I would like to move to Nestle. UMI will only say the thing that I know. So Nestle said that they take care of people and communities. And in Vietnam, I mentioned people who works at Nestle. The same as Unilever, they said that working is Nestle is cool. And umm. I think I see some of the Nestle brochure or poster before that they. Sponsor for some programs that support kids to go to school like that. If I remember it correctly. And they said that they. Cut on the weights. Reduction they they focus on the waste reduction. And I read I read a little bit about that thing. And they said that our goal is that no pocketing ends up in landfills or as litter. And I think they have to like try harder for that. Uh, ambitious. A target.

Interviewer:

So you don't think? You have achieved what they say they have achieved yet.

Participant:

For this, for this aspect only, for the waste reduction aspect.

Interviewer:

For the wage reduction aspect, not really. OK, got it.

Participant:

Especially in Vietnam.

Interviewer:

Especially in Vietnam. OK.

Participant:

And for the Unilever, I think they did good on what they said about. Sorry, what is?

Interviewer:

It.

Participant:

Equity, diversity and inclusion.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm.

Participant:

Because like when I follow Unilever on social media media channels. I can see that. At the workplace. The workers are. Diversity. They can come from different countries, different genders, different ages like that.

Participant:



And for H&M. I I think the most serious thing that they did, and they said they did, is the worker. They said that.

Participant:

They want to. Sorry, wait, I need to find that information.

Participant:

OK, so he said that they want to provide fair jobs and equal treatment for everyone. And uh, I learned about the working conditions that they are providing. So they said that. They are responsible for 155,000 employees. And they are securing good working conditions for them. And I read through the quotes the confirmation that is set on the page and I think I agree with them on this one.

Interviewer:

Sorry, what? What did you say you read?

Participant:

About uh, information that they said about working conditions.

Interviewer:

On the website.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Interesting. So OK, I noticed that for Apple, Nestle and Unilever, you you're explaining your evaluation based on.

Interviewer:

Your real life observations and for H&M, you evaluate them based on what they say on the website, is that correct?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

OK. Interesting. Does it mean that for the for Apple, Nestle and Unilever, you did not consider what they say on the website at all?

Participant:

No, I'm trying to say that I am considering both of the factual factors and. The thing that is said on the website for those first free brands for H&M. The shop there, I never pursue any of their goods and I hate H&M for the wrong accent to our country, so I only evaluate their campaigns to their websites.

Interviewer:

Valuing via website. Interesting. OK, awesome. Now that was the pass. Now moving to the future, do you think the campaign will actually achieve what they say they will achieve? It's hard to say. Say, why do you think so?

Participant:

I'm not saying all of the campaigns are hard to be conducted in the future. But some of the the aspect is not like. Easily seeing the the result in a short amount of time. For example. For Nestle. They are saying that. Hold on, the website is loading. I think I will stick to the waste reduction only.

Interviewer:

So you say. Are you saying that you don't think they will achieve that in a short amount of time?

Participant:

Yeah. Honestly.

Interviewer:

Why do you not? Why? Why do you think they will achieve other? Like all the companies they will achieve other goals?

Participant:

Because I think so. For those later they give us and for the fact that they are, they are doing those aspects in good ways. I only criticize about waste reduction because. In my country, it's not easy to reduce the amount of waste.

Interviewer:

OK. OK. Which campaigns do you prefer? Could you rank them?

Participant:

Yeah. Obviously the first position is for Apple. Uh, next one is Nestle. Part One is you need the. The final one.

Interviewer:

Could you? Your rank.

Participant:

Well for. Apple, I already love the brand and the way they present the data and their what Commission. Are transparency. And for honestly. Uh, they also give the clear data and they the. The the aspects that I've that they are focusing on the campaign are aligned to what I am interested in. At the present. Unilever, I think they are the the the thing that I impress about them is mostly because they focus on people's human rights and diversity. For H&M, it's just my. Personal thing. I will always against them for their wrong action in the past. Toward my country.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Now, which campaign do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and why do you think so?

Participant:

Well, for the environment only because as far as I know, the climate change is caused by. The gas emission and something like that. And if we want to protect the environment, especially in for the climate aspect, we need to reduce the CAP for BOM footprint as much as possible and Apple is trying to do it. And they want to recycle and green. We use most of their thing, even though the material. And they I and they had launched one specific campaign for a while. For a long time ago that they said that we can exchange our old gadget to get new one and then they will recycle the old gadgets.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. Great. So. So do you think that? So what? The other three, do you think that they are done out of real, genuine concern as well? Or are they not?

Participant:

Yeah. I think so.

Interviewer:

So everyone, every every campaign is done out of real concern.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Done out of real concern. Interesting. Uh. Everyone of them is done out of real concern, right? OK, great. Great. OK, so.

Interviewer:

Have you ever seen a campaign that? You think is not done out of real concern. For the environment or for sustainability now, OK.

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

All of them come from the right concern. No, I mean in real life. Have you ever. Seen one? Yeah.

Participant:

I don't remember, to be honest.

Interviewer:

Can't recall. And non genuine concern. Great, OK, closing. Is there any other comments you'd like to make regarding the campaign samples that you've seen? Any minor details, thoughts, opinions are appreciated.

Participant:

I don't think so.

Interviewer:

OK. Anything else you'd like to share about the topic we discussed?

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Thank you for your time.

### **Participant 7**

Interviewer:

OK. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and also message characteristic that will affect your evaluation of the genuineness of some sustainability PR campaign and yeah, so. You've already received the consent form, so I'm sure you're aware of your rights that you're of course free to skip any question or end the interview at any. Time this meeting is voice recorded only I will take notes and of course everything will be completely anonymous. But if there's any questions, please feel free to let me know.

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK, thank you. Let's just get started. I'm going to start with some basic demographic questions. So could I ask, how old are you?

Participant:

I am 19 years old.

Interviewer:

19 awesome. And your nationality is.

Participant:

Vietnam.

Interviewer:

Vietnamese awesome and what is your occupation?

Participant:

I I don't understand it like.

Interviewer:

Like what do you do right now?

Participant:

I'm I'm just a.

Interviewer:

Student awesome student. Great. So there will be three sets of interview questions in this whole meeting. The second one is slightly longer because there will be 3 subsets of questions, but each of them only contains, I would say two or three questions. So it shouldn't be too long. Great. The first set of question, I'm just going to go over some overview question just to see if you're familiar with the topic. Great. So my first question would be, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility just?

Participant:

I quite familiar with these terms since lots of like companies is like promoting it. So yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. Could you try explaining the term in your own words?

Participant:

No. For my understanding that the terms mean that. The corporate like should have like. Due diligence or like some liabilities to promote and. Strengthen the communities in general. It can be in many. Fields.

Interviewer:

Great. Now, are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

From my understanding, I think that sustainability in corporate settings is how, how, how company. Try to make their product or. Now we'll try to make the product more greener, like more environmental friendly and yeah, that's that's how I understand.

Interviewer:



Great. When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

I think it is about the marketing strategies of the corporate and is trying to focus on how sustainable that the product is.

Interviewer:

Great. What do you think is usually what? Sorry. Let me rephrase that question. What activities do you think is usually include in a campaign like that?

Participant:

What activities? I'm not quite familiar with like that that peer campaign that. From my understandings, I think is will focus on recycle or like try to make the product winner itself like the materials and all the process.

Interviewer:

Yeah, great answer. Now what are your thoughts on campaigns? Like this?

Participant:

Uh, I think this company is, uh, mainly focused on people who have more income and they are more aware of environmental problems in the world or just in their nations, but they want to do something with it, and thus they. That's that's where the company is focus. At the same time, is most people who have lower incomes or like they, they just simply like cannot afford it, or they just simply don't don't care about it. Then like they just like, oh, OK, So what? Yeah.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. Have you ever seen such a campaign like this in real life? And if yes, is there any company that comes in mind?

Participant:

I do have some companies, but to come in mine in like such type of company, but I I not really like really remember it but.

Interviewer:

No problem.

Participant:

Yeah, I think. Like Nestle is like one of them. But yeah, I'm. I'm. I'm not sure.

Interviewer:

Interesting, because Nestle is also one of our samples today, so.

Participant:

Ah.

Interviewer:

Perfect. OK. That is the first set of questions. Then moving on the next set of question now you've already seen some of the links I already sent you don't open them yet, so there are four companies as you can see and each of each set of links belongs to one campaign.

Participant:

Yes, OK.

Interviewer:

That company, now the four companies I sent you are Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M.  
Have you heard of their names before?

Participant:

Yes, I do, yes.

Interviewer:

And could you quickly tell me what you know about each company?

Participant:

Oh, apple mainly. Focus on. Software of their product and also manufacture some part of the product mainly on computers, tablet and phones and other accessories nicely focused on dairies like. Milk and like, yeah, all that stuff. But they are bigger and I know about it, but I'm not quite sure, you know. Never in Vietnam, Unilever normally belongs to like centuries products. Like soap and all that stuff and Internet with clothes.

Interviewer:

Sorry, what?

Participant:

Close this.

Interviewer:

Ah, clothing yes. Awesome. Great. So I'm just going to quickly explain how the links work so as you can see for example with Apple there's only one link. That's because everything

that belongs to their PR campaign, they already put it right there. So all we need to do is like scroll through and read them. But for the other companies it's a bit more complicated because they first have like a landing page. Of like general sustainability then each, then the the next link, for example link B will lead to like the campaign and then more details will come in Link C and then more details will come in link D That's why there's like so many links even though it's literally just one campaign.

Participant:

Hmm.

Interviewer:

So what I would like to ask you to do is like take as much time as you need, go through the links and sort of look at what they say the content on the page and understand what their goal, their value is. Also anything that they say they have already done and anything they say they would like to do in the future. You don't really have to memorize anything or click on any other buttons or download anything. Just make sure you focus on the content of the page itself. Take as much time as you need and then after you're done we. Come back and then we're going to, let's say, go through your evaluations of them. Don't worry about memorization because you can always go back and look at the the website during the questions.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Thank you.

Participant:

I would like to like I answer it like after I read one of them or after I read all of them.

Interviewer:

Just go through all of them.

Participant:

Oh, OK, yeah. Yeah. OK, I'm finished.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Thank you for all the time you spent. OK, let me get back to the questions, OK. Great. Based on what you've read. Could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign is focused on?

Participant:

For the apples campaign is mainly focused on. Improve the design and overall more improve in transportation and energy used in less light is focused on regenerative agriculture is OK and in the Union level. Something is really everything, like and UN. Suggestions on how to make something more sustainability is is also focused on regenerating agriculture.

Participant:

For H&M is mainly focused on recycling. Yeah, materials being. Used, yes.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Now, do you think we're going to evaluate them one by one? So do you think what they are saying in the campaigns are relevant to the companies?

Participant:

First of all, for Apple, I think it is relevant, but because they they live like direct like oh, this is the product and this is how it impact on it. So we I can clearly see the like the link between it for Nestle and Unilever. I also see the connections between the product that they make is bearish, like daily consumption products and therefore they cannot list all of it like that, but we we all know it's like have connection like that and for H&M. I I think it have connection because it focused on like on recycle like the clothes that we wear. So that like they just use some materials in it and then make a new. One from that, yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Now you also saw in the campaigns that they also mentioned they they are doing something to address the concerns and blah blah blah. So do you think what they are doing fits what they are trying to address?

Participant:

Umm. Uh.

Participant:

OK, first with Apple, I think is is highly relevant, yeah. For Unilever and for for Nestle, is is less here for me when I read it. Yeah, to to see like the the relevant but but I think it is. Like I have to like figure it out everything but like I think it is for Unilever also better than this like they they create the link better than next link and for them like the scope and what they do is highly relevant yeah.

Interviewer:

Could you also elaborate a little bit on how you see the fit? For example, uh, you mentioned Apple is uh, sorry you mentioned Nestle is less clear and you see the relevant, but you have to figure it out. So yeah. Could you maybe elaborate on that?

Participant:

I think it's like on like displaying problems like it it gives me like 2 like little information or because like it required me to click on another link yeah. Yeah, that's that's what I feel like is like a bit less clear than others.

Interviewer:

Yeah, OK, awesome. Let's see. And for Unilever, you mentioned that it's slightly better than Nestle.

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah, it's like, OK, when I click on the link of in Nestle where you have like like that goes and like like how they doing it, it's lengthy. But but it's like written like really clear what they are doing.

Interviewer:

Lengthy but clear. Awesome. OK, that is the first subset of question also done. So moving on. The next one is going to mostly focus on you as an individual. So do you have any past experience as a consumer with any of these brands?

Participant:

Yes, I do.

Interviewer:

All of them.

Participant:

Not Apple, not apple.

Interviewer:

Not apple. How was your experience with the brands generally?

Participant:

Umm. For the product site, the Nestle 1 is good and like the name is OK but like for like the customer service one since national engineer level is like not directly like. Anything. So I I have like nothing to say. I don't never is. Yeah. It's OK cheer.

Interviewer:

Contact. OK, great. And how often would you say you patronize these brands?

Participant:

Can you repeat it?

Interviewer:

Oh yes, sorry. How often do you buy from these brands?

Participant:

Not really. Often I only purchase stuff from H&M for. Two times in my life and less than in you never. Not since I come to the Netherlands.

Interviewer:



Never next. The north since Netherlands. Great. Awesome. Now, so that was about mostly focusing on the product now, do you think, oh, let me rephrase this question. Generally, as a corporation, do you think they are trustworthy? Just we'll see, yeah.

Participant:

Uh. Ohh, act like a person who's kind of read about some cases. All of them is kind of not trustworthy because.

Interviewer:

Sorry. Go on.

Participant:

OK, for for for example, it's your name. They have really big scandals, if I remember, not on Asian name or like other brands but like the the values they promote is really similar to this one. But then they got like oh like it's like a scam. Or like recycling the product. Even remember not wrong. Yes, for like we generated product and unit level is another case. Like 1510 to 15 years ago is a place in Africa where like. Is like on product on producing like rubber or something. Yeah. And like all the, like, regenerative products is like it's not made. Yeah, all like that. So it has precedence that it is not my source. So I'm not really believing it to be honest. And Apple, uh, yeah, I I believe the the design is OK, but like. In like the. How do you? Call it like other aspect I I not quite believe in it too much.

Interviewer:

Uh, you don't believe too much? Great. Uh. What aspects don't you believe in too much?

Participant:

Except on this side.

Interviewer:

OK, so basically operation wise.

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK. Awesome. Great. Uh, and you also mentioned it's because you read a lot of sample cases. Am I correct?

Participant:

Yeah. Yes.

Interviewer:

Yes. OK. So based on. Let's say professional experience. Great. Now before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Umm. Apples. The only thing I consider and orders I I just like don't really know about it.  
Yes.

Interviewer:

So Apple is the only one you consider as green and.

Participant:

Like the working process towards going, I I I'm not really. I acknowledge about it, yeah.

Interviewer:

Work towards green and not really sure about the other one. Yeah. OK. About the other ones, great. And. Why not? Why and?

Participant:

Ohh so for I I I don't give too much attention about like three other brands. Yes, and yeah, that's that's very good.

Interviewer:

Fair. OK. You mentioned you don't use Apple products. You don't buy from apples. Then what is there?

Participant:

Yeah, I I don't buy from apples, but I care about like technologies related informations. Yeah, that's why I know.

Interviewer:

Ah. Interesting. Great. Now, before participating in this study, were you aware that these companies engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

I do not agree specific. Uh, like companies that they engaging in like sustainability. I I just know it's like a trend like in the industry like in general.

Interviewer:

Ah, OK. Trend in industry in general. Awesome. Could you, could you think of any companies that, let's say you've seen in real life that is doing so?

Participant:

Like promoting sustainability.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

Uh. Uh, I I hear from friends like Phillips is like promoting some sustainabilities. That's that's. Yeah. That's related. Yeah. That's just only to to, to. Think is like come. In my mind.

Interviewer:

Yeah. To comes in mind. Great. Awesome. That. Yeah. Do you know what sort of, let's say, PR campaign that Phillips is doing?

Participant:

No, no, I I don't really know.

Interviewer:

OK, no specific details. Great. That was the 2nd subset already done. Moving on. Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

I I. Hmm. Uh, it's it's like 5050. Like if I have a chance then like I will take like like some sort of like knowledge about it. But if if I have no chance or like it's just too much for me, then I don't really like think about it.

Interviewer:

Think about it. OK. When you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

No, no. It's like only when I purchase like something like. Like in dairy products, no, I'm not in clothes. Also, I'm not because I'm not going to much and like other aspects of it, yes.

Interviewer:

OK, so nothing not really right.

Participant:

Yeah, not really.

Interviewer:

OK, no problem. Uh, OK, now that was about products. Uh. Now let's think of it like generally in in terms of like brands before you buy something, do you consider whether that brand is sustainable?

Participant:

No, sorry.

Interviewer:

No, no, no, no. Don't be sorry. That's exactly the point of this study. OK, awesome. Now looking back at like all the campaigns you just read, is there no sorry, do you think what is portrayed in the campaign is in line with your personal values?

Participant:

I I have to say that most of the campaign is really irrelevant to to to me as a person. Like it's either focus too much or like stuff that I don't know. If I'm not reading about it like for example like regenerative agriculture. Right. Is like the product is the same like the process is different. But like when I buy a box of milk I I cannot like like read so like. Like full purchase of like, oh, why it's so brilliant to to buy boxes of milk. Yeah. It's it's like it's too much. It's too irrelevant to the product that I buy.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Yes, irrelevant to the product.

Participant:

Just.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Now again, while reading through the campaign, is there any specific parts that let's say, evokes emotions, any positive, negative or neutral emotions?

Participant:

The motion. Yeah. Unilever. No. Just just purely like statistic and readings. Uh. A bit? Uh, positive. Like emotional connections. Like just because, like they mentioned like some things about law and maybe like, oh, OK, that's what I learned. OK. Nestle. No, nothing and. Apple a a bit negative because I I just don't think it's possible, so a bit negative, yeah.

Interviewer:

Oh, OK, interesting. I don't you don't think it's possible? Could you elaborate like for example what is not possible?

Participant:

Ohk. OK, so like they like apples is said that it focuses on like trying to make the design more like recyclable and like more eco friendly. But if just a bit like technical stuff, OK, like some material some like precious metals. In using an iPhone it it just like cannot be replaced. For now and yeah, and that thing is not recyclable in in any way. Yeah, like that.

Interviewer:

So when you mentioned negative emotions, could you put a name on that emotion?

Participant:

I I feel. Able to too ambitious and I'll be like ohh it's. It's just like too much. You were not able to achieve it.

Interviewer:

So, should I say skepticism? Yeah. Awesome. Great. That was some really insightful answer. OK, moving on to the last set of questions already, let's see. Now this is about your evaluations of each campaign. So do go through them one by one. Do you think the campaigns have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Participant:

All the comments they make process that they are making process or trying to achieve what they do.

Interviewer:

Every. Thing is process, yes. But they also mentioned some achievement that they already like, that they successfully have. Do you believe in those statements?

Participant:

Yes. Personal experience. Not too much, it's like.

Interviewer:

Person.

Participant:

4050% ohh.

Interviewer:

Oh, OK. Interesting numbers. Could you elaborate on, like, uh, like what you mean by personal experience? Let's go through them one by one because. This is really.

Participant:

Ohh OK. For up. OK. So like in general, reports can be false. That's that's. That's what I mean when I just say 40 to 50% like the reports can be forged and like it can be a bit manipulated like in the process and. I'm not sure there's like any precedent in that, but I I think it's going to have some of it. Yeah and. Like for like examples like in transportation or anything like third parties related. It's hard for the companies to like control like the outcome of it like how they're actually doing in like all the companies, yeah. And they can they have to like believe. Like in the report that like third parties provide to them or like if they like put some like supervisor is or not like as strong as like the governor. One. But like the government, like normally like in in



what they're promoting is is like not something that the government like is like really focusing on. But they have like enough resources to like truly enforce it, especially if, like Nestle and Unilever, they like their plantations and like all their fields in like third World countries. And like the enforcement in there is not good. I have to say yes.

Interviewer:

Really insightful coming from a lost student. Thank you for that. Uh, it's not really a strict. OK, great. So that's some great example for Nestle and Unilever. What about Apple and H&M? What are you doing?

Participant:

On there, similar to do you need a library and. Translate and. Apple, uh. I I think the problems like from apples come from first the sending from Unilever, because like the mining stuff like to to build their phones come from like Vietnam, South Africa. The countries like can have like materials. Yes, some of them like located in Africa, which you know not that good, yes. Like in the company itself too? Yeah. It's like administrative problems. And like, if they want to have, like, better numbers, they can like, just make something out of it with something. I would see there. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. So during your explanation, you mentioned a lot from like let's say real life. Factors that influence your evaluations. Now let's look back a little bit on the content of the website itself. Is there anything on the website that also influence your evaluation as well?

Participant:

Yes. On the website to influence my.

Interviewer:

Like based on the content that they give you and not just your personal experience.

Participant:

Yes, yes. Like when they see this, I like see on their ambitions like like how how big their plant is like like, oh, I want to change the world. Then I will like, oh, this is too much for a company to do. Yeah. That's that's how I look. Yeah, that's what I affect my evaluation.

Interviewer:

It's interesting. Which company do you think has too big of a plan? Too big of an ambition.

Participant:

What's your name and?

Interviewer:

H&M and Apple awesome. Great. So that was about the past and their past achievement. We're going to look a little bit to the future now. Do you think the campaigns will actually achieve what they say they will achieve again one.

Participant:

OK, for Apple design resource green energy and recover, I think it's possible and also use package and shipping. I'm not so sure.

Interviewer:

Why?

Participant:

It's it's really like. How did you say that? Practicing OK, but shipping, I don't think like they can like really like put it on like, just like low carbon shipping methods. Like fully loaded. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Any reason why you don't think it's possible?

Participant:

OK, I kinda. Not, not too much. I I just like, don't. Don't believe it too much, you know, OK.

Interviewer:

OK, no problem. Yeah, just skepticism is normal. Honestly, when I read them, I also feel.

Participant:

The need to be ambitious. Well, yeah. OK. Uh lastly and Unilever possible possible. Yes.

Interviewer:

Why do you think so?

Participant:

Very. It's like. Regulation international treaties are like due diligence of companies where, like related to this one and thus is really align with like what next line unit level is trying to do is like make agriculture like more sustainability. Yes. Yes. Yeah, I I think it's possible. Like when like the Treaty is like required companies to have like more careful in what they do and

like put more like trying to like control it and like also like calculate the all the corporate, the stuff too. But like it's. Yeah.

Participant:

So yeah, I think it's possible and also like most things, these companies are really trying to achieve what they are doing. Yeah. From the numbers that they gave me, I think that they like trying to really trying to achieve what they're doing.

Interviewer:

From the numbers, interesting.

Participant:

And for H&M, I'm not quite sure that whether or not they can achieve it. Yeah, because they they mentioned above, a systematic change in the European Union ago in general.

Interviewer:

Using what?

Participant:

Not cutting it just to lobbying and like just, I think it's a bit like over the powers of what they can change.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Again, any indication on the website that the perhaps also influence your thing or is it all just your personal experience based on?

Participant:

Oh, that's that's something like with in the website. Yeah, it's like the numbers in the website.

Interviewer:

Ah, yes, OK.

Participant:

Yeah, it's like they they future plans and they have like in, in the future we want to like cut down for example like 324th of the emissions that we have. Yeah like that. Yeah. And they, they and they compared to what they can do in the past and they like, yeah, this is achievable for them.

Interviewer:

So focus on the progress. Got it. Ah, awesome. Ah. Now which campaign do you prefer? Could you maybe rank them and explain your ranking?

Participant:

Ranks them. Yes, OK. First, I would prefer the apple one like as like if I'm just normal customer, I would like Apple. They are care. They super care about what they doing, what product is got affected and like, yeah, everything is clear. So like, it's really easy for me to access the information second. Yeah. Second, Nestle is similar to Apple, Easy to read, easy to understand. Yeah. The third one is a vicious focus, but yeah. 50% of the other stuff research link too much, but yeah overall. Yeah. And the last one is Unilever. Too much stuff to read, it's like. It's it's like it's a really good like report, but it's a really bad marketing campaign.

Interviewer:

Interesting, really good reported bad marketing campaign. Now you also mentioned that. If you are a normal consumer, but let's say as a as a law student, how would you rate them?

Participant:

Law student.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So last year.

Participant:

Uh, OK. Uh, Unilever first super insightful. Like, it gives me, like, lots of information that I don't know. And like how they achieve it and like, what's their goal? Everything right? Second next like. Like I I like how like like put the numbers and like all that one is like is it? Clearly for me to see. Apples and some right in third one, yeah.

Interviewer:

Why? Why is Apple and H&M glass in your?

Participant:

Uh, it's there's not much for me to know. You know, it's like it's it. Provide me. No, like extra information and like everything we like. OK. It's like, OK ish. Yeah, like that.

Interviewer:

Everything is OK, got it. Great. Ah, now which campaign do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and why do you think so? Yeah.

Participant:

Your concern, that's like Unilever. It's it's more like directly related problems in the world about like sustainability. More apples is a growing concern for like the past, like 20 years. Yes. Like it's it's like they they focus on like many other aspects. Then, like. Yeah. And ancient name is kinda. I feel like just like following the trend of the industry.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Kind of following the trends of the industry now, so you don't, so is it correct that you don't really believe H&M is doing it for real concern?

Participant:

Yes, I don't.

Interviewer:

Then what do you think their motive is?

Participant:

Let's let's focus on like the consumer that is like focus on like sustainability and like greenish of the product they buy, yeah.

Interviewer:

So for personal gain, basically. OK, awesome.

Interviewer:

Great. That was the last question. In the third set, I'm just going to move on to closing. Is there any comments you would like to make about the campaign samples that you've seen? Any minor detailed thoughts, opinions appreciated.

Participant:

OK. About the campaigns, yeah, yeah. Unilever. You should write. The less it's. It's too much for me to read already.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Thank you so much for your time.

### **Participant 8**

Interviewer:

OK. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and message characteristic that will affect your evaluations of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign. Now I already have your consent form, so I'm sure you are aware of your rights that it's completely anonymous and you are free to skip any questions and also end the interview at any time. This meeting is voice recorded only and I will also take manual. Notes. Yeah. And other than that, any other questions?

Participant:

No, no.

Interviewer:

OK. Awesome. Great. Thank you again for doing this. I'm just going to quickly start with some basic demographic questions. So could you tell me how old you are?

Participant:

I'm 20.



Interviewer:

20 awesome and your nationality is. Bulgarian. Bulgarian. Great. And what is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm a student. Court.

Interviewer:

So that's done. There will be three sets of questions in these interviews, and the second set is slightly longer than the others because there will be 3 subsets in which we'll talk about the links and like a little bit. Of your personal characteristics and stuff, but each one only has around 2-3 questions, so it shouldn't be that bad. Now. The first set of questions we're going to focus on the overview just to see if you're familiar with the topic, so. Are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Well, as far as I understand it, that's the way companies prove their methods and their meetings are. Responsible to society that they aren't harming, but they're actually positive.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Are you familiar with the term sustainability in your corporate setting?

Participant:

I I see it as a very broad term. As see it as. The word sustainability is just not creating harmful effects, but I'm not sure in which direction you're going with the term sustainability.

Interviewer:

Great. So. Let's say somebody just says sustainability. Which direction do you think they are usually going to like? What pops into your mind?

Participant:

Sustainability. I completely connected to the environment like on the 2nd sustainability connected to nature not harming animals, individuals creating more more sustainable methods of of producing certain products. That's. The first thing that comes to my mind. Always.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Now when you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

Well, the part with PR changes a lot. I think it's the way companies present themselves. In the eyes of the others, and. They are trying to appear more sustainable if. If the word sustainability is used and the way I see it. Always is. How? They promote their products to be sustainable and let's say good for the environment or for the people.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. What kind of activities do you think is usually included in campaigns like this?

Participant:

So a lot of media involvement, often through other individuals which. Our platform, of course, the company can have their own ads, their own promoting. It can also be promotion in the form of a new addition to their website. It can be everything, but it's definitely more digitalized.

Interviewer:

Yeah, great. Awesome. What do you think of campaigns like this?

Participant:

Oh, I feel like there are a lot of companies in these days. Like you can open a social media platform or just turn on the TV and see 10s of these campaigns. I think that there used to be something spectacular, but now they're something. We see too often, which makes me think that they are on that important or genuine anymore because everyone does them and it seems like a trend, not like a campaign.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. Could you maybe do you maybe have an example of such a campaign that you've seen before from a specific company or something like that?

Participant:

I'm not sure about a specific company, but let's say. A company creates a new product. Which is the exact same product as the previous one just added. Some. Sustainable parts. It can be anything like from the. Material it's made. Let's say I think I see it very often with bottles, the bottles for plastic ones than you are, or wooden ones. It's. Better for the environment. And that's the whole change of the product. Sometimes the prices are rising. And this can be seen as a marketing trick to me.

Interviewer:

Great. Uh. Awesome. So that's the first set of questions already done. Thank you for that. Moving on to the second one now, as you can see, I've already sent you a few links to the sustainability campaign. Don't open them yet. Yeah, so there are 4.

Participant:

MHM. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Companies Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Have you heard of the names before?

Participant:

Of course, all of them.

Interviewer:

Great. Could you quickly tell me what you know about each corporation? For example, which industry they're in or any other thing you'd like to share?

Participant:

OK, so first, Apple doesn't take industry. I think they have the most power out of all of the companies you mentioned afterwards. Yes, they are one of the biggest tech companies and their products are now being. I'd say not the best quality, but very addictive. That's where I see it. You said also hmm. Well, actually I myself have an Apple product. Yeah, 88, H&M.

Interviewer:

We ought to.

Participant:

Ohh it's one of the many. Or clothing brands, which are under the company Inditex.

Interviewer:

Sorry, under which company?

Participant:

They are under the company Inditex. All of those brands we know poor and bears Zara each name. They're all under the company. Inditex. Yes, there are different brands, but they're very, very similar and.

Interviewer:

Indie text.

Participant:

Yes, the fabrics that are used, the clothes, the materials, everything is. Almost the same. What were the other companies you mentioned?

Interviewer:

Ah, Nestle and Unilever.

Participant:

Next clue? Well, if you said Netflix because I can't hear the last. Part of the word.

Interviewer:

Ohh Nestle like you can see the names in the. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, you can see the names in the message I sent you as well.

Participant:

Oh, OK, let me, let me see. Yes, nice slit. Yeah. The company is connected to fruit beverage producing. It's definitely not coating or the company. I think that this is a very old and well established company. I don't know anything negative about them. I've only enjoyed their

products. And I think that. Uh. It kind of stands out to Apple and to Netflix. UM. Yes, that's what I can tell you about, yeah. And Unilever, I am not that well familiar with it. But I think it's about uh. But about again, sustainability. Like marketing, making sustainability. I think that. If you're lacking the companies, but they are global, uh power and the awareness they can bring in, whatever definitely stays stays next to Apple or maybe for a lot of people above it. But I'm not completely sure what their products are.

Interviewer:

Uh.

Participant:

But now all of the four companies are very familiar names.

Interviewer:

So Unilever actually sells like, how do I say this? Like they like, think of shampoos, shampoos, conditioners, like all of the things we use in our bathroom. It's probably from Unilever, even though they're from different brands.

Participant:

OK. Then the new level I know is different because I think I know one new level which is connected to. To immovables like apartments and stuff like that. And I actually, I've never heard of that Unilever, which is for shampoos and.

Interviewer:

Ah.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

What is the other one you say immovable?

Participant:

Yeah, it's connected to immovables immovable like like.

Interviewer:

How do you spell that?

Participant:

Apartments and houses and studios.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Participant:

Yes, it's more like a broker company I think. Ohh yes, it has nothing to do with.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Participant:

Mushroom products OK.

Interviewer:

Very interesting. OK, note it. Turn your name. Great. Awesome now. So I'm just going to explain how the links work so as you can see there are four different companies and some has more links than other for for Apple for example, there's only one link. That's because everything in there in one. Specific sustainability campaign they already put into that website.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

But for other companies like Leslie, for example, they have, even though they work a lot on sustainability, they have different campaigns. But we today we focus mostly on like nature environments and like other stuff in all the companies. So if you look at the link you see for example link A is. The first landing page and then link B is like the one that you would keep on clicking. So basically I would like to ask you to go through the links, focus only on the content. You don't have to click on anything else. Once you finish one link, move on to the other one that I sent you and just goes like that. They are all in the same campaign.

Participant:

No. So I'm just scamming them. No like trying to understand the content, just my like my first impression.

Interviewer:

Yeah, like like, I would like to ask you to, like, read it, read the.

Interviewer:

Then try to understand like what their goal, what their value is and also see what they have been doing, like for example their achievements and what they say they will do. You don't



have to memorize it because throughout the interview you can always go back and look at it while answering my questions. And of course you can take as much time as you need.

Participant:

Hmm.

Interviewer:

No rush, just just go through it and then let me know whenever you're done. Go through all of them and then we will continue with the questions.

Participant:

OK, I'll start with.

Interviewer:

Thank you.

Participant:

Oh. Uh, so I think I'm ready with the links.

Interviewer:

Awesome. I'm just going to switch back to the tabs and stuff. Great. Thank you so much for the time it took. I know it took a.

Participant:

While well, it was worth it cause. I had no idea the sites have that much information on sustainability. And honestly, I have different opinions about the different approaches the companies use. So starting with Apple, they have only one week and I think this could be more

effective since people don't usually read, let's say four or five weeks on a normal day. But. It's that it doesn't. Uh, make me feel like they are that genuine. They their information. Sounds too much like a campaign. If this is possible, they aren't much about the technology or the results they have made. They don't explain the the approach they use, they just show. The progress, the changes they made regarding materials, let's say how their products are already 50% equal friendly, but compared to the other links, they're really liking in case in terms of information and argumentation. When I read it for the first time. It seemed very genuine and I really liked it, but after reading Nestle and Unilever. I think that the apple and the Apple sustainability program is to. To calculate it, yes it's it seems like just another marketing strategy.

Interviewer:

Interesting.

Participant:

Yes, going on Chrome to Nestle this is the one that impressed me the most when I started reading it. It seemed like like normal text you can find anywhere, but I really like how they explained everything. How they have different projects, for example the forest project. And. The information might not be provided in the best way since they're website. It. Isn't as good as apples. Let's say I don't think that it's that much enjoyable. But. This is the most genuine sustainability campaign to me. Yeah. Comparing it to the other ones mostly really impressed me. It doesn't start that strong with the first thing, but when you start reading everything. And understanding their approaches. And their goals? It seems like the more realistic 1. And I think that having realistic goals means that you're actually going to fulfill them. So this is the one that's the most genuine out of all of them differently. UM. Going to Unilever. Yes, they also impressed me, but I couldn't feel that sense of realness to their goals. They mentioned a lot having. Are reducing everything to 0. Which is great, but it doesn't seem that, uh, I don't know. That is to

fulfill and I'm not sure how much the company would sacrifice to actually do it. The way they're explaining everything is also. Oh, great, compared to Apple. I can see that they have different projects. That we put the necessary time to think through everything. But at the end of the day, I would very, very much trust master outside of your new level. Again, the reason is their goals and how they always mention 100% or 0%. It doesn't seem realistic. And the last one, H&M. Really surprised me. I expected something very simple since I don't connect the company to sustainability. In any way. Yes, but they're really surprise me.

Participant:

They started very briefly. Wait. The things they're going to explain later. Sustainability essentials, the way they're going to produce their clothes. Latest updates. And throughout the other links, the other through links, you can really see their plan and their goals. But again, they mention a lot 0 percent, 100% to me. It creams no realistic goals and I am not sure how. If they're ready to sacrifice money and time to actually fulfill their goals. Yes, they focused. Let's say UM. More generously on the planet. Instead of the people. Even though they mentioned the social impact, I think that Apple, Nestle and U level focused more on. The global changes not only the the laws and the nature. Again, I think that it is a good sustainability project for a clothing company. But if I have to choose the best one, it's Nestle. H&M doesn't have. Fortress explained that glow. I think if you're not comparing it. It's enough. It's efficient, but if you start really digging into it. I feel like everything is just repeating and repeating. There is no new explanation and no new data, no new goals, and new argumentation. Yes. And another thing, if I compare the four of them next to each other. I feel that the one that might be the most influential is the apple one because of the way it is presented. The way the website is structured, with the goals, with phrases like saving Mother Nature, saving the. But joining us in that money for our community, all those campaign phrases are really essential. And the fact that everything is nice and put into one place. I think that if they had included more about their approaches to

knowledge and more relation. It could be better than Nestle. Like these are my impressions and thoughts. On. Goings.

Interviewer:

Amazing. OK, first of all, really great insight. Spoken like a true law student. OK, second of all, I think you just single handedly like finish one of my sub one subset of my question without me asking anything so. OK. It's like it's like my entire set of question. I didn't even ask anything and you just finished it. Thank you. OK. So that was, that was supposed to be. That was exactly what I was gonna ask you in the last few questions. So glad we got that out of the way.

Participant:

That's.

Interviewer:

You also mentioned ranking and I know you said you rank Nestle first, but what about the other three like from top to bottom?

Participant:

OK, so first is Nestle. The second one is Unilever. Even though I am not 100% sure of their. Yes, I think they still deserve the 2nd. Place the third one. Is. Apple plus. Their side really seems like a campaign.

Participant:

It makes you feel connected to their journey and the last one would be H&M, because again. It seems calculated, but I can't see that community can see the journey they're trying to explain. I can see. Any real motivation towards their community? That they just wanted to

explain the approaches and kind of repeated themselves. Again and again. Pricing for a clothing company. But it's not as as impressive as the other two.

Interviewer:

Interests. Not impressive. As the other three, yeah. Awesome. Ah, let's see. I'm just going to jump for. So going back to what you said, I think you also mentioned you feel that Nestle is genuinely caring for the environment and for sustainability. Right.

Participant:

Yes, yes, the information they provided on the site was very expensive. And something you or you can read every day. There are projects where. Very innovative and different, even though they are credited. And overall, their goals were the most. I think. I think that according which. Estimated the pros and the cons and their actual abilities. Conceptually, both this makes me think that they are really putting the effort in the sustainability campaign and the whole journey as they say. Uh, they don't have that much 0% goals or 100% goals because. They really don't really seem realistic and having realistic goals means that you are ready to. Sacrifice a certain amount to imply.

Participant:

This really stood out. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Perfect. What about the other three? Do you think they are not genuine or do you still think they're genuine? Just much less like how? How would you? Evaluate the other three.

Participant:

Yes, the other three. I think we are genuine to a point. For example apple. Uh, OK, let's

go. Like the ranking. The second one was Unilever. I think they are genuine to a certain extent. Their goals seemed unrealistic. But they had a lot of approaches, a lot of information, a lot of technology, reasoning, different events and. Yes, they really seem like say around. 75% genuine. That's how I see it when going to the links. I had certain doubts but. Comparing to other companies and to other companies. I think that they are genuine suspense. The third one. Apple. Uh again pretty much calculated a lot of phrases which can make you really. Feel. An emotion, but there is no actual proof. UM. I'd say that they are genuine to some extent. Again, is there a tech company and waste and carbon emissions tech company are very, very harmful and especially a company has bigger apples, so they they definitely need some kind of sustainability. 1. But their campaign, the link that is provided. Doesn't.

Interviewer:

Fulfill all.

Participant:

My requirements. For a company this big, a company that influence dollars. So I think that they need to give more explanation. And like the ATM. UM. I think this is the only company that didn't. Team training at all. Oh. Yes, the topics they discussed were very, very common. Something you can you can think of within 5 minutes. Again they they provided a lot of text but not a lot of useful information. There wasn't a lot of explanation, a lot of technology, a lot of matter. And combining that with their 100% or 0% gold. It doesn't seem genuine to me. I didn't understand how they're going to achieve all of that. There was no real proof, no real results or information. They try to create the company. They have a lot of references and. Articles. But. While I'm reading. It I don't feel they are genuine us.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Interesting. OK, so. I like that you give a lot of examples of what they what is in the website and stuff. I also would like to ask you a few questions about like let's say, external factors that also influence your evaluations. But before we get to that, I also need to understand you as a person first. So let's just circle back up a little bit.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK, let's see. OK. Just a quick questions against you about the campaign. You already read that ohh they want to address this. They want to address this in the campaign. Do you think what they do you think what they say they want to address is relevant to the company?

Participant:

Well, there are some things that were relevant to all the companies. For example, carbon emissions. You know H&M. Has a lot of textile approaches but. I think they were most relevant, although focused on water, water pollution, water sustainability. Of course, the human factor, which is. Not having too much pressure on the workers and. The community which is following. Yes, I I actually couldn't find anything that wasn't relevant to them. I really like the forest project that Nestle hat, and since I'm not very familiar with the technology because I've never studied something like that. I don't see that I am the best person that can can make the process to the company. But generally speaking, I that any change in sustainability. Very positive.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Now you also see that they they are doing a lot of stuff. So do you think what they are doing in the campaign fit what they are trying to address?

Participant:

For Nestle, for sure. For Unilever, I think they had a bit more product and information. What their goals were. Apple. I don't think they have. I think their goals were. Big, but again, they did not have enough argumentation and means. And it's the same for H&M.

Interviewer:

Me.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Cool. So that was about it. I'm gonna move on to to question that. Looks into any personal characteristics. So do you have any past experience as a consumer with any of these brands?

Participant:

I have an apple with Netflix.

Interviewer:

Never. Rate. Like as corporations. Do you think that they are trustworthy?

Participant:

I don't think that this is. A simple questions is. You know who is on top of the corporation, how it's functioning. I wouldn't categorize any corporation as trustworthy, even though I don't think they're harmful and I don't have any negative feelings against them. I wouldn't call any



corporation in these days for.

Interviewer:

Oh, interesting. OK. Any reason why you think so?

Participant:

Yes, because to run by humans, not all humans actually care about the environment or about others. Therefore, I don't know if these projects are some very, very well made campaigns or there is someone in the company which really cares about the environment. I don't know. If they have the power they need to actually. Make a change. And This is why I can't explain. I can't describe the company as trustworthy. I don't have the information for for.

Interviewer:

That. Awesome. Now, before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Actually, no one never considered them as. Green or sustainable?

Interviewer:

Interesting. Does it just not come into your mind or is there any reason why you just don't see them as such?

Participant:

So for Apple and for H&M, I didn't see them as sustainable brands. I never thought about Nestle and Unilever. Yes, this is the reason.

Interviewer:

Just don't think about them. OK, great.

Participant:

Yes, Sir. I haven't thought about them.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Now, before participating in this study, were you aware that these companies engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

I was 100% sure that they have to since this is something very important nowadays, but I wasn't aware that I had that much information and. And plants and I guess, but I was 100% sure that all companies or almost all companies had any connection to sustainability.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Now moving on, do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

Yes, I do care about sustainability.

Interviewer:

Is there any specific aspects that you focus on or just general?

Participant:

Uh, let's say. That that aspect I don't like the most. Is fast fashion dance. This is the one

thing that is extremely popular in people my age. Also, I would like to emphasize on recycling, especially after living in the Netherlands, I can see the. Difference. I never recycled before moving to the Netherlands, but now I see how how good it is. Again, I appreciate everything which improves water consumption. That's something important to me because. Water is a huge part of our planet. And these are. The three most important things for me.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Now when you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

It depends on the product itself if it's. If it's like if it's, uh, product, which I'm going to use for a long time, yes, definitely. But if it's for that, I am just trying something new. I wouldn't search for sustainability. I would search for the quality of the.

Interviewer:

What is there an example of a product that you say that you use long term?

Participant:

Yes, let's say any type of printer. The way the materials were collected. Board. How long the how the materials were exactly and what they were creating the furniture. This is something I would consider a long term product.

Interviewer:

Sorry, I meant sorry. Could you could something's wrong with like the network? I only got like how you meant. You mentioned how the material is extract and then what else.

Participant:

But.

Participant:

How the materials were treated after? With what chemicals. Let's say ah, OK.

Interviewer:

Chemicals and uh, what else?

Participant:

Yes, but if I if I'm going to buy a new shampoo, let's say from Unilever, and I wanna try and see how it affects my hair. I wouldn't. Or I wouldn't. See sustainability as a factor. I would try to find the best product.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Now that was about the product. So again with the. Let's focus on a brand generally before you buy, let's say a certain product, do you consider whether that brand is sustainable before buying?

Participant:

Mm-hmm. No, because I don't know the truth behind any other brands. If I. If I had the information and I knew it was. 100% correct I would, but I don't.

Interviewer:

Awesome now. Do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns that you saw is in line with your personal value?

Participant:

I think that some of it is. The first part is the connection to humans. How this affects every single person. Next, the biodiversity. And climate change. So this is also a very, let's say, scary topic water consumption. And. Specifically what? Hmm. When I think new level focused on the way they the materials they use. This is also very important. These are the things that mostly on. With my personal vision and of course, the carbon emissions which are global, they're for any corporation.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Uh, OK, so. The next question is about emotions, but I think you've already explained it quite extensively, so that was amazing. OK, so I'm just going to move on to the way we evaluate the campaigns. I like that you already like evaluated based on what you've seen on the website. I'm just going to quickly ask you a few more questions. Do you? OK, wait, you already evaluate what they say. Let's see. OK. Just really generally and quickly, do you think the campaigns have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Participant:

I think they have achieved some of it. They in the beginning of their websites of the. Links they always. Provided some information of what they have achieved, I think that the initial information which is the most realistic is cheap. This is applicable to Apple to Internet. All of them. I think that have achieved some of it. Otherwise they wouldn't be allowed to from teams, since there are a lot of requirements these days. Oh have achieved everything.

Interviewer:

So are you saying that some numbers are not real?

Participant:

Yes, I think some numbers aren't real.

Participant:

Yes. Or they might be soon. To be real. I I'm not sure if they have been real at the moment the information was posted online. For the most realistic examples, I am sure. They are real.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Great. And what about, like, let's think about the future, do you think, oh, do you think they will also achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

Well, this depends on the management of the company, their virtual goals, the changes in society and the company themselves. But I think some of them will achieve that. I'm. I'm not sure if they will achieve all of their zero percent or 100% goals. Since this is also connected to. The. To the way the world is changing. But I think that with developing technologies they can achieve a lot of their goals, not maybe 100%, but let's say 80 or 90. And I think that. These trends in sustainability are going to be more and more common. So yes, I expect a lot of. Them for the future.

Interviewer:

Great. OK. Again moving back. The way you evaluate it throughout, it's based on what is seen on the website. Is there any reason any factors outside of the website, let's say in real life observations, personal experience that also influence your evaluations?

Participant:

Of course they are. I might not be aware of all of them. For example, honestly I didn't have any. And like negative thoughts from the beginning. For H&M, I have a lot of insight from the harm they were doing, but I decided to give them a chance and I was actually looking for a lot of positive experts which were there, but they don't want enough, maybe to fight my. Negative feelings towards them. And for Apple, I had mixed feelings because they are a successful company, definitely. But success isn't achieved that easily, so maybe they have to compromise their sustainability to achieve it. My thoughts and unilevel were completely from the website since I knew just another brand called Unilever. I had no insight and information about the specific Unilever. Yes, I think that I was influenced from my past experience and information, but. That didn't affect my judgment that much. I still try to find something to. Contrast my past experience and I wanted to give a chance to all of the companies. I want to give them a fair start.

Interviewer:

So it seems like uh, H&M is not doing very well in your opinion. So let's were you convinced by them after this?

Participant:

For H&M. I was, let's say I was impressed that they had put that much thought in their campaigns since I didn't have very, very high expectations. But I am not. 100% convinced because I haven't seen. Any results or any improvements in? Their clothes. Because this something I can go and see was go to store and. Check the materials. Like their origin and everything. And for the past years I haven't seen any development in that.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. So. So if you think that they H&M is not done out of genuine concern for

the environment, what do you think their motive for doing sustainability is?

Participant:

Well, the first motive is definitely the way they. Appear to be. Sustainability is a very important topic this days, and if a company doesn't provide any information on their sustainability campaign, it would seem like they don't care and they are. Pulling out of the trend or people who really care about sustainability, for example, environmental activists will try to. To turn others towards them. Yes, this is like a mandatory requirements in 2024 having ability program. I think every brand has the ability program they have, otherwise they wouldn't be able to.

Interviewer:

Exist. Yeah, fair. OK. That was the last question. I'm gonna move on to closing. Any other comments you'd like to share regarding the websites you've seen? Any minor detailed thoughts or opinions?

Participant:

Well, the one thing that I wanted to share was that what is important is also the person who made the website. Because some of the websites were very, very well created and I am specifying on design when design is effective, it can influence more people. Then was Apple it really? Out. Yes.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Anything else you'd like to share about the topic we discussed?

Participant:

Well, I would like to share that this. It's a very, very broad topic.



Participant:

Let's say that. There are so many expectations for the future. And actually see how it turns out. It's going to be. A surprise everyone for me, everything environment is unpredictable. Yes.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. Thank you so much for your time.

### **Participant 9**

Interviewer:

OK. Let's see recordings on. OK, great. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and message characteristics that will affect consumers evaluation of genuineness of sustainability, PR campaign. I already received your consent form, so I'm sure you're aware of all your rights. That it's completely anonymous that. What? What is it again? It will be voice recorded and you can skip question or end the interview whenever you want. Just let me. Know. OK. Also, I'm just going to start with a few demographic questions. So how

Participant:

Sure.

Interviewer:

Old are you?

Participant:

I am 23.

Interviewer:

And what is your nationality?

Participant:

A Romanian.

Interviewer:

Great and now what is your occupation?

Participant:

I'm a student and I also do part time. Work.

Interviewer:

Great. OK, so the entire interview will be with three. Different set of questions and each one only has like a few questions like three to three to four maximum. But the second said it will be slightly longer because we will go through the links and it has three subsets of question as well.

Participant:

OK. OK.

Interviewer:

OK, so the first set of question we're going to go over some general stuff just to see if you are familiar with the topic, but it's totally fine if you're not.

Participant:

OK. Yeah. OK.

Interviewer:

So my first question is, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Not really. I mean, I assume it's about, yeah, just being. Yeah. Inclusive and like.

Participant:

Yeah, diverse, something like that.

Interviewer:

When you mean when you say inclusive and diverse, do you mean the workforce or do you mean something else?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah. I mean the, the, the employees and like, yeah.

Interviewer:

OK. Are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Not really. Yeah, I assume it refers to for example. I don't know. For example, shell like worrying about their fossil fuel.

Participant:

How do I? Say that.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant:

They like impact on the environment basically.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome now. When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

I think it's about when, yeah. Companies both on social media about how sustainable they are. So for example. That this year they had, like a smaller carbon footprint or they use like less energy. Something like that.

Interviewer:

OK. What kind of activities do you think is usually included in campaigns like this?

Participant:

I assume. Mostly just. Well, not, yeah, mostly both, because they want to make people aware that they are responsible and sustainable. I assume maybe also combines to kind of maybe influence other. Companies as well, but yeah.

Interviewer:

OK, great. What do you think of campaigns like this?

Participant:

I mean, I think it's a good idea. To me, whenever. I see something like this. I don't really know. If I can trust it. UM. It's. Good that they want to talk about these things. But yeah, to me, yeah. They can always slide pretty easily so.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Is there an example of such campaigns that you have maybe seen before? Maybe a company, a specific company, anything that comes into your mind?

Participant:

Maybe not a campaign, but I only saw saw something like in an e-mail for example. I don't know if it counts.

Interviewer:

Yeah, go on.

Participant:

Like for example, uh. What was it like when you order from DHL they say like? Yeah, by doing this you reduced the. The carbon footprint, or like the the fuel, something like that.

Interviewer:

Ah, OK.

Participant:

So yeah, I. Mean maybe this isn't even about this?

Interviewer:

No, I I think it is definitely part pain, yeah.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So that is the first set of questions already done. OK, nice. Moving on to the second one now, as you can see, I already sent you like a, some all the links and stuff, don't open it yet.

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah, I won't. I won't.

Interviewer:

Yeah, there are four different companies there. So Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M, have you heard their names before?

Participant:

Yeah.

Participant:

Like for? Yeah, all of them.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Could you quickly tell me what you know about each corporation?

Participant:

Well, Apple, OK, I have an iPhone and other products, so I know nicely owns a lot of other. Umm, like other smaller like. Yeah, food companies. Yeah. It's kind of like a multi not multi

like a monopoly thingy, whatever. And Unilever is kind of the same. I think it's mostly about like shampoos, soaps, but it's also like Nestle like it has other small companies. Like they kind of manage those and each of them with uh clothes.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK, awesome. I'm just going to quickly explain how the links work. So as you can see for Apple for example, you see only one link. That is because everything everything that is related to their sustainability campaign, they already put it in one link. So that link.

Participant:

OK. Yeah. OK.

Interviewer:

Campaign great, but for the other companies. They have multiple campaigns going on at the same time, but for today we only focus on sustainability environments and similar topics, so that's why instead of asking you to click through specific pages, I made it easier by like just putting the links in there subsequent link over there. So as you can see from the.

Participant:

OK. OK. OK.

Interviewer:

The name of the link you see? First sustainability, then sustainability is less nature and then keeps flashing. So even though it's different pages, it is one camp.

Interviewer:

OK. So when you are reading through them, I would like to ask you to only focus on the content and you don't have to worry about any other subpages they have or any downloadable report. Just focus on the content and once you finish, move on to the next page. Yeah. So again, you will have plenty of time.

Interviewer:

Take as much time as you need. Go through all of them. I would like to.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

To actually to focus on like their values, their goals, what they have done and what they.

Interviewer:

Say they will do.

Interviewer:

Yeah. And then take as much time as you need. And after you go through all of the links, come back and then I will ask you some more questions about it. You don't have to memorize them because the interviews you can always go back and look.

Participant:

OK, so I just go a little. Bit through them and then tell you. When I'm done.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Exactly like. Take as much time as you need.



Participant:

OK, OK.

Participant:

But I'm not supposed to like, think aloud or something, right? And I just.

Interviewer:

It it it doesn't matter. Like if yeah. If you have some if you want to explain something, I will not. I will not interrupt you until you tell me you're done. Yeah.

Participant:

OK. OK, OK, got it. OK. I'm done. OK, great. You're muted, by the way.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah. OK, great. Let's return to the. Question.

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. So. OK, I'm going to ask you a few questions. And for each question, please evaluate them one by one like the companies 1 by 1.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

OK. So the first question is based on what you've read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign focused on?

Participant:

Mm-hmm. We can make.

Interviewer:

Yeah, but you can always go back and look.

Participant:

OK. Yeah, well. OK, all of them kind of, you know, kind of all of them focus on renewable material. Like their goal is to, you know, recycle as much as you can. Use the less amount of materials. And yeah.

Interviewer:

Well, there's also some difference between them. Could you tell me like?

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah. One second, one second.

Interviewer:

No worries. Take as much time as you need to go through them.

Participant:

OK. So you have 4 Apple. Yeah, it's it's about renewable materials, recycle materials.

Participant:

What else? Yeah. And also packaging with less emissions. UM. Can maximize materials that we can recycle. OK, let's see. Yeah, honestly, it's more well, yeah, it's about. You have better resources. But again, you're using using renewable. Resources and.

Participant:

There are 0 emissions deforestation, free supply chains and regenerative.

Interviewer:

Agriculture.

Participant:

Uh. Linguine liver is also kind of similar I think. Yeah. Regenerative agriculture and yeah, just recycling. A lot better.

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, for Unilever. Also. Yeah. Regenerative agriculture again. And. What you do is with something else. Yeah, renewable energy, things like that. And.

Participant:

Each name? Yeah, also about also reusing so they. Were talking about the cycle of. Like circularity, mostly. So yeah, basically reusing their. What kind of encouraging people to. UM's donate their old clothes so that they can reuse them.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Moving on now.

Interviewer:

Again, we're going to evaluate it 1 by 1, so let's focus on what they say they have achieved. Oh, no, wait not there. Sorry. Focus. Yeah. Sorry. Too many questions. Even I get confused.

Interviewer:

OK, so you already see what they what they say they want to address, right?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, do.

Interviewer:

You think what they are saying in the campaign? What they're saying that they try to address is relevant to the company?

Participant:

Yeah, I mean, they use a lot of those, especially I mean, no, all all of them use like a lot of natural resources. So yeah, I think it's relevant that they are addressing it for sure.

Interviewer:

OK. Could you? Quickly explain like with each company, why do you think they are relevant? Like which part is relevant to what, for example?

Participant:

Uh-huh. Oh, OK. Yeah, that's a good question.

Interviewer:

OK, take your time.

Participant:

With that, can you explain more? Like what do we mean by relevance here so that I'm sure?

Interviewer:

Yeah, of course. So for example. You see that they mentioned, let's say somebody mentioned.

Participant:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

Deforestation, for example. But how does the addressing deforestation is relevant to the way their company operates? For example, yeah, yeah.

Participant:

Ohh OK. Yeah. Well, for example. OK, so for Apple. Yeah, we know they use a lot of like. UM. Wait. Yeah, like a lot of these, these type of types of materials like carbon, aluminum, whatever or also like, yeah, carbon emissions, like everyone does. So yeah, I think it's relevant. Of course that they talked. About. The materials that they use for their devices. OK, let me go here again. Fitness as well. I mean, yeah, they they tackle important topics. Of course, waste. And yeah, the in yeah environment that they take their resources from, I think that's obviously relevant. Yeah, you live with the same because they use like ethnicity. Really similar. So I think they tackle. Wait, now I'm on the Unilever website and the they're giving me a survey. Oh my God. OK, I close it.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant:

Yeah, I mean. Wait.

Interviewer:

Think of think of the operations. Think of it whether, let's say, even if they talk about deforestation. But if you think that their company has nothing to do with wood, then perhaps the relevant is not that much, right?

Participant:

No, I mean for sure like for both, I mean they stay. In. You delivered like the packaging they obviously. Use a lot of wood for making the. Their packaging, also, like the plastic wastes they talked about, that it's very, very relevant. And yeah, for for h&M again like. A lot of material that is wasted because of fast fashion. We're not wasted, but like OK. People throw them. They mentioned that, OK, there's a lot of. There's a lot of clothes in the landfill, so that's why we talk about. Which recycling which of course is relevant.

Interviewer:

Great now. When, after they talk about what they want to address, they also talk about the action that they do, the campaign that they actually do right. So yeah.

Interviewer:

Again, do you think the actions, the activities that they do fit what they are trying to address?

Participant:

Yeah, I mean for Apple, like here, they talk about how the the the MacBook is like 50% recycled. So. Yeah, obviously it fits with what?

Participant:

They previously mentioned with aluminum as well. With carbon shipping. What else? What else? Yeah, and their recycled materials like the. Out of metals that they use or. Whatever. We got too many taps.

Participant:

Send it again. OK. And for Nestle yadi? They show here like.

Participant:

Yeah, they they reduced their. What even is this emissions? Also the plastic packaging. Is, yeah, designed for recycling? And. Yeah. And of course they also fit because, yeah, they, they talk about it, they. Also address it so yeah.

Participant:

And yeah, for Unilever, they also have these. Our sustainability news, which I assume it's with. Like what they've done? So. Also like about plastic which I've mentioned is like important because you have a little plastic waste. And also how they're improving the people who work like they how they're improving their. Their wages, also important for sure. And.

Participant:

Yeah, and for for. For H&M, I guess it's here like the latest updates how they're talking about the climate transmission plan. Here, data on wages of their workers which? Is very important because we know. How they are treated and? Yeah. Other stuff about their. Materials as well, so yeah. I think overall it it is. Relevant to their.

Participant:

You were talking about.

Interviewer:

OK, great.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So that was the first subset of question already done. Moving on the next part is mostly going to be about to understand more of your personal value and habits as a consumer. So do you have any past?

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Experience as a consumer with any of these brands.

Participant:

Yeah, I mean, I have. Apple product. With honestly, I assume I buy things that are. Owned by Mr. but I don't really notice. Same with Unilever actually. I think I. Have like shampoo or? Yeah, something related to these kind of products and for H and. M Yeah, I buy. I buy from there. Not often, but I. Do have a lot of things for me.

Interviewer:

Uh. How frequent would you say you buy from these brands?

Participant:



Both for. Yeah, for Apple, I don't buy. Too often only. Yeah, I like last time I bought something, it was. Like. Six years ago, when I got my. Phone. For nicely, yeah, I I don't know because I don't really check the labels, but. As I know, a lot of things are actually owned by Nestle, so I would say. Quite like. Let's see moderately something in the middle for Unilever. I assume a bit less than Nestle and for each name I would say once every.

Participant:

3-4 months.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So generally, how was your experience with them?

Participant:

Uh. With the brands, you mean? Yeah. I mean, besides Apple and each name which? I both like. Yeah, like. Yeah for yeah, for nestling you liver, I mean. It it's complicated to give that answer, but I assume it's OK since I. Buy them. It means I like them so.

Interviewer:

Great. As corporations, do you think that they are trustworthy?

Participant:

Honestly, no. Like overall I don't trust any corporations.

Interviewer:

Oh, OK, no problem.

Participant:

Even though, like, yeah, OK, I buy from them. Yeah, it's hard to avoid them, especially in this new liver. But yeah, no, not trust.

Interviewer:

Any reason why?

Participant:

Yeah, I mean. I know about their unethical practices for Apple. The fact that they take advantage of people in. I believe Congo, where they get cobbled. Yeah, they. We are not paid almost at all and they are not addressing this, as I saw on their website right now, which is basically slavery at this point. Yeah, with nicely and Unilever. They support Israel, so it's a no from me. And hmm, I mean.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah.

Participant:

It's fast fashion, fast fashion. Will never be echo, not like. Yeah, sure. They both their wages and whatever, but I do not trust that. So yeah.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great insight. Now, before participating in this study, have you ever considered these brands as green, sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

No, even yeah, even though they. They want to appear such like for example, when I when you buy. Something from H&M now they have like this label which says. Made from whatever percentage recycled materials.

Interviewer:

Which?

Participant:

Yeah, I guess that was an indication of their sustainability that I that I first that was my. 1st. Uh. Yeah, interaction with that, so to say. Other than that, no.

Interviewer:

Do you do you maybe vaguely remember since when you just start distrusting this organization, this brand?

Participant:

You mean all of them?

Interviewer:

Or you can or is that event. Individual.

Participant:

OK. OK, well, ohh OK. Well, with Apple, I told you about. Hong.

Participant:

Yeah. I just wanted to double check, but yes. I think that was for me. I saw this recently. And. Yeah. And also with their batteries as well, like, that's also not. There's something weird

going on with their batteries as well, like the way they. Source the materials for day mean. Whatever witnessing you deliver, I told you because you support Israel, so people are boycotting them. So I'm also trying to do that.

Interviewer:

So is that reason that that's quite reason, right? Yeah.

Participant:

Yeah. These like for these three. I I found out. Really recent and it sound like I was. Yeah, I thought I wasn't aware when I buy things that are usually in new liver. Ohh, but now yeah I am a bit more. Aware and for. Yeah, for H&M. I kind of always knew I knew about. Fast fashion. But since yeah, it's it's the most affordable. I couldn't really. Avoiding. Yeah. But to but to give you a specific time. Yeah, basically. I think ever since I learned about what fast fashion entails, which was let's say. Four years ago.

Interviewer:

Interesting. So most are quite recent. Yeah. Interesting. Interesting. OK. Before you participate in the study, were you aware that these brands? In such activities that promote sustainability.

Participant:

Actually I didn't know about Apple, but I assume they would do something. I think most corporations right now have like a sustainability tab on their website. So basically. Uh, yeah. So I didn't know. Exactly about Apple missing liver. But for H&M, yeah, I knew. And because they are kind of vocal about that and also in stores, I think with the labels and everything.

Interviewer:

Great. Awesome. OK. Second subset done. Moving on to the last one also about you also move your stuff. So do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

OK.

Participant:

Yes. I'm. I'm. Yeah, I'm interested in that. And I'm trying to kind of. Engage in things that are like in behaviors that are more sustainable or just in. Or becoming more aware about some topics. About sustainability, so yeah. I am really interested in this topic.

Interviewer:

That's great. That's great to hear. Now, is there any area that you pay more attention to when it comes to sustainability?

Participant:

Hmm. I think.

Participant:

Yeah. I mean, I think about the environment because, yeah, climate change is. Quite, quite a big issue right now. Well, it has always been, of course, but now it's increasingly becoming a bit more scary, so. I am. I'm interested in that also about food waste. I think it's also really, really important. Yeah, and of course. Human rights that I think, yeah, with human rights. It's a bit difficult to tell not to tell. But like, yeah, of course. I'm not going to disclose everything. But. Yeah. So for me, that's that's very important.

Interviewer:

OK, so now when you go shopping. Do you do choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

Sometimes. Well, sometimes, but sometimes they're more, more expensive, like for example, let's say organic meat or. I don't know some vegan milk that is more sustainable, but again it's more expensive so. I think as a question I would like to buy them. I would be inclined to buy them if they weren't so expensive.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. Great. So mostly on like food products, right?

Participant:

Yeah, but even then, I don't know. Like. I'm a little bit. Skeptical about them?

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant:

Because, for example, how? How do I know? If the meat is actually organic. People don't really know what that is as well. Like when when I see then I'm with someone. They're like, OK, but what is that? And. Yeah, or for example, clothes again, I'm really skeptical.

Interviewer:

OK. I will. I would love to hear more about that skepticism. There's a question about it below.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Awesome. So let's see now that was about the products. Now let's look at like on a wider perspective. So before you buy it, let's say a certain product, do you, do you consider whether that brand is sustainable or not?

Participant:

OK. Mm-hmm. Overall no. Because I think when I buy something, it's mostly gonna be about. The money, of course. So because. That sustainability, kind of. Goes to. Yeah, it's like an afterthought.

Interviewer:

Hmm, interesting. Awesome. OK, great. Now looking back at what was written in the campaigns in the link, do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns is in line with your personal values and in which way?

Participant:

I mean, yeah, they, they. All talk about their their impact on the environment. They want to recycle or whatever it is is important to me. Yeah. They also talked about their. The workers, the wages again, like human rights, which is important. So yeah. I think like what they said is definitely. In line with my values.

Interviewer:

Great. Now when going through the content and the campaigns, is there any? Specific part that. Evoked emotions. And if yes, what sort of emotions did they evoke?

Participant:

Hmm. I mean. Yeah, I don't. Know if skepticism is an emotion.

Interviewer:

It is. It is OK. Yeah.

Participant:

Yeah, that's that's what. I was getting it's like. Yeah, a bit pretentious. A bit. Like. Also overwhelmed, I think for Apple. I mean, yeah, of course they are going to know how to design A website kind of better than the other. Companies. So for Apple it was very.

Interviewer:

Check.

Participant:

Easily. Portraits. And it kind of like it. It inspires trust like it gives you the. The idea of OK, I can trust this thing, but for me personally, I know that's. I know that this is. All. Well, not all, but mostly alike.

Interviewer:



OK. Interesting. Is there any, like, we're gonna talk more about Apple because I know how you express your skepticism. Like which? Which part is there any certain part in that website that makes you like? Nah, that makes that really be like I do not trust this.

Participant:

You mean for Apple, right? OK. One second. Yeah, I mean this part with like the proof is in our products. And they they have this really nice. Design of like a lot of. With their products and like Nice visuals and whatever. But yeah, I mean these these nice visuals are supposed to kind of. Conceal, I mean to me kind of conceal a lot of things. So. Yeah, they they try to also like, yeah, put a lot of stuff in here to kind of overwhelm you. To be like, oh, oh, look like, look how great Apple is. Like, so many things that they've they've done. So I think that's why.

Interviewer:

What about the other three?

Participant:

Files model then.

Participant:

Wait. Yeah. The other the other three have like a lot. Again a lot of information, bit vague in some parts as well. Like I want to see like. You know, because I see these numbers and I'm like, I don't really know what that means. I see a percentage. And I'm like. Yeah, well, that doesn't tell me anything, you know. So that's why. I would like to see more like videos or like evidence that they are actually doing these things.

Interviewer:

So should I say that you are not convinced by the numbers then?

Participant:

Yeah, exactly.

Interviewer:

Would like to see more videos and evidence.

Participant:

Interesting, yeah.

Interviewer:

So. Generally, from what you say, I see a lot of negative emotions, not convinced, skepticism, feeling overwhelmed and feeling. They are a bit pretentious. Is there? Is there anything positive or not at all?

Participant:

Yeah. I mean, I told you the only thing I like is.

The. The design of the apple the Apple website. I think it's.

Participant:

Easy to understand and like. Yeah, not too much text. Yeah. And other positive emotions. Yeah. Not not so much.

Interviewer:

OK, no problem I mean.

Participant:

Yeah, of course.

Interviewer:

They don't sound very trustworthy, to be honest, not too much checks. OK, great. OK, that was the second part done just a few more questions and the last part. And then we're done.

Participant:

Sure, sure.

Interviewer:

So now we're going to focus on what they have achieved. Now do you think the campaigns have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Interviewer:

And then now let's do it one.

Participant:

I think you.

Interviewer:

1.

Participant:

OK. Well, I think for Apple, yeah, maybe. I think for sure a little bit because otherwise. Otherwise, I don't know. I feel like other people would know and it would kind of. Yeah, raise some questions or whatever. So I think like for all of them to some. Extent they they did achieve.

But I think they also lie about some things. So. Maybe they have achieved some things, but not like the goals that they have. They haven't reached them like completely.

Participant:

Because for example for. For miss in Unilever, I think. It's impossible to to. Reduce their waste into reduce deforestation. I don't know, that's that's not really. Achievable in my opinion with the current. Things that are going on right now.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm.

Participant:

And for H&M. Yeah, I know. I mean, I know that you can go there and you can. Leave your old. Clothes and you receive like a disc. Whatever. So I think, yeah, they they do recycle, but. The the other problems, which is like the how they treat their workers and how much they pay them. Yeah, that's not. I don't. Thing that improved, even though they say that.

Interviewer:

They say so interesting. OK now. Which part of the website that made you think so? Or is there any reason outside the website that made you think so?

Participant:

Yeah, mostly. Mostly reasons outside the website. With yeah, the things that I see online. UM and. Yeah, that because the the fact that I will never trust corporations, but I mean actually I think, yeah, one thing about websites is that. We have a lot of information to kind of make people say, Oh my God, they want so many things or. Such a great cooperation, but. I think

that's that's a tactic to kind. Of. Overwhelm you and be like. OK, OK, so they do it. I'm not going. To like.

Participant:

Keep reading because I'm sure that they do it.

Interviewer:

Interesting insight. Yeah, that's interesting. I've never thought of it about. Angle. Great. So that was about the path. Now let's focus on what the goal is, what they say they will achieve. Do you think they will actually achieve what they say they will achieve? Again, let's do it 1 by 1.

Participant:

Mm-hmm. Yeah. Yeah, for apple. Yeah, I told you. They they will achieve some things, but.

Participant:

For example them saying. More recycled materials and emission cobalt. And what I think. Thinking of those videos that I saw with like about Congo and like how those people are mining cobbles every day. I don't know. I don't think this. Is this is gonna happen? And four.

Participant:

For next thing you never, I mean. These those are like. Yeah, the the one of the biggest corporations in the world. Again. Could achieve some maybe like. Yeah, recycling shore. But that recycling also depends on like the other countries and how they. They recycle those products, so for me it's really hard to kind of. See this happening. If this is not something that is. Systematically happening across the world, so again. I don't think. This is feasible either or at least. Yeah, sure. They say that by 2023 or 20. Sorry 2030 or 2040. But yeah, I think that's hard

to do. And for H&M. Yeah. Again, I don't think people are. A lot of people care about recycling. I don't think a lot of them actually take their clothes to these to the stores so. Yeah, they might achieve some of the goals to begin. And also with the materials. This is something like you're not going to use water. At all or as much. I don't know. How that's possible? So yeah, I. I really I really. Doubt that they will achieve these goals.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. OK, great. Now, so which campaign do you prefer? Could you rank them from best to worst in your opinion?

Participant:

I think yeah, the best is H&M. Yeah, that's. Yeah, it's a yeah, 18 name Apple, Nestle, Unilever, even though Nestle, Unilever. I would put on the. Same. Spots.

Interviewer:

Could you give the explanation of why you?

Participant:

Because I think the H&M one, like the campaign, is probably the most achievable. In. Yeah, maybe not so quick as they imagine it to be, but. Yeah, Apple second because. Yeah, because I think they are trying with some. Some of the things with other things, yeah, they're not. So good at. And. What they put on the third lighting, they sleep well. Yeah, it's.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant:

Yeah, again not not so achievable. As the others, because I think these these two are. Using the most resources.

Participant:

When? Like, yeah, like they use. Animal products they use. These from the environment. Well, to me they are the.

Interviewer:

Worst. Great. OK. So last question, which campaign do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and which one do you think is not?

Participant:

I don't think any of them are. Because they are so concerned. I think yeah. As I said, I think they they do take some steps into that direction. But overall, since you want to maximize profits. And they want to increase. Obviously, they want to keep their customers, they want to and also increase retention of these customers. They kind of like. Forced to have this sustainability tab on their website so that. People get the false impression that. What they are using, what they are buying is sustainable, even though, again not. Like most customers I've you do not understand. What a lot of those things mean. And they didn't understand the numbers that we see in relation with what? What is going on and what an? Ideal number should be. So. No, I didn't. They don't care. It's just because. Yeah, it's just to look good for the customers. So yeah.

Interviewer:

Great. Interesting. So yeah, also, that was the last question I'm going. To move on to.

Interviewer:

Any other comments you would like regarding the campaigns you have seen? Any minor detailed thoughts, opinions.

Participant:

No, I think that's all.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Anything else you'd like to share about the topic we discussed?

Participant:

Yeah, I mean, very interesting subjects. You're very. Thought about it in this way, but yeah, I liked it.

Interviewer:

So yeah, awesome. Thank you so much for your time. That is all.

Participant:

Of course.

### **Participant 10**

Interviewer:

OK, great. Hi. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and message characteristic that will affect your evaluation of. Whether a sustainability PR campaign is genuine or not. I've already have your consent form.

Participant:



MHM.

Interviewer:

So as you know that everything will be anonymous, and of course you're free to skip or end the interview at any time. I'm also voice recording this and taking notes on my laptop. And yeah, that's pretty much it. OK, let's get started.

Participant:

All right.

Interviewer:

OK, thanks. I'm just going to start with some basic demographic questions. So could I ask you how old you are?

Participant:

29.

Interviewer:

29 great and what is your nationality?

Participant:

Polish. Belgian.

Interviewer:

Polish. OK and. What is your occupation?

Participant:

My you mean my? Work, yeah. Health safety environments.

Interviewer:

Wait, sorry again.

Participant:

Health, safety and environment specialist.

Interviewer:

Specialist great. OK. So that's it. OK, there will be 3 subsets of. Sorry, three set question in this interview. The first one will the first one is quite short. Just gonna go over some to see whether you're familiar with the topic. And then the second one is slightly longer.

Participant:

Right.

Interviewer:

Here I will explain as we move there, there will be 3 subsets. In the second one, but again each only contains a few questions, so it won't take too long and then the. Last one, of course. I'm just going to start with the first set of question. First of all, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Yes, I am. I saw I saw before in my studies. He started.

Interviewer:

Could you try explaining it in your own words?

Participant:

Corporate social responsibility focuses more on the fact that every corporation that you have, like I don't know, let's go from H&M fashion brands to car manufacturers. All of that, all of these corporations have to keep into account that. They are responsible for the environment. And for other sustainable development goals like they were defined in the UN Charter, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals basically. And it's it refers to fact like where you are as a company open and transparent about how you do certain things. UM. Like for example how you treat your employees, what kind of supplies you use to get your material or these suppliers working in an environmental friendly way or your suppliers not using child labor, this kind of stuff and you like every year? Every corporation is supposed to make this big report the social responsibility report. Where they you. Know all of these things according to the single development. Goals of the United Nations. Homes and describe how the company performs with each of these sustainable development goals and what can be improved upon because no company is perfect. And yeah, I mean. Usually these reports. Are very long, like depending on how big your company is going to be to 200 pages, let's say. We want both from H&M and it was like 200 pages and it was all all, all of you know. But it was H&M and we. Know H&M. Is fast fashion, so we knew a lot of it was green washing also, that's where the tricky part. Companies that have a bad reputation, they tend to greenwash their goals and achievement and how they're doing. But in reality, it's not that not that straightforward.

Interviewer:

OK, great. We will talk about H&M a little bit later. It is part of the interview, so great that you really have an opinion about this. OK, just being on, are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Yeah. Yes. Sustainability. Yes, because it's all falls under the same umbrella. It's again, it's related to like the Sustainable Development Goals. Like I just explained like what do companies do to improve their contributions to the world they. Again, like you know, what kind of materials they use the the materials they use for the clothing, for example on the environment or not? Are these materials extracted according to? According in ways that are OK with human rights like, you know you don't use child labour or that the people that extra extract the materials, they do it in safe working conditions, that they're paid properly, this kind of stuff like all these human rights, things are also like part of the sustainable. 30. I would say because especially if you were suppliers from other countries, from poor countries there, they don't really pay too much attention to laws and legislation like they do in Western Europe or in in the Western world general. And that's always where the tricky part is, because sometimes you use a supplier and you don't know that. Suppliers using child labor in his or her country to get your material and then you are responsible as a company chain because you are. Perpetuating it because you have a contract to supply and you're paying him to do these kind of things, it's kind of similar like how you buy Adidas shoes that were produced either in Europe or in. China. Of course, people would like to buy that less from China because they're much cheaper, but at what cost? And of course, on the other hand, if you don't buy that. Let us then, then, those kids that do all that labor, they will not get their paycheck because you didn't buy that enough. So it's not that easy. Choices are not that easy as customers.

Interviewer:

Easy. OK, moving on, when you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is referring to?

Participant:

Well, basically the edge company is going to present its service. It's doing very well that they are achieving the goals that they're doing their best honor, that they're very transparent and open, that they have the reports ready on time and available for the public to see. If you go to the website of the company, you can easily find their. Sustainability report. Going through it and in case of any questions you have to contact the contact. People are listed in the sustainability report if you want to have more information about it. So they might be as transparent as possible. And of course, since it's PR, they're also always are going to have a good opinion about themselves and even the. Points that are. Not done as good. They will always try to find a way to make it sound as if they're doing good anyway and. Despite the small stuff. With you they will find a way around. So they always try to spin every story into post, even if they have a thing.

Interviewer:

On your grade. So what are your thoughts on campaigns like this?

Participant:

Well, this it really depends on the industry, I would say because if you would have to ask the sustainability reports of oil manufacturing companies like Shell or BP, then if they're going to start saying that they have very green. And everything and that they are following the sustainable development goals. I think most customers would scratch their head and they would like really be thinking like. Is this true or is this not because we all know the reputation of companies like BP and Shell that they are not? For sustainability, that much but more known for their greenwashing. Concepts. Like when they say for example they had small time, I think it was shell they had this advertisement one time that they basically have like this poster where it where it had like an industry with chimneys and then. It had like flowers. Chimneys. And then it had like a decline that that sets. Like our, our our ambitions, our greed, stuff like that, but they

are not harmed, that are not harmful for the environment. They're clean, clean emissions that they that they take care of their CO2 and. I think that message came. Out wrong because it seems very weird. But. I mean these kind of things have to be taken. And then if you. Have other companies? That are like. I don't know like Agonia, which is that clothing brand that repairs the clothing if.

Interviewer:

Wait, which brand?

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Patagonia, yes.

Participant:

Yeah, but they're going to they they also have, they could have this green imago around them where they repair the clothing that they try not to use material that's harmful for the environment. And such. And yeah, these these things are usually more expensive because of the cost of going to producing it, but they give off a better reputation because. They really like. Focused from the beginning on that concept of sustainability and circular economy, while other like companies. Especially like core companies there, I didn't have that in mind. They're just basically trying to cater to the market and current trends. So I'll be more likely to believe startups or companies that are green from the very beginning, and I would believe established companies that have been polluting for decades, let's say. That's really depending on the company, how you look at it.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. All noted. So that was the first part already done. Great. Yeah, I would say moving on to the second part, I'm just gonna send something over to your WhatsApp. If you could just give me a second.

Participant:

Nice. Great.

Interviewer:

OK. OK, I just sent you a list link. Don't open them yet, I'm just going to quickly explain how they works. So as you can see there are like 13 different links but from only four companies. So Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Have you heard their names before?

Participant:

Which one was the last one you mentioned?

Interviewer:

H&M.

Participant:

Oh yeah, I've heard all that.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Could you quickly tell me which industry they're in?

Participant:

That depends because H&M is like the fashion industry, fast fashion. Apple is like consumer electronics, basically laptops, mobile phones, smart watches, computers, all of that. Unilever is like more of a company that's for food. They have a lot of brands under them like. With Tom. Other food brands like, like most of the things that you can buy like teas, soups, all of these kind of things like really food oriented and what was the. Last one again.

Interviewer:

Nestle and Unilever, I think you just made a mistake.

Participant:

Yeah. Also like a. Food brand, of course. Like, I mean, you can buy like. Like I think it's cacao and stuff like that.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah. Unilever. They also have food and also like a lot of like hygiene products like shampoos and stuff. Yeah. Mm-hmm. OK, great. So I'm just going to quickly explain how the links work. So as you can see there. Multiple links unfortunately, but for Apple for example, there's only one link. That's because, like in their sustainability PR campaign, everything was put into one link, so that's really nice for. Us. But unfortunately for the other.

Participant:

Uh-huh.

Interviewer:

Companies, they have multiple campaigns going on at the same time. You should click next. Am I making sense?



Participant:

Yeah, I think I I think you.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK, great. So let's say like link A is the first page and link B would just be the continuous of it. So while you are reading through the links, I would like to ask you to just focus on the content. You don't have to worry about any clicking on any links or download any report, no need at all. Just focus on the content, what they say on the page itself. So what I'd also like to ask you to do is when you go through all of the links, focus more on their goals, their values, what they say they have achieved and what they say they want to do or what they will achieve. And yeah, just take take as much time as you need to go. Through all of them. And then after that, please return here and then I'm going to ask you a few questions to see how you evaluate them. But then again, don't memorize. You don't have to memorize anything because you can always, you know, during the interview, flip back and forth and see what they say and then answer my question.

Participant:

Yeah, I see.

Interviewer:

OK so. Time as you need.

Participant:

OK, I'll go into it now.

Interviewer:

OK. Thanks.

Participant:

Alright, I went through them.

Interviewer:

Awesome. OK. I'm just going to. Move on to the questions so.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK, based on what you've read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign focus on?

Participant:

Well, basically they would like to give out numbers that they achieved so much percentage of reduction of using certain materials or that like in the companies of Unilever, Nestle, they like to point out how many percent of like, you know the. How many percent farmers that are they take these material from areas that are not deforested, because that's also a big problem in harvesting palm oil, for example, where you have to cut down trees. And that's the deforestation, which is an issue usually in Brazil. But yeah, here they have to focus that how they're really improving that it's now done legally and stuff like that, but. I don't know like that.

Interviewer:

Companies.

Participant:

That was, I think it was Nestle or Unilever where there I think Nestle that because both are actually doing around the palm oil and I know it's controversial because the forest building issues when it comes to harvesting palm oil. But yeah, in those airports like to say that they're doing it clean and. List the police station somewhere and all that. It sounds a bit weird to me. And yeah, regarding H&M, they. Like to focus on the fact that. People that they are. But the motion to you using waste related.

Participant:

Purchasing jeans.

Interviewer:

Sorry, I couldn't hear you. I couldn't hear you at all when you were talking about the part.

Participant:

Yeah, about the H&M there they like. To focus. That they reduce the waste that's produced dying of the clothing, you know, because they have to use special special dyes like paint for the clothing for. Means and that's. That's a big problem because it generates waste and especially if you consider the fact that genes when people have used them up, they just throw them away, over time it becomes a huge garbage dump of jeans and most people do not give back their jeans to repair them like some companies. For an H and. M Now claims that they will also like like you know, like encourage people to give back their clothing for repairs, which is a new concept from hitting them because I didn't hear about it before. But from reading this development reports on their website, it seems like they are going to now focus more on. Which kind of makes sense because there were other companies before that, like jeans and brands that offered this many years ago. So it's not a completely new concept to me, but I do it almost

on the bandwagon, jumping on the clothing repair. So that's what kind of came. As a surprise to me. When I read that in the links that you sent me.

Interviewer:

So you see that the campaigns are addressing certain problems. Think what they are addressing the problem that they're addressing is relevant to the company.

Participant:

Yeah. I would think so, yeah, definitely. Especially when it comes to those companies like. You deliver unless. They were there, really focused on the farmers. And because I mean, most of the stuff that you would you have to grow it on the, on the land, on the fields. And that's why harvesting is important, man. It's also important to farmers work in good conditions and they get paid for their work properly. Instead of and usually the problem in those countries is that they are not paid as much as they should be because yeah, because of extortion on people and governments misused and and everything. It's yeah, there are problems with with these kind of issues in a lot of countries that are outside of Europe. Even within Europe, we have problems like that. In some areas. And but for Apple I also like to see how they claim that they are, you know, also like being more sustainable than being all the setting affected the technologies producing by its own nature is more than environment friendly because for smartphones and it's it's. Which is most? Probably taken from a mine in China. Under which people work in labor conditions that are not tolerable according to Western standards, let's say because China has a monopoly on almost a near monopoly on Syria because of the mines that are located in China, and they have a huge market share compared to other countries. There's also like the mines in Africa. But they're also usually are kind of controlled by external factors govern. Comments and whatnot, so that's a bit of a Turkey territory there. When Apple was mentioning that they have achieved so much, you know that the solution is grounded from right for resources where it's

being done, you know the the right way, the clean way without any issues where the workers are paid properly. I can have my thoughts about that with Apple specifically because. I know, I know that the industry is not that clean. So when it comes to mining the minerals needed for smartphones and computers.

Interviewer:

So. They are also doing some actions to remedy like what they are trying to address. Do you think this action actually fits the cause?

Participant:

I think it would, but I would like to see more, more hard evidence on the fact that these actions they. That they work because all they, all they say now is that they they claim that they do this, they do that, they reduce this and they give numbers. But. How can we be? For sure, these numbers are real. When it comes to these companies, because I know the love comes to they like to, you know, they like to clean up their image, that they're doing better than they really are. And it's easy to throw out numbers without anyone verifying them, especially when the PR and the PR of each company puts these numbers on the website. They tend to stretch it for. For for the internal purposes, just to get better model. I really would like. To see more hard evidence and like I don't know, like.

Participant:

Hard facts that. This is really how it is. And we're really doing this instead of just throwing around numbers which cannot be verified.

Interviewer:

Let's say awesome. Great. Just so that was the first subset also done moving on. Now this next question is mostly gonna be about you, your personal values and also your consumption habits.

Participant:

Right, right.

Interviewer:

So do you have any past experience as a consumer with any of these corporations?

Participant:

Definitely. I mean you need over, I probably have a few of their of their marks on my shelf which I consume on a weekly basis. So it's hard to to not get around it. I mean it's everywhere nicely too like with the like with chocolates they that they produce or companies that. Produce under the umbrella of honestly. For example apple. Well now I have a company smartphone that's from Apple, so this is my first like real all hands experience with apples. I before that I didn't have any Apple products. In my house or anything like that, we are we are no apple people in my family. H&M. Yeah, I have. I have, including from H&M. I used to buy clothing there few years ago because they have really nice clothing, good prices. But lately I feel like each of them like it doesn't have the clothing that. My style so. I already buy clothing from H&M. As much as I used to back when I. Was still back before finally, basically.

Interviewer:

So generally, what do you think of them as corporations? Do you think of them as trustworthy or not?

Participant:

Well, H&M not so much because in the end they produce this. This. Yeah, this fast fashion clothing and we know that this that these clothings are usually produced in countries like Bangladesh, China, India, Malaysia in those in that area of of Southeast Asia. And we know that the working conditions. There are pretty. So there was this big case more than 10 years ago where a company or factory clothing factory got destroyed. I don't know. It collapsed and it killed many of these workers in Bangladesh and that caused quite an uproar because of the working conditions that were there, the poor health and safety. You know, regulations were in place and basically, you know, all the dirt came out after that accident, all the missed. Management. The problems with the with the workers, the treatment of the. Workers their pay. Their working hours, the fact that they are, you know, producing for very cheap cost clothing that is then sold in the West for much more expensive prices. And it all came out of the closet and that basically it tarnished the reputation. Then of brands like H&M, CNA and all those other ones that. Are busy with fashion. So for those I can know that it's tricky when they say something I I tend to laugh like a second opinion on that because I don't really believe. That for the other brands I thought I'm not that. I don't know that much about Nestle, Unilever, but I know that Unilever is a very big player. In the we had the market of like, like you said, hygienic products. And food.

Participant:

I I don't really have a clear opinion on that because I haven't researched myself too much to be honest and regarding Apple. Well, Apple really makes uh expensive. Stuff. They make expensive models of computers, laptops. Smartphones. And the fact that they released new models on a very frequent basis, every picks the question if it's really necessary to have that much models released in a short time spent just because it has some newer specs, a few new functions, and they really encourage people to just trade in their phones. Because if you don't, if you if you stay with the old model, sooner or later it will be. Updated it will not receive any updates anymore and apparently it will also start locking up, thereby forcing you to buy a

new model even though you don't have to, because if it works fine, then why should you buy a new model suddenly? So those are practices that are not not not really sustainable. If you ask me, it shouldn't be done, but it happens. And I also like, I know that Apple has this exclusivity thing. So if you use Apple purse, it's hard to get compatible with the products from the competition, which kind of makes this like an exclusivity thing. And that also like generates friction because you cannot use other software on it, and you're forced to stick with Apple only and then you have like this split between people that are for Android and people are for Apple. And I don't think that's a healthy thing to do to cause this kind of division in Poland to keep things exclusive because. You pretend to be like a like an even like a company that's like a luxury brand because it's expensive and you have to frequently buy you new models of it when they release. And I don't think that's a good. Way. Of doing things I. Mean here it's profitable for them. But for the general Sustainable Development goals and all, that's not not very good in my opinion. Because you don't really need a new model every six months. Let's be honest about that. That is just not the way you just harm the environment or by producing these things massively pumping them out and expect people to buy them over and over again every year or something. That's not the way of doing things.

Interviewer:

So before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as green, sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Actually, no, none of them, because these are brands have been around for decades. At least, yeah, more than. 10 years, let's say. And then when they when? These companies were started. Nobody thought about green or sustainable development started because that didn't exist. This component this. Concepts didn't exist back in the day when these companies were



founded, and that's why they don't have it ingrained in their DNA. So what's happening now is that of course you have new people that are in charge of the companies. They make new guidelines, they change their charters and whatever. But the core, the deep core, the company is not green because it was not meant to be. And all they do now is just chew warning stuff into it to give it a more green marvel and kindly give this. Impression that they are, you know, adapting to the world, adapting to change. But they're still, they still have a long way. To. Go. So no, I do not believe that they are green companies. Not at all. Because that's was not what their concept was when they were. Launched back in the day.

Interviewer:

So. Before this study, were you also aware that they engage in CSR activities?

Participant:

Actually, yeah, because it's standard for every company. Now if we saw. That in the material that I did in. In school, that's now pretty much for most big companies. They have to do the sustainability report because it's part of the it's part of the expectation. I think it's also part of the legislation in some countries that you make a sustainable development report every year. So yes, I knew that the big companies. Have that because they have. To have it's an expectation. And if you want to play along in this market, you need. To have a sustainable development report. Because that's what others expect from you. So yes, I was pretty much aware that they probably have fun.

Interviewer:

So apart from all the reports and stuff where you did, you know some, let's say specific activities from any of these brands.

Participant:

Specific activities. Yeah. Well, yeah, yeah. I mean not not what I nothing new that I can add to it. I mean, we know H&M does clothing, next letters like food, Unilever, food hygiene products and Apple consumer electronics. I mean, I don't have much to add to it.

Interviewer:

No, I mean, I mean like those like CSR activities. Like, yeah, like, like anything, they any activities that promote sustainability that you know they do except for all the reporting, of course.

Participant:

CSR activities. Well, no, not not so much. I mean, they do claim that they do something for the farmers that they work with better suppliers and that they make sure that the condition of the farmers in Latin America are on on the basic standards. So I assume those kind of activities. Yeah. I mean if if I read through the reports, I see that. Pop up sometimes if they take good care of their of the farmers. They don't work with people that pay the farmers like below the minimum wage, for example. So that's that's the only. Example I could think of.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So and that is. Based on what you've read.

Participant:

Yeah, basically OK.

Interviewer:

That's the second subset done. Moving on now for you personally, do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability?

Participant:

In a way, yes, it's both yes and no because it depends. It really depends on the stuff I like. For example, like for sustainability when it comes to electronics. Any electronic thing like let's say from a TV to a micro? Way. For me, it's important that these devices are made to last, that they work for more than just a few years. They work for a long period of time. Instead of breaking down every two years like a lot of electronic equipment breaks down these days, because nowadays they produce things that are made to break down basically in the short amount of time spent. So that people buy new products and their money flowing in into each company because that's the way we're doing things. If you look back. Like 50-60 years ago, when they made the device, that device lasted for many years because it was. Constantly more these days and everything is like made disposable like like you know you use something and it breaks down. You throw it away, but in that by doing that you create a big trash mountain of trash. It cannot be properly dealt with and it causes a strain on our planet. And what and for that, I think it's very important to rethink the design of certain things, like the things that people now design stuff to break down in one or two years. That's a very bad philosophy. It's purely capitalistic philosophy because they force you to buy, keep buying new things the whole time. So the money keeps flowing. But it can be done differently where you make things that last for a very long time. And people have more use of it. It's better for the planet. Of course not better for companies, let's say. So that's where the problem is. But like for example there is this. There's this light bulb in America and one of the fire departments they called the Centennial light bulb. It has been like produced more than 100 years ago and to this day it still works because it was made back with the philosophy that things are supposed to be made to last. And this light bulb is the living proof that you can make light bulbs, at least for 100 years. So the fact that they sell light bulbs now that die in two years or something, that is just that, that that is just bull crap. You asked. Me, because the technology existed 100 years ago to make things that last. So now, so now they cannot tell me that they cannot produce a decent light bulb. Sorry, I don't believe that. So definitely it's all about the design philosophy. And we should really get rid of that

to get rid of the flows of it, to design things, to breakdown, because that will just destroy our planet over time. Back to going back to. Your question, I consider myself a stable individual. Yeah, when it comes to like these things, like I said about the devices that are made to us, yes. But to other things, I don't pay that much attention to as much as I should probably. Also, because I'm caught up in everyday life and I just don't always think about sustainability items, but there's some things that can be done better for sure. Yeah, I mentioned before, I think that's what we do now because that's my biggest issue.

Interviewer:

OK, so I assume you're mostly concerned about whether a product is like, let's say, long lasting and how much weight it would produce if it is not.

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's an important one. Another important factor for me problem with the microplastics. Because microplastics South Africa. They're including. They're in shampoo. They're they're everywhere. And it creates a huge litter. And it's just for human health because we have it all in our bodies, these microplastics, and. This is something that didn't exist long time ago and now it's everywhere. It's only. And to create a big problem for human health in the future, in future I guarantee it. It's something that people should pay attention to because the plastic waste. It's a problem you have plastic everywhere and it's a material that will be great natural because it's another artificial thing that was created. So how do we break down plastic? How do we get to the plastic waste like you have companies like McDonald's that have banned plastic straws? OK, good. But that's just part of the problem. About all the other plastic items that are abundant. And not necessary. Even how do we deal with those you have? You know, usually they ship those ways to India or to China and they let those countries deal with it. But that's not the solution because you just believe those. So we need a global approach to these

problems that every country signs zone and works together towards a common goal of solving these issues. And you cannot have countries bouncing around their problems back and forth because nothing gets done that way.

Interviewer:

OK, great to know. So when you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

I have to be honest. No, I I don't really pay attention to it. Usually. Usually I don't choose it because it tends to cost more and I found that some of these products are labeled as green and stuff. They're not that very effective as normal products. Like for example the the the product that you use to clean the toilets. You have like normal alternatives like chemicals. For it and then you have the green ones like the biological ones. And I just found out that once I had these biological ones, it didn't do that proper job of cleaning my toilet bowl like the normal product. The not not biological greenmont is. So yeah, in that case I can say that, yeah, I prefer the normal product is the the biological 1. But I'm not someone who goes and looks for biological stuff. Usually I just look at the price and if it's affected. Pretty much interested.

Interviewer:

OK. So that was about the product in general. Now let's talk about like the brand itself. So when you go shopping before buying a certain product, do you consider whether that brand is sustainable or not before deciding whether to buy or not?

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah. Like let's say. 99% of the time I do not. Pay attention to it to be honest. Unless I know the brand and if it's something important to me, and if I know it has a green background. Then yeah, I. Probably would take into consideration, but I cannot think of any examples right now. Mostly I just buy because of the cheap price. That's the reality. I think that goes for most people.

Interviewer:

Yeah, indeed it is true. Also, the participants I had talked about price as like the designing.

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK. So now looking back at the campaigns you just read on from the four companies. Do you think?

Participant:

Yep.

Interviewer:

What is portrayed in them on the website is in line with your personal value.

Participant:

Well, well, yeah, of course I'm I. Mean I'm all for it, that there is sustainable development, call it. Everybody works towards it. Yeah, of course I value the fact that they want to reduce waste, that they want to reduce tough, tough labour conditions for the farmers in the third world

countries. All of that. So yeah, it's it's in line with my values. But the question is how, how, how authentic are these reports like, how can these? Extreme measures. That's always what considers. Because I tend to be very critical. Of these reports. I do not believe everything what I read. I was in a critical mind about. It and I. Know that there's a lot of lies and fake news going around and doing these days because that's the world we live in and you have to take that into account every time when you read something like OK, sure, yeah, 50% reduction of this, but in how much is this true? You always going to keep that in mind to be. Critical consumer, I would say not just someone who blindly takes figures and says Ohh yeah this is good. Ohh perfect. It's in line with my expectations and my values. I like to be critical.

Interviewer:

So one while reading through the campaigns, is there any part that evokes emotions, any sort of emotion, positive, negative, neutral, any sort? And which part?

Participant:

Yeah. Ohh, I think it was with the Apple campaign that I saw something about the fact that that they're that that they're green around their production of those smartphones and that. At that point, I was like. Are you serious? Like I know this industry. It's not like not clean industry. It's not, it's. It's easier said than done. I just didn't want to believe that much it it had a really nice person that. He was 50. Percent or something. And that was, I told her. I don't think so. I really don't think so. I think this is a bit of a stretch.

Interviewer:

What about the Japanese?

Participant:

So I have. The other companies. Yeah, I was also like. A bit wary about the palm oil topic. I don't know if it was funny liver or nesting 1. Of those two. Because then I also know that they deal with deforestation because you need to cut off the trees to to gather the the oil. The trees. So when they say that that that they are not harming the harming the the the you know the how do you say the the forest station. Is somewhere that. Yeah, OK. But if you don't from the forest station, and how do you extract the town? I mean that that just something that doesn't make much sense to me. So that was also like. That's something that that just, you know. That's filled me with disbelief. I think those. Are the two best examples the apple and the power when I. When I look. At the because and I said no.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Really. Yeah. OK. What about his name? Any specific emotions?

Participant:

Teaching them no, not so much. I mean, maybe I was a bit surprised when they said that they offer. They're going to offer a repair services because I. Haven't heard about that? Before it's a good evolution. It's not popular among consumers. To repair the clothing because it's a concept that. Doesn't really ring a bell to many people, because when something's broke, you just go buy a new one. So much easier and cheaper usually. Then go or turn repair it, pay money for it, wait until it's repaired. I mean, it's a lengthy process and while you just buy something new, it's a very quick, very short process and people like to go for the quick and easy solutions, most of them.

Interviewer:

Yeah, fair.

Participant:



So, so that would be something that H&M to work on to provide them because I don't think if I go to my H&M in Hamburg them to repair my jacket, I don't think they will offer me a repair service like they claim in that system sustainability report. But let's see, let's see what the future will bring. Hope they stick true to what they say. And.

Interviewer:

OK. Awesome. So that was the second set done. Moving on to the last few questions.

Participant:

All right.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK. Now let's look at let's focus on like what they say they have achieved.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Do you? Think that they have actually achieved what they say they have achieved.

Participant:

Now our second thoughts about it. I mean the fingers seem good and they seem like they're always improving and doing everything better. But then you usually.

Interviewer:

I'm sorry. One second. One second. Let's evaluate each company 1 by 1.

Participant:

Ohh OK about Apple. Well, what can I say? I mean. When you read the report, it seems all nice. And all that they are doing an improvement and getting better. Routers, smartphones and stockers. I don't know, to be honest. Like it seems it seems. I I I don't feel like believing it to be honest, because I'm critical of these kind of statements because like I said, I know the industry and it's a dirty industry. So if it's only common greenwash, that's better. Than this then no. I will not fall for that. So I I don't think this this achievement is maybe they did, but not at least not in how they stated. I think they just you know magnified it. Some magnified small tiny chips, and they blew it out of proportions. That's how it looks like more to me.

Interviewer:

Great. What about Nestle?

Participant:

Honestly, well, I have nothing. I don't have much to add since I'm not very familiar with with their activities. It it could be believable, except again for that poem story. No, I I don't know. I mean, if they think they can. Get they can. Guarantee better formal rights for farmers in Brazil. Knowing that it's a tough country. Where deforestation happens a lot. I'm not sure about that.

Interviewer:

So when you say it is mostly believable or you're judging based on the, let's say on the facts and figures they provided. That's because of something else.

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah. On those facts and figures and and also on the fact that you hear media stories about it or when you read. Deeper through it on the Internet that you figure there is like there is, you know. A second story. To us like now, a second phase of the coin, how we pull it

the second side of the coin, a flip side. So yeah, there's like, yes, they say this, but then on the other hand. You have that situation. So I'm like, yeah, I'm like. Again, I'm critical about these things.

Interviewer:

OK, what about Unilever?

Participant:

Well, also again not that machine for that I. Can say about it? That really I I can't. I don't know. I'm not. I'm not that familiar.

Interviewer:

Yeah, no problem, no problem and kitchenette.

Participant:

H and. M. If it's believable. Hard to say. I mean, they frequently come, they they tend to come to the new in the news media about something where people complain. About workers rights or? And these things, how they source their material from poor countries and it's done not in the best conditions. While their sustainability report states that, no, no, no, it's it's it's going better. We're doing good and the conditions have improved but yeah. You see these? Two things contradict each other, so that makes the report not believable to me.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK, great. Thank you for that. Now that was about what they have already done. Now let's focus on the goals and like a future commitment, let's say do you think they will achieve what they say they will achieve? Again, let's do it 1 by 1.

Participant:

Oh. Well for apple. That would depend if they're too ambitious and of course not. They will not achieve. Their goals, I mean, if they want to. I would have. I would have to again. See their goals, what their goals were. Because I don't remember it from us.

Interviewer:

Yeah, exactly. No problem. No problem. Eda, you can always go back. And like reach.

Participant:

Yeah. But like, like, let's let's say if they want to, you know, get better, they get the silicium from better sources. I mean, they really focus on it. They could do it, but.

Interviewer:

Sorry, what is the what is the element against? How do you spell that?

Participant:

You can't do. Silicium.

Interviewer:

Silicium OK.

Participant:

Yeah, that's yeah. Minutes from cleaner resources. Yeah, that's going to be a tough target to achieve since there is a monopoly on the market with and it's not easy. To extract it. So I don't know what they are going. To solve that problem. So I don't know that target. Is reachable for them. If that's what the target is, of course. But yeah, I mean. I think again, I think all those

reports. Are a bit over ambitious as well. And of course, yeah you can. Be over ambitious, but. Where where is the where. The limits I would say. I mean in the end, if you're just gonna come up with things that you're gonna do this, you're going to do that and and you end up not doing it. Then you're less believable than you were before. So I see.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK, moving on.

Participant:

Yep.

Interviewer:

Their next company?

Participant:

Yeah, and miss Nestle.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

I figured I figured it's liquid maybe yeah. They I think they. Could they could achieve like? Something. If. If they work with with those farmers, I think yeah, it's. It's it's possible. It's quite possible and. Depends on which phone, which phones you work with, uh, which plantations, also in which countries. But I think there's actually room for improvement there. So I think they. Can reach their goals of like you know. Expecting the material from farmers that get good pay for their work and stuff like that, I yeah, that's do.

Interviewer:

Why? Like why? Or what makes you think that Nestle could achieve their goal?

Participant:

Well, well, there are many plantations around the world so. I think if. They cooperate with the local governments and like you know. Or like put some pressure on it. Then I think things can be done.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

Yeah, you have to just improve it, like have some legislation changes. Get some donations for those farmers. Government donations so that they can do their work. Yeah, Subs subsidies. Subsidies for the farmers.

Interviewer:

Is it something they mentioned on the website or something like you know?

Participant:

He's done throwing into the. That's also where these. I'm throwing around. Basically I don't think they mentioned those, but it's possible we work. It's possible to get things done to make to improve them, so there there is a problem in that sector.

Interviewer:

So so is it correct if I say that this is what you think they can not necessarily reflect in their website?

Participant:

Yeah. Yes. Yeah, yeah, of course. I'm just throwing my my ideas about it.

Interviewer:

What about what about, like uh, what is on their website? Is there any indication that shows you that OK, yeah. Maybe they will achieve this.

Participant:

Uh, no, I. Don't think there was, but I I have. A good feeling. About it, let's say like that, OK, feeling interesting. Yeah, yeah, that's something that you. Also need to have a good feeling sometimes.

Interviewer:

Great. OK, what about Unilever?

Participant:

I never I think it, I think. It's a similar story really. But again, I don't know much about. The company. So. My opinions are very limited about it.

Interviewer:

Great. What about each, Annette?

Participant:

Hmm, well, if they want. To really like you know, offer this service. For repairing clothing. Yes, that's that's that's reachable, yes, but maybe maybe not in the time in the in the time in the deadline they have at mine. I don't know which deadline it was. But I would say that over the years it can become a possibility, yeah. Definitely. I think that's a good addition.

Interviewer:

Any indication why you think so?

Participant:

Because it has been done before by other companies that offer, like jeans, that sell jeans and they offer repair services or even Patagonia, that repairs their own clothing. So hmm, can steal their homework, improve upon it, and launch their own repair services globally. It is doable. It's already there. They just have to take. Take inspiration from the competition, improve upon it and launch it. And since they are a bigger and bigger company with more money than their competition, I don't see any problems.

Interviewer:

Yeah. That indicates that.

Participant:

I think they did mention something about the day, what they are going to because I saw some numbers when it came to those repair services. So I think it's going to the right direction on that aspect, please.

Interviewer:

Right. Great. OK. So which campaign do you prefer? Could you rank them from best to worst?



Participant:

OK, from this to. Work from all of all of all. Of these folks. Like container or like what they've written. You mean on the.

Interviewer:

Website. Yeah. Yeah. Like, let's say, the way you evaluate them, which one do you find more? Trustworthy. Real, you know.

Participant:

OK, I think I would start with the Unilever 1.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant:

And then go to the nest hole.

Participant:

Then I would put H&M on the third floor and Apple on the final one because I know it's very they like showing off more than they like to do. So. The last place.

Interviewer:

Interesting ranking. Could you quickly explain your ranking?

Participant:

Yeah, sure. I mean that both from Unilever and Nestle, they seem rather achievable and doable. Like I mentioned before again with with those farms that they that can guarantee them better conditions.

Participant:

Or H&M definitely doable if they look at the competition, how they are doing and improving upon it, they can make the statements that they have on the website come through. They they don't have to do that much effort. Really they don't need to do their own research for it, not so much at. Because it's already there, it takes the concept exists, it's nothing new. Repairing clothing. It's nothing new. It existed already even before, before we had, like this mass production of clothing. People would have their clothing, they would go to the tailor and tailor would fix the clothing product. So the concept has been there for centuries, actually. But for Apple, I don't really see a way how they can optimize their sustainable. Knowing that the that the brand is like really it's not very sustainable friendly cause and effect, they launch new models left and right and without without thinking about the fact that people really need it or not. That's that. That's I will rank apple less because they're not that trustworthy to me because. Their business practices.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. OK, so of these four campaigns, which do you think are done out of real concern for the environment and which one do you think is not?

Participant:

Which one is not for the environment? Well, that's.

Interviewer:

Like done out of. Yeah, OK. Apple is not for real concern, OK?

Participant:

Yeah, I don't want that.

Interviewer:

So what about the other three?

Participant:

OK. Hmm. That's like I would say to borderline. Borderline borderline. Borderline act between the two worlds could this. Knowing their reputation, their previous reputation, but they they have a. Nice way of putting. It so I am willing to give. Them you know, a a chance. As for Nestle and Unilever, I think they are more. In the believable category.

Interviewer:

OK. More believable.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

OK, great. And I believe you also already explained your ranking, explain why above so.

Participant:

Yeah, yeah. I mean the same.

Interviewer:

So for for the companies that you think are not done out of real concern, what do you think the motive is for them doing this?

Participant:

Yeah. To get a. Better reputation so that you know that they they show people because these sustainability topics are very in and even consumers, they pay attention to it to at least some degree. So of course it's always a good thing to promote. Yourself as a sustainable. Company that you do it, even if your contributors are minimal, if you can make a whole show about it that you're doing like this and that and and you're you're improving those, that makes an impression on people and it's. And also I kind of shut the mouths of the criticisms of people are more critical towards your company because you can then just shove the report in their face. To make them, you know, sink at home, lower that. They're not that anymore. But. But still. I mean, if you if you dive into the figures, you think about it really hard, then you have to ask yourself the question if it's. Really believable. What apple? Is doing, yeah, but that's my opinion, OK?

Interviewer:

OK. That. Yeah. OK. That was it. I'm just gonna move on to closing. So great. Anything. Any other comments you'd like to make about the PR campaign samples that you just saw? Any minor detailed thoughts, opinions.

Participant:

No, actually, no, no, I think I've. Expressed myself clearly.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK. Anything else about this topic that you'd like to share?

Participant:

Just that people have to, you know, not take everything at face. Value I would. Say I would say to that people think critically about when they read some report, especially from the big established companies who we know they're not green because they were not green in their DNA and that's why it's best to rethink it about what their true. Pensions are. Because most of the time it's just greenwashing. And that's just the fact. Like with those oil companies like Shell and BP, that's just pure greenwashing. So we have to think about that as well here for the four companies that we have for this research topic, yeah.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So that was it. Thank you so much for your time.

### **Participant 11**

Interviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The goal is to understand which individual factors and also CSR message.

Interviewer:

Characteristic. That will affect your evaluations of sustainability PR campaign, so I already have your signed consent forms or I'm sure you already know your rights, that this is only voice recorded. It's completely anonymous. And of course you can always skip or end the interview at any time.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. We can already get started. I'm just going to collect some basic demographic data. So could I ask?

Participant:

How old you are? I'm 30.

Interviewer:

OK. Also and what is your nationality?

Participant:

I'm not English both.

Interviewer:

And what is your occupation?

Participant:

My occupation is a volunteer organization doing communication work.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So there will be three sets of questions in this interview. Each only has around like three to four questions, except for the second one, which is slightly longer, and there are three subsets of question. I'm just going to quickly. Compare something. OK, awesome. So my first question. The first set is going to go over some general knowledge about the topic we're going to discuss today. It's completely fine if you are unfamiliar with it. So my first question is, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:

Speaking. Yes, yes I am.

Interviewer:

OK. I'll see you. Could you quickly try to explain it in your own word?

Participant:

I'm sorry my, at least to my knowledge, corporate social responsibility is kind of the is what a organization often in terms of like they tend to be selling things, but not always. Basically, big organization in general. It's there like idea that they should kind. Carry forward their their. What they do? With their work, uh, this like in terms. Of like it can be for. Example that they. There's a responsibility for like often environments as or like topics in terms of like which come under corporate social responsibilities like environments or they. Give a certain percentage of their profits back to. Something like water projects or it basically with the idea that even though they're getting profits, they're they're they are contributing to like a better world. Like that's the basic idea. You want my opinion. As well on on on whether that how, how that it's employed or is that is does that come later on?

Interviewer:

We're going to go through that later in like later.

Interviewer:

Don't worry about it. OK, Next up. Are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Yes, in terms of how I, it's like I understand that is it depends on on on like you have obviously environmental sustainability you have. Like the impact. Oh. What the organization is doing, so the long term impact, but also I've heard it being used in terms of sustainability for employees. So it's it's a kind of. In my opinion, is a bit of a a kind of a a a term that is applied liberally now. Basically for like. Long term. Like minimizing damage or minimizing the the like issues that might come up or in whatever setting that is.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. When you hear the phrase corporate sustainability PR campaign, what do you think it is about?

Participant:

My my initial response to that is damage control, which is maybe a very, very cynical point of view on that, but corporate responsibilities like social campaign, basically. Trying to gain awareness for the work that the organizational corporation is doing and on the front of social responsibility. See whether that is then as like feedback on like something else that's gone wrong, or to greenwash, or whether it's actually because they really want to be able to make more impact. I think that really depends on your organization.

Interviewer:

OK, so apart from damage control, you also think that there's an element of like greenwashing. Like.

Participant:

Yeah. No, like, I think I think it's very cleverly used by the larger corporations to greenwash, often to kind of be like, ohh, look, we are, you know, often something like, oh, we're providing we're. Contributing 1% to you know eco funds or where. You know, or to a certain charity or where. So yeah. Like, like that's I I definitely think it's a tactic that is used like within organizations like I it's not that. I think that's. The the like the always the goal. It it honestly, I know you know, I know a lot of companies that actually do a lot. Of good work. There like social responsibility. Thing I just think that in general, it's if you're talking about. Folks. A PR campaign my like specifically. Like it's either for fundraising and then it tends to be more internal in my opinion. Or it's like, yeah. But at the same time, I think. It can also. Yeah. I mean, in terms of PR,



it depends on how big PR you make it. If it's like, you know, putting things on the website about you know, the good work that is being done with your money, then yeah. That's also good, but. I think my initial response is always going to be skepticism. First then, like after research. Then it's going to be, yeah. Maybe maybe this is something good.

Interviewer:

Yeah, fair enough. So you also mentioned like it also depends on how big of a scale that PR campaign is. So like generally, what activities do you think is usually included in the PR campaign like this?

Participant:

Definitely website like publishing it on the website. Whether that's like something very small in terms of like just you know having a logo and then being able to like at the bottom of like for example the organization you're supporting or. Having banners on the website saying, you know, we donate how much to like to to, you know, plant trees. Like there's that aspect to it. I think it really also depends on the organization as well. I I know for example a, a a company here in the Netherlands that is they're like they sell tea, but like part of their. Entire like make up of the organisations that they. They work together with people with a disability to get them into employment or to provide employment and like a really low and like for them, that's part of their story. So they, you know, publish stories about their employees or, you know, it's part of their. Packaging. So like it, it can go from like the extreme of being very subtle to like just being a little sticker somewhere to like being actually part of. Like all aspects of. Your kind of marketing, I guess in that sense. So you know social media websites like websites and promotions and. We think what other PR companies? Advertising may be, but I don't know whether. It's like like. Maybe not in the like explicit sense, but more in the the kind of unwritten.

Participant:

Social messages of like the we are we want to create a better world. You know, like those kind of social messages having like. That so so like. But I don't think I've ever seen. I don't really watch much TV, but I. Don't think I've seen like. Adverts outright saying we contribute to building, you know, the planting trees, for example.

Interviewer:

You mentioned the tea company. May I have the name of that company?

Participant:

Yeah. Hey, Zach here. Yeah. You want me to write it?

Interviewer:

OK, I I got it. Like tea bag, right?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah. But then, yeah, Zach here.

Interviewer:

Actions like with 2A.

Participant:

2A's. Yeah. So I think like if Zach is in.

Interviewer:

The business? Yeah. OK, got it. Yeah. Got it. OK, awesome. Thank you. So that was the first part already done.

Participant:

Nice.

Interviewer:

Yeah, really fast. Moving on to the second part, this is slightly longer. I like during this. I will have to ask you to read some messages on some websites. I'm going to send it to you via.

Interviewer:

WhatsApp. So honestly, quite intimidating because there are like 13 links in total. But before we start, don't open them.

Participant:

Mm-hmm.

Interviewer:

That we're just going to, I'm just going to quickly again ask like a few more questions. And so as you can see there are 13 links from 4 different huge corporations. Apple, Nestle, Unilever and could you quickly tell me what you know about each corporation?

Participant:

Not. Not a lot of good, although my my sister's partner works at Unilever in a sustainability role, so I know that they're really like, like engaged with. And. Let's let's let's start with. Apple I know a couple of years back in terms of like there was, there's been several scandals in terms of like their products being using. Using like metals from like open mining and damaging mining. Kind of like the scandal that actually, like they were coming to meet into, like, violence that was occurring in those regions and like and by by basically using those products and obviously open pit mining is like one of the most harmful like mining types. It can happen. In terms of like also bad, bad workers environments like working, working in bad factories like the

workers not having good quality work places and. So that's on the negative side of things. On the positive side, I have nothing I know. Nothing about that or apple. This is like like it's it's. Really bad, but like, like they they're they're obviously a massive company. They're probably doing something. About it, whether they're doing enough, I don't know. No. Nestle, Nestle, in my opinion, is an incredibly problematic company and I would never buy anything from them. That that's because they are and continue to contribute like they like. They did a massive campaign where in the East African regions and African general as well using breast milk. With supplements and and for babies and didn't basically hush up the fact that you needed to use clean water with that, and that they knew that like after I think it was like after a year that actually it was contributing to the. Like infant death, because. Yeah, yeah. It's so and and in some regions that's still going on like they're, yeah, in terms of sustainability, I know they do have like their own kind of markers. For that they have. They do a lot on advertising about their sustainability, because obviously they're also very much they're involved in a lot of different things. So obviously like chocolate, for example, I know they try and. Have they have like their own like label for like trying to make fair trade if things fair trade and more sustainable but? Like they don't tend to use. Actual like like the markers that. That are, you know. Accredited across the board, so like the Fair trade, they don't actually have the actual Fair trade logo on there because they haven't actually met. I think the requirements for fair trade market. Things, things like that. So they have their like they they've got something similar, but it's not actually fair trade so like. For me that. Always as soon as those are like. Red flags when I'm looking at companies, things, products that like they they don't actually have the accredited or the the big, the big check marks to their. I mean I, I mean obviously those check marks can also be problematic in and of themselves. But like there is a certain standard that you have to apply to your products if you want them on your products. Unnecessary doesn't do that, so I find them. That's that's kind of like my. In my baseline is distrust. UM, Unilever? Like I said, I know someone who works in the sustainability Department and he works really. Hard for that. I think. This is and. I think it's

my my baseline with big organizations is often like. It's hard to. You if you're that big an organization to actually actively do something and still like get like, you know, work towards profits, it's so big that I I like, I know for a fact there are people actively working on making you even more sustainable. I know it's like a really. Big priority in the company because I've got contacts there. They also know that it's a company that is like worldwide and like the stuff I know is from one department in one country, so. Yeah. Like like. Not. Not like I haven't heard any like massive negative things, but I that things also, but also because I don't always know what products they need. Are. Or like because they have so many names under them like they buy all those names and then like there's. Just that little. Logo on the. Back. So it's, you know, some things like I know in the UK they. Bought over, I think they bought a. A kind of beauty. Product line called simple which is like very focused on the environment, but like I also know they they own dove and Doug is like massive in and of itself. So like that organization I think is very segmented. And so I know in some areas. It's doing a lot. But I don't know whether it's in all areas and that's. That's kind of what I. I think is what I know is like is my baseline for them and then H&N is just total greenwashing. You can hear it my voice. And their sustainability and climate is. Yeah. No, it's absolutely delicious. Like. They they had obviously like the clothing bank where you could like return clothes and actually, you know, after investigating things, it turned out that they were just basically dumping all. Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know, if they have their sustainable or like, what was it? No, it wasn't lying, which, you know, turned out to be also total nonsense. So. Yeah, but basically I'd say. If I hear H&M and sustainability. I tend to laugh.

Interviewer:

Fair. You're not the only person who thinks so, so.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

OK, great. So as you can see, I already sent you unfortunately a bunch of links, yeah, so each of them is actually one PR campaign like for a company.

Participant:

This one. Right.

Interviewer:

For example, in Apple it's very straightforward. They put everything in the campaign into like one link good for us, but unfortunately with the other ones I think they have multiple campaigns going on at the same time. And now for this interview, we're just mostly focusing on environment and nature. So that's why.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Instead of like bothering you with having to click through different sub links in the plan itself, I just straight up put it out so it's easier for you. What I'd like to ask you to do is just.

Interviewer:

Simply go and type each link and then like read their content. You don't have to click on any extra links or download any report that's not needed. We just need to look through the content focusing on what they say about their goals, their values, what they say they have achieved and what they. Want to achieve and any similar stuff. Of course you don't have to memorize anything. Measure everything. Please come back here. We're going to. I'm going to

ask you a few questions about it. And of course, you can always go back to refer to, like a certain part. Or like to remind yourself and of course, take as much time as you need.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Oh good.

Interviewer:

I'm good.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. OK, let's go. OK. Before we go deeply into each one of them, based on what you have read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign is focused on?

Participant:

OK, I guess let's work backwards. H&M is very much focused on circularity and reusing their like products, and the idea of making like. Circular corner. Me, the Unilever is more looking at like like storing or like restoring nature or. Like finding alternative ways in which to like, use new innovations to contribute to their fund. And then there's the other one is the big fund that they're using in like diverse ways. Missile is very much focused on agriculture and the the impact that they have because obviously. One thing that comes to mind with their thing is that, like not of their products are food based. And so in terms of like getting agriculture, regenerative agriculture practices that like focused. Helps them in the long run. I think supporting like they're smallhold farmers is like the big thing, and Apple was looking at, like, how they use their resources. They're like reusing. Being like the metals from their own products, like the

minimizing the. The packaging I think with all of them the the things that came up in general is packaging. Router like. Agriculture. Except for Apple and and like regenerative agriculture and. And there was one more. My brain is your brains and diversity. That's the other thing. That's the other one. Like, there's like the the catch phrases.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Now we're going to start talking about them one by one. So first of all, let's focus on what do you think. So do you think that the cost that the campaigns are addressing?

Interviewer:

Do they? Sorry. Are they relevant to their companies?

Participant:

Ah, interesting. Yes, yes. So I think I think they like they each have taken this idea of sustainability and the environment and taking like the the focus. Ohh and. Going sorry. Just skipping back to the emissions like carbon CO2 emissions, that's the other one anyway. And the yeah, no. They've each taken like the the things that are most.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

Important or will have the most impact or you know are most important to their organization and like focused on most. So for example Apple, it's very much looking at like resources and like like metals. You know how how are they? Like like shipping like like those those kind of things to like get their products where it's like like I said yesterday is very much focused more on nature and biodiversity because their products are you know products of that



come from nature whereas. Who is more of a manufacturing side of things. So they're looking at like the energy they use. To manufacture goods. Uh and yeah, with H&M it's looking at. How can they make their impact in the clothing industry like smaller I think like the goal of each of these is to make their impact on the environment as small as possible or these massive organizations.

Interviewer:

OK, now. And so just a quick sum up would be like you think they all fit quite well.

Participant:

They fit the company.

Interviewer:

OK. Great also. OK, great. So you also see what they have been doing. So do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits the cause that they are trying to address?

Participant:

UM. Depends on like if it's, whether it's effective, it's it's not, it's it's not, it's not like.

Participant:

Like like like the the way H&M was like focused on. Like circularity and circular climate like that is it's like I yeah, like that's that's. A. A good kind of cause to for them to like focus on. Do I think it's? Do they do it do enough? Is it actually, you know, simply a a bandage over a kind of an organization where like. Yeah. Like like like as I'm I specifically the H&M one. I'm reading that and I'm going. Yeah. That's like like it's a. Can I swear on? These it's it's bullshit. Like it's not. It's not enough. And it's like, yeah, anyway, but that's an opinion like. I mean, obviously you are asking my opinion on certain things, but you ask whether, like they fit and I think.

Interviewer:

Go ahead.

Participant:

Yes, to a certain extent and then. Like uh. Yeah, I think I think. In terms of like. Skepticity or like whether I think they they do enough. Or whether they. Yeah, that's not, but that. That wasn't the question. So. Do they fit? Let's go through the apple. Yes, hey. They they they at least like when I'm reading this I'm thinking. Ohh yeah, these are like, these are the things they are addressing are definitely areas where they where where they can make like the biggest wins as a company. Quickly and and then the next step is like OK and then how do you go further from that then then if I'm looking at nest? They, uh, like like. As like if I didn't know anything about. Them and I was just reading them. Like I'd say, that's definitely like they're doing very good work. But I also think. Yeah, I I. Have a question in terms of like it's it's a big old company that is from the top down saying this is what we do but these are like small most of their products are produced by small. Owners and like how sustainable is? That for them, you know, in the long run. That you know. I I have questions about all of these. There are questions that come up for me whenever I read these kind of things because like it's these are massive organisations and like they can be doing like really good work in small scale but. How? Realistic is it if you're like. If you're like lying. Is actually like your. Your aim is to make profits. I am. How realistic is it? That you're really going to be made trying to make that big of a. Difference. And that's maybe because I've been brought up with very. Socially conscious parents and like, that's that's kind of something I think. And then I guess you need your.

Participant:

In their fund. Yeah. So like definitely. I think like saying. That the the way that they're they're going about it is definitely. Like I said, like the the areas that most of these organizations

have tackled are like the areas in which they can make the biggest difference the quickest. I don't know whether it's like, yeah, it might be, I don't know whether it's. That's like like it feels like a bandage on a very open wound. Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

OK, moving the next subset of question is going to be mostly about you, so.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

I know you mentioned you don't buy from Nestle at all. Yeah. OK, what about the other three corporations?

Participant:

I do buy from Apple, although I actually buy second like like refurbished products if I can and I am holding out on. Like.

Participant:

Uh. Growing chilly apple, so I haven't, for example, got Apple Mobile. I think the the. The issue I have with like there's all these big organizations like I know almost certainly that like Samsung is probably just as problematic, which is where I have my mobile from. But yeah, like the the kind of. Other options so like I'm aware for example the Fairphone, but like after doing some research into it like there's been, yeah, it's like like, there's there's other options. But I'm. But on the whole, like before, I was like, I became more of a conscious consumer. Like I I bought these things. So Apple, yes, Nestle. No, unless there is like no alternative option.

Unilever, yes. I I do tend to try and buy from their more eco conscious brands like so. But on the whole. I think when I buy unilver, it's more because I I tend to not realize.

Participant:

And hmm, no, I don't, unless I get it second hand. So yeah, in terms of clothing, I buy mostly second hand now. Or from slow fashion or companies.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. It's really funny. Every single interviewees I have, they were really confused about the brands under Unilever. I think they hired really well under their more established sub brand or whatever.

Participant:

They call. Yeah, that's the way the organization works, right? Like, for example, they. Ben and Jerrys the ice cream, but because of the way the organization works is that Ben and Jerry is in, in and of itself actually like an an organization that is then. Like under the branch of Unilever, so like Unilever, unless you know like the. The brands are. Always like the only indication of what brand is actually under them them. Is like the you. And that's obviously like if you start looking for it, it's everywhere. Which is why like for for me, like I don't really know how. To get away from them. So like I know I buy stuff from them because they are so huge. They're just one of the biggest companies in the world. Yeah. So like, I know in certain areas, like in certain parts of the organization. Like for example with the dove. Section where my my sister's partner works. I know that they're really actively investing in that, and I know, for example, Ben and Jerrys is also like a kind of almost a thorn in the side of like because they are so independent and so focused also on social state and sustainability because. When they the organ, like the company owners like sold the company, they wrote it into like the the like contract

that when they stole it that they had to adhere to certain like rules in the organization. But uh. Like so for the sale to go through. So you go. So they function very like independently in that sense. So I know in certain aspect they also know like for example I'm pretty sure in the real is Unilever as well. And I'm pretty sure they are like really bad. Like in the. Way on Mac. Like you know. So so it. That's what I find so difficult with these big companies is that they're like I I mean obviously H&M is like an apple or like single corporations, whereas Nestle and media leader are multiple corporations in, in, in in reality, if you look at it. I mean, they have one overarching branch of Nestle or Unilever, but. Like it's it's easy to get suckered into buying something and then turn over, you know being like whilst just shopping and doing things quickly and looking seeing like eco tick or whatever. Buying it and then turning over and. Saying ohh shift the fuel lever you know. Yeah. So yeah. Yeah, they think. They think smart in the sense of like. And also like all of these, like buyouts are always like, not really publicized, right? I didn't know until my boyfriend said it that that that didn't. Jerry's had been bought. I thought it was still under Ben. And Jerry's, you know.

Interviewer:

I also, I also didn't know until I start doing this thesis thing so.

Participant:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Oh, well, guess we can't escape it.

Participant:

No one exactly.

Interviewer:

OK. OK, so we already answered the next two questions as well. So that's great.

Generally, do you think these corporations are trustworthy?

Participant:

H&M no.

Participant:

Umm. My my issue is with UM. There are corporations that are out to make money, so. The bottom line is always going to be profits and these like working in a sustainable manner. In the long run, it's not like it might be profitable because you're like, you're getting more people. Uh, more customers or you're in in the long term, you know. Looking after like with Nestle looking after your. What's it called? A supply chain? But it is always going to be easier, like there's always going to be an easy way to do this and. And so like, I believe that what they do like. What they that? What's on the website? It's like they're doing that. UM. Like they wouldn't publish it otherwise. UM. That like is that like the underlying core? Like core driver of their organization now and that I think is where then like why I have then problems with? With organizations like this.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK, what about Nestle? Is it the?

Participant:

Then yeah, so in this day, like I, I find it interesting is the like, the obviously one of the things that makes me more believe them more is because their products are so dependent on. The environment. You know, coffee. Chocolate. Several other things I think, like their entire

system is built up on. Yeah. It's like it's really dependent. On that, I think Apple. Yeah. Yeah. And like, like I like, I like for both of both. Leave her and like. But I think that's the thing. Like, I believe what is on the website because they wouldn't publish other ways. Box like. Yeah, like I said is it, is it enough? Yeah. Don't know.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Yeah. And it's great. It's great that you also have very specific opinion about each of the corporations. Is there a story or a reason why you have formed this opinion beforehand?

Participant:

B. Well, yeah, like reading up on it news like like, I'm interested in sustainability. I'm interested in the environment. So like, I'm I read and used to watch, like documentaries. Read research, red art news articles. I'm I'm you know, mildly interested in fashion. Not like, not massively. But, you know, like I the the way that in which I kind of form my opinions is, is that I started looking at my. Impersonal. Like impact, I'm looking at. OK, I have as a buyer, I have power where my good putting that power. And so I started looking into like the companies that I was buying from. So for example, H&M, I used to buy all. My jeans from there. I don't anymore. You know, I. Like I don't like I said, I don't. I buy all my clothes second hand. That's like there's some natural progression. But like, as soon as you start kind of looking into these, like even in the smallest way, you start finding different like. Yeah, different ways in which. All different companies are doing things or not doing things and I think. The nature of bad news and bad press is that like that always gets more, gets more information or gets more. Attention, that's the word use. I'm thinking the Dutch word gets more attention and sticks, you know, like you can't really get rid of a bad name very easily. You have to, like, do a complete overhaul. And even

then there's going to be some people that don't believe that you're actually doing enough. And. Say. Yeah, I guess I guess. That's a general answer. Specific answers for each organization.

Interviewer:

Because like this session is more about you. So like I would like to understand my participant better. OK, great. Moving on. Well, is it well based on your answer, is it safe to say that you have never considered any of these brands as green or sustainable before?

Participant:

No.

Interviewer:

Great. And before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in CSR activities?

Participant:

Yes. On different levels, I guess and and like and and so I I assumed Apple would be doing something because it's Apple and they're so big. Like if they didn't then they'd lose a lot of business and their business savvy.

Participant:

Unilever, I knew personally H&M. I knew because like, there was a lot of talk. Especially in social media a little while. Ago about like. The kind of like. Band-Aid response to what? What's going on in their organization in terms of of sustainability and Nestle. So Nestle has always been like, apart from all the like I said in the. Beginning like the. The baby milk scandal, like they've also always been like, focused on. In their own way, like supporting their like smallhold farmers and. So like I've been aware of that as well, like the negative, but like, yeah,



there's also been like no negative research like this, you know, this, this this is one of the one of those things where like they probably couldn't learn it beforehand. So yeah, and and like yesterday, I knew as well I didn't know the scale of it or. The scale that the website says.

Interviewer:

OK, fair, great. So you also mentioned you are somebody who cares about sustainability. Is there any specific area that you focus on?

Participant:

Yeah. I'm sorry in terms of sustainability, it's more like I'm just looking at like small ways to like, make make small changes to make big impacts like in my life. So like like minimize the like my flying so. Like you know, we basically eat vegetarian. In terms of like like the products I buy, like I'm very conscious of where I buy them. So for example, I now buy from. My like beauty products from places that like for companies that I know are very. Focused on like. Biodiversity and like clean like environment like very focused. Diamonds. Like I said, if I do buy clothes, then that I'm not second hand, I buy it. So I think I think it's more of like a a fostering a consciousness in like my my power as a consumer in different ways. Right. Like my money. Like the way this economy works is that your money has power and it's more of a voice. So when you invest it in small companies or local, like where you know the story where you have like. Are sure about the way they work. Then you can start. You know, sending a signal. And. Then obviously the. Doing things like climate change marches or being like politically like active as well in. That sense slightly less. Than I would like. Because there is a lot happening. In my life, but like at some. Point I am. Hoping to join, for example, since you're very so. No, not yet. But like you know, like uh, that's that's on my To Do List for. The next couple of years. You know, like whether, whether that's like in what, what kind of format that has, is that like it's I, I guess like my main main thing is a consciousness of what I what I consume and how I. Use my time and energy wisely.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great. Nice to see that all of my my interviewees are interested in the environment and stuff. Most of them there are two that was like.

Interviewer:

No, I don't care.

Participant:

Yeah, but I think I think that's like also. Perfectly, just not like response. But it's, I think, yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

I I think some people just sort. Of give up on it.

Participant:

Well, yeah, I think it's very, very. Normal to feel especially like right now when there's so much like negative news and it's so complicated and like like it's there's so much wrong right now. And like, you can focus on one small bit but like if you look at the environment, it's like that's one thing. But you've also got, like, the wars. Going on, you've also got like a a kind of economic system that's like basically imploding on us the long term. So, you know, like we're not.

Participant:

There's not to deal with.

Interviewer:

I swear to God, the environment is going to kill me before I die of. My natural age. We'll see how that goes, yeah. OK, we already answered the next two questions as well. So that's great. UM. Do you think what is portrayed in the campaign is in line with your personal values?

Participant:

To a certain extent. And. I think so. My personal value is, you know. Try to leave the world a better place than I need it. Like when I leave it, I think that's the kind of overarching theme of like, where I'm anchored in so you know, sustainability, the environment are two things that I find really important. So anything that like. Big corporations like this do to try and minimize their impact and always going to be for and I think what where I struggle is in how these organizations have so much power and. Have such such a big like reach. Do they do enough for the like in in the long term? Like do they do they? Do they do enough and that's where? Like it falls through. And I and I and. I guess like. At the same time, I also try and see like you know there there are people working within these organizations that are probably really working hard to be, you know make bring change or be sustainable. So I try to be slightly less. Like skeptical than my like go to is. So the campaigns. The underlying message they're they're giving, yes. Uh. The reality and the organizations themselves? No. Maybe. Is that is that? Is that the?

Interviewer:

Yeah, it is a very comprehensive answer indeed. OK. Just quickly, one last question before I'm going to before the last session where you will evaluate them where you were reading the campaigns and everything they say. Were there any parts that evoked emotion? Any sort of emotions? Positive, negative, neutral. Any sort?

Participant:

Yeah, yeah, definitely. I think with the HMM one, you mentioned that lots that there was, there was a lot of skepticism there and like. Almost kind of almost. Discussed in the sense of like like their. It just felt like a lot of, like, jargon. And more so than than actual. Like if you like. If you read between lines, they're not actually doing very much where it's like the other organizations. Felt more realistic. I think the next day won't surprise me. A little bit. UM, apple? I was like, yeah, like. I think. Yeah, I think. I think Apple will really leave a relatively. Neutral in terms of emotions. Actually, yeah, maybe maybe. I think like the the the Fund for Unilever. I found.

Participant:

1 billion in the scale of like the entire organization is a little bit like small. OK, I know, I know that's like, but these, these are like companies that like get, you know, profits and the trillions. Every year and then you're. Over scale from like so it's 2024 now. They aim for 2030 is to spend 1 billion like.

Interviewer:

Yeah, that's not a lot.

Participant:

It's it's not. It's not a lot.

Interviewer:

So.

Participant:

Yeah. Yeah, that's that's. That's a good one.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. So you also already mentioned that you do think they did achieve what they say they have achieved, otherwise they wouldn't put it on it. So that's. Great.

Interviewer:

What about the future? What about what they promise their goals? Do you think they will genuinely like you? Don't genuinely think that they will achieve it?

Participant:

It depends on how they do that. So one of the things that I noticed with like the H&M, also the apple is and that's I think the nature of Apple is they they invest in like technology. Like or like in and I can't remember whether mini lever or I think it was Unilever. Also, the carbon capture technology like. In my opinion, nuts. Like putting your hope in technology to like be be a be on annual solutions, actually just going to be like it's actually going to cause problems further down the line. Because like to create these technologies, you're going to have to use like extractive resources like like. The first thing is to like minimize. Your own impact and like that doesn't come from like new technology that comes from, you know, shrinking. And that's what these organizations don't want to do so. Yeah. The question just blinks a little bit.

Interviewer:

Do you do you believe? That they will achieve what they say they will achieve.

Participant:

Some of them and the others always. Others maybe. I also wonder whether it, you know, six years down the line whether like legislation and things will have changed so that they'll be they they will have to. It's there's a hope. I don't think that's going to happen, but like you know,

there's there's a lot that can change within a couple of years and I think. There's a potential for all of them to achieve it, achieve their goals, whether they will or not, I think is really dependent on the organization and what. Happens in the world.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So yeah. Really of like two more questions and then we could be done. How would you rank them from top to bottom? Your preference, of course.

Participant:

OK, I booked some H&M. It's that that general across the board, yeah.

Interviewer:

I mean, there are of course a few black sheeps that put them at the top. Surprise.

Participant:

OK. I don't know. I'm really split between the other three. Like, they're they're kind of. They hit different notes for me in different places, but they all kind of, I'm all quite ambivalent to the to the ranking team.

Interviewer:

That's totally. I can put. Them all at the same rank then yeah.

Participant:

Uh.

Interviewer:

It's just a hard note for your acronym. Awesome. Great. OK. Really like last two question, which campaign do you think are done out of real genuine concern for the environment and which one is not, which ones are not?

Participant:

Hmm. Notes OK. Apple, I would say is done out. Of profit. OK, like. And then I think Unilever and Nestle surprise surprise and I think I'll probably. Like so. So they're they're done out of concern for the environment, but also out of concern for their. Bottom line, so like yes, but no. We it's like it's a part, OK.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So yeah, that was my last question. Thank you so much for your time.

## **Participant 12**

Interviewer:

OK, great. Hi. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this study. So the goal is to understand which individual factors and also CSR message characteristic will affect your evaluation of the genuineness of sustainability PR campaign.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

I've already got your consent form, so I'm sure you're aware of your rights, that it's completely anonymous, that it will be voice recorded. And of course, you are free to skip any.

Should or end the interview at any time? OK, awesome. Let's get started. I'm going to start with some basic demographic data. So could you let me know how old you are?

Participant:

I am 25.

Interviewer:

And what is your nationality?

Participant:

I am from Vietnam.

Interviewer:

And what is your occupation?

Participant:

Right now I am a master student in Taiwan.

Interviewer:

Cool. OK, great. So there will be three sets of questions in this interview. Each set will contain around four to five questions, so there won't be too many, but the second set will be slightly longer as we will go through the links and there will be also three subsets of question. So let's get started. The first one, I'm going to ask a few questions just to see if you're familiar with the topic of this interview. But of course, it's absolutely fine if you're not, my first question would be, are you familiar with the term corporate social responsibility?

Participant:



OK. Corporate social I don't think I do. Yeah. No, I'm not familiar with that phrase.

Interviewer:

OK. Could you maybe try guessing what it is referring to?

Participant:

Can you repeat the phrase?

Interviewer:

Corporate social responsibility.

Participant:

Corporate social responsibility. So for me, I think it's the responsibility to. For like for corporate to. And sure what they are putting out into the market. And. In ensuring that the products the is yeah is.

Participant:

Morally acceptable to the social. May, yeah, yeah.

Interviewer:

OK. Are you familiar with the term sustainability in a corporate setting?

Participant:

Sustainability. Nope. Also no.

Interviewer:

OK. Could you try guessing what is it about?

Participant:

Umm, I think. I think it is about the. The ability to. To keep. Umm. Like to be able to, uh. Continue their line of work, their line of product in a. Social environment in the marketplace.

Interviewer:

OK. Now. This interview we're going to focus on corporate sustainability PR campaign. When you hear that phrase, what do you think it is referring to?

Participant:

OK. I mostly think about PR, campaign and marketing strategies. Some things about. Yeah. Things that revolve around PR and marketing, yeah. OK.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK. OK. That's actually true. Well, today, we're going to focus on. Basically, PR campaigns that company would usually organize or conduct in order to. Say portray themselves as a company who is also sustainable in terms of environment, in terms of ethicality when it comes to the workers and any other similar, you know, aspects.

Participant:

OK, cool.

Interviewer:

OK, So what do you think is usually included in the PR campaign?

Participant:

In a PR campaign, I think it will start with the the goal. Is to like to introduce the product service to the market, to the people and with the the steps in the middle like on how to approach the each demographic and. Yeah. And then carry out the, the the plan. And they're actually using different platform social platform. To. To get to the goal, I.

Interviewer:

Think OK, interesting. So does it mean that you see a PR campaign as an effort to advertise their products and services?

Participant:

Yes. Overall I will say that that is my thinking, yes, OK.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So what you are referring to is actually a marketing campaign which focuses more on the products and the service itself are a PR campaign actually focus more on the company's image, the corporate image. Generally, so they don't actually focus on the products.

Participant:

Ohh OK.

Interviewer:

These two concepts are actually quite confusing and it's totally understandable to get it confused. So that's a good distinction to make now. Let's focus on the PR aspects. What are your thoughts on PR campaigns like this? Especially ones that focus on sustainability per se.

Participant:

Can you give me? Two seconds, OK.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Ah, anyway, let's circle back my question was, what are your thoughts on the sustainability PR campaign per say? Like, yeah, like a campaign that the company does to promote that? Oh, I am a green company. I am a sustainable company.

Participant:

So if a PR campaign of a company that is going in the direction of sustainability, I think it will. Be a good. Hmm. A good picture, a good representative representation for them, because. The sustainability going green and stuff like that I think is the main. Focus of today's society because people are. Yeah, you know. Getting greedy. Going greedy. Yeah. So I think it will. It will be a good campaign. For that company.

Interviewer:

OK. Yes. Can you think of an example of such campaigns that you have seen before?

Participant:

Hmm, I have to think for a minute, I think. Maybe. Ohh I I remember seeing McDonald's having a. No strong policy or stomach. Yeah, I forgot. But some some of the places that sell drinks with plastic straw, they actually did the campaign that like they removed the straw to save the turtles and environment and stuff. Yeah, I think that could be an example.

Interviewer:

Yeah, that is actually a great example. So, OK, that's great. That's the first set of questions already done going on. OK. So this one is going to take a bit of time, but as you can see, I've already sent you some samples of sustainability campaigns of four different companies. So the four companies are.

Participant:

Oh.

Interviewer:

Apple, Nestle, Unilever and H&M. Have you heard of their names before?

Participant:

Yes, of course, yes.

Interviewer:

OK, great. Could you quickly tell me what you know about each corporation?

Participant:

So Apple is an electronics company selling what computers, mobile phones. And some others. What accessories like watches? Yeah. And for Nestle, Nestle, I think is mainly food. Yeah, I think food, food and beverage, so water.

Participant:

Some cereal, and I think it's a big it's a big company. Yeah, they go into the the the food and beverage area.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant:

You need lever. You need lever. If I recall correctly it is. The whole. Household. Like, what do you what do you say? The the stuff that we use every day like? What shampoo? Sour

gel. What? The the stuff that you used to wash your clothes. Detergent. Yeah. And other stuff like that by Unilever. Yeah. And H&M is a clothing, right? Yeah. OK.

Interviewer:

Awesome. Great now. So what we're going to do next is I'm going to ask you to read through the links. So as you can see, it's a little bit complicated with those with multiple links for Apple, for example, everything in their sustainability PR campaign, they put it in one link, one website. From top to bottom. Super straightforward. That's everything you need to know, but for the other ones, there are multiple campaigns going on. Focus saying on multiple different aspects, but for today's interview, we're focusing only on the environmental. So I have already gone ahead and picked out the links and the sub links for each of these campaigns. So what I would like you to do is just go through the content you don't have to click on any other links in the website. You don't have to download any report, just focus on reading and remember even though there.

Interviewer:

There are links ABCD, all four of them belong to one campaign.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So I'd like you to go through all of them, take as much time as you need. You obviously don't have to memorize any of them because throughout the interviews, if you want to go back and refer to something, you can always go back and look at it and answer my questions. Yeah, so absolutely no rush. Take as much time as you need and after you finish reading everything come back and we're going to proceed. With the interview. OK, cool. Cool, cool. Thanks. Oh, and when you do, when you are reading through them, I'd like to ask you to focus on their values, their goal, what they have achieved and what they want to achieve.

Participant:

So do I go through all of the links at once or each company?

Interviewer:

Yeah, all of them.

Awesome. Thank you for your time now. They were long, weren't they?

Participant:

Uh, yes, it was exhausting.

Interviewer:

Ah. Yeah, understandable. OK. Just quick recap. So based on what you've read, could you quickly tell me what each PR campaign focuses on?

Participant:

Umm. I think all of them pays their. Campaign around the 8th year of. The reusing. The circularity of their products, of their side product, the product and for the next Nestle and the Unilever, Unilever. Uh. That. Yes. Yeah, and. And for these two companies, they also include the regenerative agriculture approaches. Yes. And for apples and H&M, they mainly focus on the the circularity of the products.

Interviewer:

OK, cool now. We're going to start evaluating them one by one. So do you think the costs that the campaign address? Is relevant to the companies.

Participant:

The course.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah, basically what they are saying in the campaign.

Participant:

The campaign relevant to the company. Yeah, and it's. All for all of these campaigns are very. Well aligned with their companies and the companies face because the they are trying to appeal to people. That's about what they are doing, what they are producing, what they are making, what they are selling and. All of these, they have some. Problems affecting the environment and how are they going to? Fix this problem by stating different strategies to. For sustainability, yes.

Interviewer:

OK, cool. Now do you think what they are doing in the campaign fits what they are trying to address?

Participant:

Well, this because this all I get from the link is there. The goal, the aim for the campaign and what they are saying that they. Will do or they will try to do and I don't actually see any like hardcore evidence yet, so I'm not very sure if what they are claiming is like. What they are doing? I think is what you're asking. Is.

Interviewer:

Yeah, sort of. Could you, could you point out the specifics in each company?

Participant:



OK, for example, for the Apples, they mentioned that in the approach section. A detailed. They have said that they wish, however, they that they want to maximize the material they recover from the recycled product and I think this is vague because. Pretty. Uh. We don't know how much they how much products they actually recover because the from the mobile phones, the the iPhones, the the computers, the Apple Watch, all sort of things, they usually get resale or if they're broken, they just get thrown out, nobody. Actually. Give the the the broken products back to the Apple Company for them to like recycle. The. The product so. I think that is a very difficult part to pinpoint and after that from the broken products and how they can recover the material. That is also pretty like. Little little detail on that. So I think that is one point from the Apple Company. 40. Nestle. Well for Nestle. So I, I don't know. I don't. Maybe I don't see any problems with it?

Participant:

OK, well that is the same goes to Unilever because these two, they make all of the products involved like agriculture and farming and stuff and they are and they mentioned the regenerative agriculture and that is. That is what they're trying to like. Apply to all of these sources.

Participant:

And I see that in the recent years from what I know is generated mariculture like some cultures are. Being done not by this company, but also by a lot of. Local farmers, other companies that are doing great. So I think there is a valid point that what they are. Trying to show. Yes. And finally for the H&M. Hmm. The problem? Yes, they also mentioned the. The circularity, so the same as apples, the. The the the detail about how they. Hmm, like how they reside for every use the products are they maximize the the materials from the the the broken products is very vague for me. They only show the numbers of clothing they collected from what

they yeah, they mentioned a number of a few, a few 100,000 tons. And OK, that is the numbers can be verified, but how many of those clothes are actually like reuse? Time or whatever that I'm not sure. I think that is a. A blank in the statement, yeah.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Break. So awesome. That was the first subset already done. Moving on.

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Now the next two sets is mostly going to be about you and your purchasing habits. So have you had any past experience as a consumer with any of these corporations?

Participant:

Uh, yes, uh, all of them, actually.

Interviewer:

So how was your general experience with them?

Participant:

For Apple I. I have I have purchased many different. The product of financials throughout. And long span of time and back. Maybe like 10 years ago, the products, the packages, the packaging is not very environmentally friendly. A lot of plastic. And a lot of stuff going on inside the office and the most recent purchase I made in Apple is. Three years ago. It is a lot of improved. But. In I say that as a point. In terms of packaging, so yeah, and Nestle and Unileverl, the product I mainly purchased for the food and. It's mostly the food and the the the

the daily use household item. Ohh and. None of the much changes throughout the year, I don't know. So. Yeah, I I would not say that they have any changes that is revolutionary won't say that I am very impressed by the campaign that that they are. They are collecting the old clothing to what they what they say is that they will recycle them. Yeah. And I think that is a good way to like for. The customer to get rid of old clothes. And also we discount or a coupons are now not purchased and that is like a very good. Way to make people donate their own clothes.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Are you a frequent customer of QM?

Participant:

I wouldn't say so, but I have a. I have donated my clothes to hmm a few times, yes.

Interviewer:

Awesome. So yeah, OK, that's great. You mentioned your experience. So generally as corporations do you think that they are trustworthy?

Participant:

Well, they're big company, so of course they are always trying to hide something, but. Well, for what they are saying and what they are showing me. Personally, I think that they are. Well. Trustworthy enough for me to continue. Purchasing products and services, yes.

Interviewer:

So are you evaluating the trustworthiness based on servicing products? Or is it based on other aspects?

Participant:

I would say that it is based on the quality of the products and services and also the Sustainability direction. There's there's ability campaign if they have some, if they have any. I'm I'm. I'm I'm also. Going green, I want to like be helpful to the environment. So of course I will try to look for company that is doing what I have wanting to do and.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Uh yeah, so. OK, so it is correct. Is it correct that I assume that your trust on them is again based on your past experience as a consumer and what you see?

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK, that's correct. That's good. OK, before participating in this study, have you ever considered any of these brands as sustainable or any other similar adjectives?

Participant:

Uh, yes, I would say so. For the Nestle and the H&M company. Yes.

Interviewer:

Yeah. So you already explained why you think so for H&M, what about Nestle?

Participant:

Unfortunately, I remember reading some articles a long time ago about them. Some of the water projects. Is it involved? Uh. Reusing water, recycling water and also supplying water to some. Countries in Africa. And that is a a very good. Campaign for me.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. So before participating in this study, were you aware that they engage in activities that promote sustainability?

Participant:

Well, I assume that they do, but uh, I didn't actually like get in to know that they are working on what? What? What is what? Yeah, I I just assume that they are all going for sustainability because that is like the default campaign for. OK.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. Do you consider yourself to be someone who cares about sustainability? Yeah. Which is there any area that you say pay more attention to or? Put more emphasis on.

Participant:

Uh, for me I I want. I really want to focus on the capability to. Recycle and reuse because that is a very big part of. All of the products that we used that we have right now, yeah, very good way, but. Recycling is. A. In the. The the process of recycling. Stuff you also generate stuff and that is not, and sometimes the stuff that we get from recycling the byproducts you have to deal with them as well. But for reuse for reusing purposes. That is a very good way for you. Because if we can find a way to repair. The the the broken products of the the the Yeah, the previous products into a new one with a different purpose is is a very good incentive for like. For the product itself, it's interesting. OK.

Interviewer:

Now moving on to your consumption habits, when you go shopping, do you deliberately choose products that are advertised as more green or sustainable?

Participant:

Yes, I will. I will try to look for the products that I want to buy that fits in those categories.

First, if there are none, then I move to the next option.

Interviewer:

Could you maybe give an example?

Participant:

Like, OK, if I'm a if I'm out buying, uh, let's say. Where am I buying clothes and if I see that the clothes is is made from material the source, the source of the all of the stuff that made the clothes is very green, very sustainability. The very sustainable so. I will definitely. I'll go for the break. Yeah, but if the the the clothing, the let's say that the shirt, uh, that shirt I want to buy is. It's a. 100% my style and really want to that shirt but it but it does not like come from a green background that come from the company that does not support that thing. Then maybe I'll give it a second guess, but. Or. If it's really. My style I I really love that shirt. Maybe I'll just get it. Yeah, that was, yeah.

Interviewer:

Interesting. You mentioned the example that you also check the source of the materials and stuff like. How would you do that?

Participant:

Well, I would just read was on the tape was on the description and maybe that is where I put my trust in the company. I trust that they. They are saying the truth. They're telling me the. Truth.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Now that was about the product. Now more generally we're talking about the brand here. So before you buy something from a brand, do you also consider whether that brand in general is sustainable?

Participant:

OK.

Interviewer:

Or not.

Participant:

Yes, I will go for brands that are going great.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK, so are looking back at the four campaigns that you just read. Do you think what is portrayed in the campaigns is in line with your personal values and if yes, in which way?

Participant:

I would say that. The campaign that involved. Oh. Regenerative agriculture from Unilever and Nestle is. Is the very example of what I thought to be sustainability and going green, yes.

Interviewer:

How so?

Participant:

Because. It is a very big. But you know, agriculture is a very big aspect. It's a it's a need, right? We need to eat and that that comes from agriculture and that is why this regenerative agriculture will actually help us. Get 281. To allow the life for the earth, yes. No, we don't have to go to live on Mars or some things, yes.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. OK, while going through the campaigns, were there any parts that evoke emotions in you? It can be any sort of emotion, positive, negative, neutral. Just pinpoint it.

Participant:

Oh, I remember something. Yes. Unilever mention in the. A few of them are 7 sustainable investment teams. Few of them actually. A few of them is. Very like interesting to me. They mention carbon capture and utilization and this is what I what I see is a very good good point to start because we are we are right now very care a lot about the carbon emissions and. They also mentioned the plastic alternatives and transformation that is also a very good. Strategies. Just like. Plastic is the biggest stuff that is. The the the pollutant right now. And one more thing they mention is non animal derived alternatives like. This is what? Like confuse me a little bit because they say that animal derived products such as dairy. Is a key ingredient for many for many of the brain and the maintain the maintain emissions is mostly from the the kettles and that's why they are seeking to shift to non animal derived product and ingredient replacement. And I understand this statement as they are trying to replace dairy. We are the kind of non animal. Milk like oat milk, almond milk and that kind of stuff. And I think that this may be not the best approach. For like all of the products because. Not all people like. Substitution for real daily. And I am one of those people. I like my meal from cow, not from a plant. OK, and this is what confused me because originally when I read this, the first non animal derived



alternative, I thought they was talking about experiments on animals and not like not using cows. We produce milk, yes. And I think that's that's. OK.

Interviewer:

So, OK, very specific ones coming from Nestle. What about the other?

Participant:

That was that was that was Unilever.

Interviewer:

That was Unilever. OK, my bad. Yes. What about the other three?

Participant:

The other three and. Not getting a very specific emotions from the campaign. Well, I can see that. They OK. Yes, yes, yes, they do this. They do that. Not much. Not much. Yeah.

Interesting.

Interviewer:

OK. That was the 2nd set done. We're moving on to the last set already. Ah, now. You have already seen what the campaigns boast about. Sorry, you have already seen what the campaign boasts about achieving what they already have achieved. Now do you think that the campaigns have actually achieved what they say they have achieved?

Interviewer:

One by one, let's do it.

Participant:

OK, so for apples, like I mentioned earlier, I did not think that they actually achieved the. Like the reused materials in the recycled products. Even though they put some numbers on the web page and that number is actually. For the numbers, OK. For Nestle, for Nestle. And a lot, a lot of data they put on the the website. All of the all website and I think that is. Well, good enough. And but most of these numbers are from what they are aiming. So like for example, they are aiming to have 200,000,000 trees and that they aim to plant and grow by 20-30 and that is just a plane, yes. And like 50% cream. Millions to be sourced from farmers adopting regenerative agricultural practices by 20-30, and that is just. The girl's name. So I think that Nestle and Unilever, they. Actually achieve what they are trying to like to say. Like what they're saying, and I think that is is because. Uh, what they are saying is based on the a lot of projects, a lot of campaign, a lot of like. A direction that we. As a collective of, like, farmers and agricultural people are ready to win, if the past few decades already, they are just taking it. And. Next level. Oh. Like, yes, they're applying to their like their chain, the, the, the chain of supply and that stuff. So I think they already achieve maybe not 100%, but 6070% of what they are saying. The thing is it's been done already. And for H&M. Well, they they have some, they have some data, but I'm not sure. If those are like. Well, you know. If those are real numbers are not, because. Uh, I don't see how those numbers are actually realistic? Because they say that they have collected like 1100. Tons of clothings in the last 10 years, and for me that is a little bit exaggerated. Yes.

Interviewer:

Interesting. Yeah. So thank you for also explaining your evaluation. And yeah, you also. Let's say a lot of your rationale was because of what you read on the website. Is there any reason outside of what you see on the website that also influence your evaluation?

Participant:

Besides the fact that I don't entirely trust trust big companies and what they what they are claiming. That's it. It's all based on my reading on the website, yes.

Interviewer:

OK. And some sort of a skepticism with big companies in general?

Participant:

Yeah. Yes, OK.

Interviewer:

Now, OK, that was what they have achieved. Now let's move on to their future goals. Do you think the campaigns will achieve what they say they will achieve?

Participant:

For the agricultural plans and goals of Nestle and Unilever, I think that they will like very close or maybe actually achieve what they say they will, but for apples. I like, I already mentioned why I'm having. Why? I have doubts on their plans to like, recollect and then recycle the materials. I don't actually see how they can actually pull that out in the near future. And for H&M they. Did they actually mention any? Future plans? Uh. Well, for whatever they claim. They. Are doing and will be doing. I think M will. Sort of not. Not getting to it because clothing is, uh, I think it's a little bit different from like food and beverage and yeah electronics because. Not all people will like, go back to the original. Stone to donate their clothes or sell their clothes back to the the the H&M company. We actually donate them to charity or some other things, so maybe they would not achieve their goal. And thinking that's why.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK. No. Let's look at the let's think of the content and look at the contents again. Now, what do you think of the way the company? Talk about the campaign, for example. Do you think they are providing enough information or what do you think of the wordings?

Participant:

For me, I think that they have. Like written a reasonable amount of. Explain. Of what they are trying to do in in a pretty much. Clear and easy to understand ways. For all of the four companies, yes. Well I am not getting. I will not get be getting into actual. Web page design because. Yeah, some of them is actually really hard to read.

Interviewer:

Go on elaborate. You can elaborate.

Participant:

Pretty long. OK. OK. OK. Yes, for Unilever the. All of the legs are very long. And. Very detailed. Yes. They also include videos and they provide PDF file on what on what they claim on their claims. Yes. So I think this is the for the unit level is a pretty good. Writings. Very good presentation. And the same goes for Nestle, because a lot of stuff they read they have written is is. Clear, easy to understand. Ashley Nestle. Was able to keep it shorter than Unilever and also they included many other links to all of the campaign. All of all of the other campaigns. H&M also pretty short and precise and to the point. It's just that there's not much to what they are actually saying. For the apples. The web page is very clean and very nice to scroll through because you know they company.

But it's part of the. Short amount of text. They actually on the website you don't get much from what they are saying. What they are trying to claim, and their actual plans. Like right now or the future, yes.

Interviewer:

OK. Yeah. So which campaign do you prefer? And could you rank them?

Participant:

For me, I would rank number one is Unilever, Nestle, Apple and then H&M

Interviewer:

Could you explain your ranking?

Participant:

Uh, so like I mentioned, uh, I actually prefer the the agricultural approaches. So of course building level and Nestle is 1/2 and also Unilever mention. In detail on what they are doing and all of their like investment teams and what they want to do, like right now in the future, so it's. That is one and two, and for #3 is Apple because. From what I can from what I rent Apple actually provided. Information on how they are. Doing what they are doing and. The number of the data. Like social reduction or blah blah blah, stuff like that number and that is not reflected on the website of the Internet. Yes, so that is why action name even though. Days gone.

Participant:

Web pages, that is Apple. But for me they are not telling a lot of stories behind all of these. Yes.

Interviewer:

OK, great insights now. Which campaigns do you think are done out of real, genuine concern for the environment and why do you think so?

Participant:

I would say Unilever because because. I will. I will say that Unilever is a bigger company. Comparing to H&M and Apple. But maybe in part with uh Nestle, because and because of their. Such a big size and their products actually cover a. A large range. In our daily life so. The campaign the is actually having more impact on our life. So that's why I say that it is the campaign is the most important one.

Interviewer:

Yeah. OK. And OK and. You believe that they are doing the campaign out of real concern for the environment and sustainability, correct?

Participant:

Yes.

Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Great. So for the other three, does it mean that you think that the other three is not done out of real concern for the environment?

Participant:

I wouldn't say so, maybe. I I still think that they are. Happy, genuine concern on the environment. The the campaign and the. The impact of the campaign and the product is not that big comparing to. Unilever.

Interviewer:

OK, OK. So uh, is it correct that I understand you think that they have? Other motives? Apart from, say, promoting sustainability.

Participant:

Yeah.

Participant:

Is. Will Ohh I will settle for for apples Apple companies. I think that what they're selling here is. Only half of the story they are going great, but not for the sake of actually going green I would say.

Interviewer:

OK, questing then what do you think the motives are?

Participant:

They are trying to appeal more to the younger and like because we are like getting like want to protect the environment and stuff. So they are trying to appeal to us to get us to use their products.

Interviewer:

Umm, OK that that's Apple, right? What about Nestle and H&M?

Participant:

For H&M I I think I have the same feeling. As for the Apple Company for Nestle. I am maybe. Like leaning toward the thinking that they are actually having concern for the environment. OK, so sustainability, yes. OK.

Interviewer:

Interesting. OK, great. So yeah, that was the last question. I'm just going to move on to closing. So yeah, is there any other comments you'd like to make regarding the PR campaign samples you've already seen and in minor details? Thoughts. Opinions.

Participant:

OK. Actually I have two if you don't mind.

Interviewer:

No. Yeah, absolutely. I would really appreciate it.

Participant:

But I know you're not the one that is making this campaign, but just to point out I have a confusion on why Nestle put a number showing the management positions held by women in their sustainability page. I don't know why they did that, and for me, it's irrelevant. Yes, that is the first one and the second one is all of the unit level pages. The. They are so hard to read with the blue background and white text. It uh. It is actually looking like the blue screen of death of Windows and that is the most horrible things can ever happen to anyone, and I don't know why they chose this design, and I know this is not what you are trying to look for in. An answer, but this this may be what is stopping people to reach to actually read their wall of text and. And and actually. So at least twice while playing through the four unit levels link. Yes. So I think if anyone is not like being asked to go through all of this link, we can actually get to the end and that is a design flaw. A floor for me? Yes, I think.

Interviewer:

Awesome, right? Well, that's that. It is great that you tell me because that's also some of the things that I look into, anything that is relevant to consumers evaluation is relevant to my study. So great that you point that out. Yeah. OK. Anything else?

Participant:

President. Alright. No, that's it actually.



Interviewer:

OK, awesome. Thank you for your time.

## Appendix F

### Study 1 - Coding scheme

Theme	Level 1	Level 2
Perceived motives	Self-serving	Greenwashing (build/fix image)
		Appeal to customer
		Damage control
		Profits
		Compliance
		Gain awareness/recognition
		Reduce costs
		Benevolent
Logos	Industry - CSR activities	
	Activities - CSR activities	
Ethos	From company itself	Credibility in sustainability (based on website)
		Credibility in company size
		Credibility in products/service
		Discredit in sustainability
		Discredit - lack information
		Discredit - company size
		Discredit - products/services
	Company political stance	
	From participants	Personal experience & stories

Theme	Level 1	Level 2	
Pathos		WOM	
		Neutral credibility	
	Environmental concern		Reduce-reuse-recycle
			Agricultural practices
			Human rights
			Climate change
			Environment protection
			Food waste
			Trash separation
			Water
			Minimizing personal impact
			Fast fashion
	Attitude towards green products		Microplastics
			No environmental concerns
			Consider brands before buying
Consider products before buying			
No consideration			
Green purchase behaviors		Buy green products	
		No - money	
		No - lower quality	
		Only for self-benefits	
		No consideration	

Theme	Level 1	Level 2
Emotions	Negative	Confused
		Distrust
		Doubt
		Skeptical
		Unimpressed
		Annoyed
		Hatred
		Overwhelmed
		Uncertain
		Neutral
	Positive	Impressed
		Intrigue
		Trust
		Hopeful
		Excited
		General positive emotion
		Touched
Message characteristics	Concrete information	
	Vague information	
Evaluations	Ingenuine	Manipulative language
		Action - claim mismatch
		Lack effort

Theme	Level 1	Level 2
		Misleading data
		No distinct reason
	Genuine	
Verification dimensions	Beneficial	
	Emotional	
	Rational	
	Relevant	
	Sensorial	
	Social	

## Appendix G

### Study 2 - Codebook

#### Rhetorical devices in corporate sustainability PR campaigns - codebook

##### Introduction

This codebook is provided in order to code rhetorical devices in the content of corporate sustainability PR campaigns. Each item that needs to be annotated is a full sentence with punctuations.

##### Coding criteria

All sentences in the content of corporate sustainability PR campaigns will be selected from the company's main sustainability page, its primary sustainability campaign (if there are multiple), and any sublinks of this campaign. If there are multiple campaigns, the selection will prioritize the one focusing on sustainability, environment, or climate. If the company does not have a campaign specifically focused on these aspects, priority will be given to the sustainability content most prominently displayed on the website.

Sentences will be selected unless they meet the following exclusion criteria:

- The sentence is the company's slogan.
- The sentence consists only of filler words.
- The meaning of the sentence is not understandable.
- The sentence contains an embedded link to a different campaign (links embedded in part of the sentence are not applicable).
- The sentence is in a summary content box that leads to a sub-webpage.

- The sentence is part of charts, tables, graphs, quotes, or image captions.
- The sentence focuses on promoting specific products or services.

For each category of rhetorical devices, code 1 if the item is present/yes, and code 0 if the item is absent/no. Multiple rhetorical devices can appear in one sentence, or set of sentences. The context is important to spot rhetorical devices, thus the annotator is required to inspect sentences before and after each individual sentence to determine whether the rhetorical devices are present within or across sentences. In case of rhetorical devices appearing in a set of sentences, it will be counted as one instance.

### Rhetorical devices descriptions

Rhetorical devices	Description
Hypophora	<p>Asking and subsequently answering the same question immediately.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <p><i>"What makes a king out of a slave? Courage!"</i></p> <p><i>"Why must we fight? Because there is no other choice."</i></p>
Rhetorical question	<p>Asking a question to prompt the audience to ponder the issue being discussed, rather than to elicit an answer.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <p><i>"Isn't it a bit too late for that?"</i></p> <p><i>"Who knows?"</i></p>
Epistrophe	<p>Repeating a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses or sentences.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <p><i>"See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil."</i></p>

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Rhetorical devices	Description
	"When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child."
	Repeating a word or a phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or sentences.
Anaphora	<i>Examples:</i> "Every day, every night, in every way, I am getting better and better."  "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets."
Repetition	Repeating the same word or phrase multiple times. <i>Examples:</i> "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow."  "The horror, the horror."

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