

Proud to limit the damage: Negatively framed eco-ratings motivate green intentions through anticipated pride

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Abstract

Assessing the environmental (un)sustainability of products is complex for consumers, and the effectiveness of current eco-information schemes leaves room for improvement. Eco-ratings quantify the environmental (un)sustainability of products in a choice set in a standardized way, using a predefined score range. Since eco-ratings do not have a one-to-one relation to a quantifiable physical reality, their framing direction is arbitrary: scores could be framed positively (e.g., 1 = not - to 5 = very environmentally friendly) or negatively (e.g., 1 = very - to 5 = not damaging for the environment). Three studies show that emphasizing that a product is less damaging to the environment (vs. more environmentally friendly) relative to other products, increases anticipated pride and leads to stronger purchase intentions for more environmentally sustainable products. Next to theoretical contributions, this paper has important practical implications for the communication of the environmental (un)sustainability of products.

Keywords: *Environmental sustainability; Information schemes; Communication*

Track: Consumer Behaviour