

# Green Marketing: A Global Issue to Enhance Natural Environment

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## Abstract

*In many cities around the world, air and water pollution have reached dangerous levels. World concern continues to mount about the depletion of the earth's ozone layer and the resulting "greenhouse effect" a dangerous warming of the earth. An explosion of "environmentally friendly" products and marketing programs appeared as firm after firms tried to capitalize on consumers' perceived increased sensitivity to environmental issue. this study reviews the concept of sustainable production and consumption considering protecting or enhancing the natural environment. The study adapt a qualitative content analysis and the researchers developed themes relevant to green marketing, and sustainable development. It concluded that the adoption of green marketing philosophy makes the organization close to its customers particularly those who have an environmental concern. The study recommended that government should modify consumers and industry's use of harmful goods and ensure that businesses provide accurate information on the environmental aspect of their activities.*

**Key words:** environment, development, green marketing, sustainability, productivity, consumption.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1992, the World Bank recognizes that environmental degradation even has a capacity to destroy societies. Sustainable development may be one answer in this need; however it is a rather ubiquitous contested, but indispensable concept (Castro, 2004).

Kotler and Keller (2005) noted that although environmental issues have long affected marketing practices, especially in Europe, their relevance has increased in the last decade or so. With the will-publicized earth day activities in the united state in April 1990, the "green marketing" movement was born.

An explosion of "environmentally friendly" products and marketing programs appeared as firm after firm tried to capitalize on consumers perceived increased sensitivity to environmental issues. The environmental awareness has been escalated in most country of the world; as a result, organizations had to improve their organizational culture and strategy to presence the environment in all their components. There is need to address critical issues of long-term global sustainability in which the situation continues to deteriorate, including climate change, deforestation, biodiversity and desertification among others. Etzel Walker and Stanton (2001) observed that environmental consciousness is greater in many other parts of the world – ranging from the European Union to Japan – than it is in the U.S.

As a result, a company must be environmentally sensitive in its marketing activities, especially product development, all over the world.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Environment concerns have grown steadily during the past three decade. In many cities around the world, air and water pollution have reached dangerous levels. World concern continues to mount above the depletion of the earth's ozone layer and the resulting "greenhouse effect" a dangerous warming of the earth. And many environmentalist fear that we will be buried in our own trash (kotler and Armstrong, 2001).

Society has adapted an anthropocentric philosophy that has little consideration of how human demands relate to limited natural resources. If these results are not assessed, the aftermath may be dramatic. Bond (2005) claims that since 1970, the pressure on earth has almost doubled. Some key natural resources have declined by about one-third. Clearly, this consumptive pattern is not "sustainable" for future generation.

Many problems such as the widening of the ozone hole in the atmosphere, global warming, forest sweeping as well as acid rain, high levels of air, water pollution and many of the climate phenomena which has increased environmental problems during the post three decades caused an expansion of the environmental awareness.

Beckman's (2004) question's then become pertinent in these studies, which asks: what type of policies should be in place? In turn, how will sustainable development and marketing effect business and their long-term competitive advantage?

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study are:

- i. To examine sustainable production and consumption.
- ii. Provide ways to protect or enhance the natural environment through green marketing.

### **Research Methodology**

The study adopt a qualitative contents analysis and the researchers developed themes relevant to green marketing, environment issues and sustainable development gleaned from text books, journals, the internet and other publications from which conclusion and recommendations was made.

### **Literature Review**

#### **The Concept of Sustainable Development (SD)**

There are several paths explaining the rise of sustainable development. First, sustainable development may have been a reaction to radical environmentalism. Second it may have developed as a response to conservative and business utilitarianism. Third, it may have grown-out of a natural response to discussion in mainstream journal literature (Castro, 2004). Alanana (2006); Thomas (2010) noted that sustainable development has to do with development that is continuous and uninterrupted. This means that development should "keep going". Apparently vague, this concept of sustainable development aims at maintaining economic advancement and progress while protecting the long-term value of the environment; "it provides a framework for the integration of environment policies and development strategies (United Nation General Assembly, 1987). Although the origin of sustainable development is uncertain but Robert

and Hills, (2002) observed that three fundamental pillars exist”

- i. The first pillar provides a theoretical base supporting practical application. There are four major research areas identified within sustainable development, including ecological, economic, social and cultural parameters. Identification of these areas encourages effective planning and proper implementation.
- ii. The second pillar recognizes modeling can increase theoretical promotion and operational gateways.
- iii. The third pillar seeks developing a spatial framework especially for environmental advocacy and management.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, more than 150 world leaders adopted the new 2030 agenda for sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The seventeen (17) new Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the global Goals, aim to end poverty, hunger and inequality, take action on climate change and the environment, improve access to health and education, build strong institutions and partnerships. The Sustainable Development Goals are:

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2: End hunger., achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- Goal 3: Ensure health, lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- Goal 6: Ensure availability an sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8: Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable

development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

In practice, sustainable development requires the integration of economic, environmental and social objectives across sectors, territories, and generations. Therefore, sustainable development requires the elimination of fragmentation; that is, environmental, social and economic concerns must be integrated throughout decision-making process in order to make towards development that is truly sustainable.

Fuller and Gillett (1999) candidly remark about the state of sustainable marketing. They comment that the Earth's ecosystem suffers from a consumer-driven, no-holds-barred economic pattern. Consumers are not demanding green products, but they are also failing to recognize any connection between environmental impact and marketing consumption. At the macro level, these researcher's project the marketer will be a primary "mover and shaker" in this new developing field of green marketing.

### **The Concept of Sustainable Production and Consumption**

Sustainable production and consumption is the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, whilst minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life circle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations (HSD/United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1999). Consumption has in the past decades become a pivotal concept in debate about global environmental sustainability. Agenda 21, the blue print for the impacts of all social actors consumption practices is vital in making sustainable development a realistic goals (UNCED, 1992).

The concept of sustainability consumption was given political voice at the 1992 earth summit, were there was broad political consensus of the fact that major changes in the present consumption pattern are necessary in order to solve the global environment and development problems (Reisch, 1998). Environmentalist have long been concerned about the individual and aggregate increase in human consumption that have typical accompanied economic development. Most environmental related research focuses on the consumption of green products and on the identification of green consumers so that green target market and marketing programmers can be developed. Consumption is a central part of individual everyday practice and often "unseen" habits. Environmentally responsible consumption, often also called green consumption by contrast can be any consumption activities undertaken with the specific aim to reduce negative impact on the environment. These can include activities related to purchasing, use and disposal of goods, as well as non-purchase decision (Peattie, 1999). Such environmental consumption may not amount to sustainable but may be a step in the right direction. Mawoli (2017) observed that green marketing, also called environmental or ecological marketing, is a field of marketing which lays emphasis on adapting marketing practices that protect and promote environmental core values. He added that a company that uses

production systems that minimize gas emission and pollution as well as appropriate packaging may be considered as being environmentally friendly.

Therefore, when an organization apply the green marketing concepts by dealing in high quality products or services and use the honest advertising media, in a socially and environmentally responsible way, it will have a good reputation in the market and make a good exploitation of available marketing opportunities and impact on the behaviour of environmentally conscious consumers, thereby leading to increase in sales, market shares and attracts investors.

### **Protecting the Natural Environment through Green Marketing**

Kotler and Armstrong (2001) defined natural environment as the natural resources that are needed as inputs by marketers or that are affected by marketing activities. They noted that environmental sustainability is a management approach that involves developing strategies that both sustain the environment and produce profit for the company.

### **The Environmental Sustainability Grid**

<b>Tomorrow</b>	<p><b>New environmental technology</b>          Is the environmental performance of our products limited by our existing technology base?</p> <p>Is there potential to realize major improvements through new technology?</p>	<p><b>Sustainability vision</b>          Does our corporate vision direct us toward the solution of social and environmental problems?</p> <p>Does our vision guide development of new technologies, market, products, and processes?</p>
	<p><b>Pollution prevention</b>          Where are the most significant waste and emission streams from our current operations?</p> <p>Can we lower costs and risks by eliminating waste at the source or by using it as useful input?</p>	<p><b>Product stewardship</b>          What are the implications for product design and development if we assure responsibility for a product's entire life cycle?</p> <p>Can we add value or lower costs while simultaneously reducing the impact of our products?</p>
<b>Today</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>

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*Adapted from: Kottler, P and Armstrong, G. (2001) principles of marketing, in: Stuart L., Hart, "Beyond Greening: strategies for sustainable world", Harvard Business Review.*

Companies can use the environmental sustainability grid to gauge their progress toward environmental sustainability. At the most basic level, a company can practice pollution prevention. This involves more than pollution control – cleaning up waste after it has been created. Pollution prevention means eliminating or minimizing waste before it is created. Companies emphasizing prevention have responded with “green marketing” programs – developing ecologically safer products, recyclable and biodegradable packaging, better pollution controls, and more energy – efficient operation (Kottler and Armstrong, 2001).

At the next level, companies can practice product stewardship – minimizing not just pollution from production but all environmental impacts through the full product life cycle.

At the third level, companies look to the future and plan for new environmental technologies. A company that deals with agricultural products may shift its agricultural technology base from bulk chemical to biotechnology. By controlling plant growth and pest resistance through bioengineering rather than through the application of pesticide or fertilizers.

Finally, companies can develop a sustainability vision, which serves as a guide to the future. It shows how the company’s products and services, processes, and policies must evolve and what new technologies must be developed to get there. This vision of sustainability provides a framework for pollution control, product stewardship and environmental technology.

Yudelson and Iunch (2000) observed that sustainable design represents a new area but is an afterthought in many companies. One special interest area is green technology and an area that



may become a core competence. Technology provides environmental improvements and economic growth, but, technology is complex, unpredictable and prognostications cannot be provided by timetables or directions. Anex (2000) noted that, technology is not necessarily contains a chain-of-causality, is decidedly influenced by firm structure, competition, human resource availability, industry type and product life cycle. Unfortunately, there is little incentive to switch over to new green technologies. Base on this, Yudelson and Iunch, 2000; Noorman and Miller (1998) pointed out that marketing plays a key role because of expanding traditional boundaries, dealing with stakeholders, innovative products and being a champion to improvisation.

The environmental product impact can determine using eco-design methodology and include use of a software product such as, “Design for the Environment” (DEF). The programs analyze trade-offs between materials, components and makes suggest for aftermath materials and product manufacturers (Gross and Port, 1996).

### **The Concept of Enviro-preneurialism:**

It is a tongue-twisting term using an environmental-based marketing strategy. It allows a tactical, rather than strategic approach. Menon and Menon (1997) observed that environment framework has three relevant strategies:

- i. a strategic market focus upon innovation and technology, rather than regulatory or consumer pressures.
- ii. adoption of entrepreneurial viewpoint
- iii. a coalescence of environmental, economic and social objective.

There are three major assumptions concerning enviro-preneurialism:

- i. is recognition that there may be negative impact upon the Earth, without human consumption or metabolism. We should seek consumer items having a low environmental impact (Ottmman, 2003).
- ii. Sustainable marketing is a driver through internal philosophy, rather

than management or regulatory promulgation (Ryan, 2003; Ottman, 1998; Mirvis, 1994).

- iii. Social and socially-responsible marketing concepts bends quite well into the model of environmentalism (Osterhus, 1997; Marignan and Ferrell, 2004).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, successful green marketers no longer view consumers as people with appetite for material goods but as human beings concerned about the condition of the world around them. The adoption of the green marketing philosophy makes the organization close to its consumers, particularly those who have an environmental concern.

### **Recommendation**

- 1 Companies who manufacture products can make a further contribution to environmentally responsible way.

- 2 Government should try and protect the consumers and the society by minimizing the impact of business on the environment by modifying consumers and industry's use of harmful goods and ensure that business provide accurate information on the environmental aspect of their activities.

- 3 In making packaging decisions, companies should heed to the growing environmental concerns. Many packages end up as broken bottles and crumpled cans among others littering the streets, they should initiates recycling programs to save the environment.

- 4 Consideration should be given to developing new international market based mechanisms and incentives for protecting biodiversity in developing countries, including mobilization of international financial support and technical assistance.

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