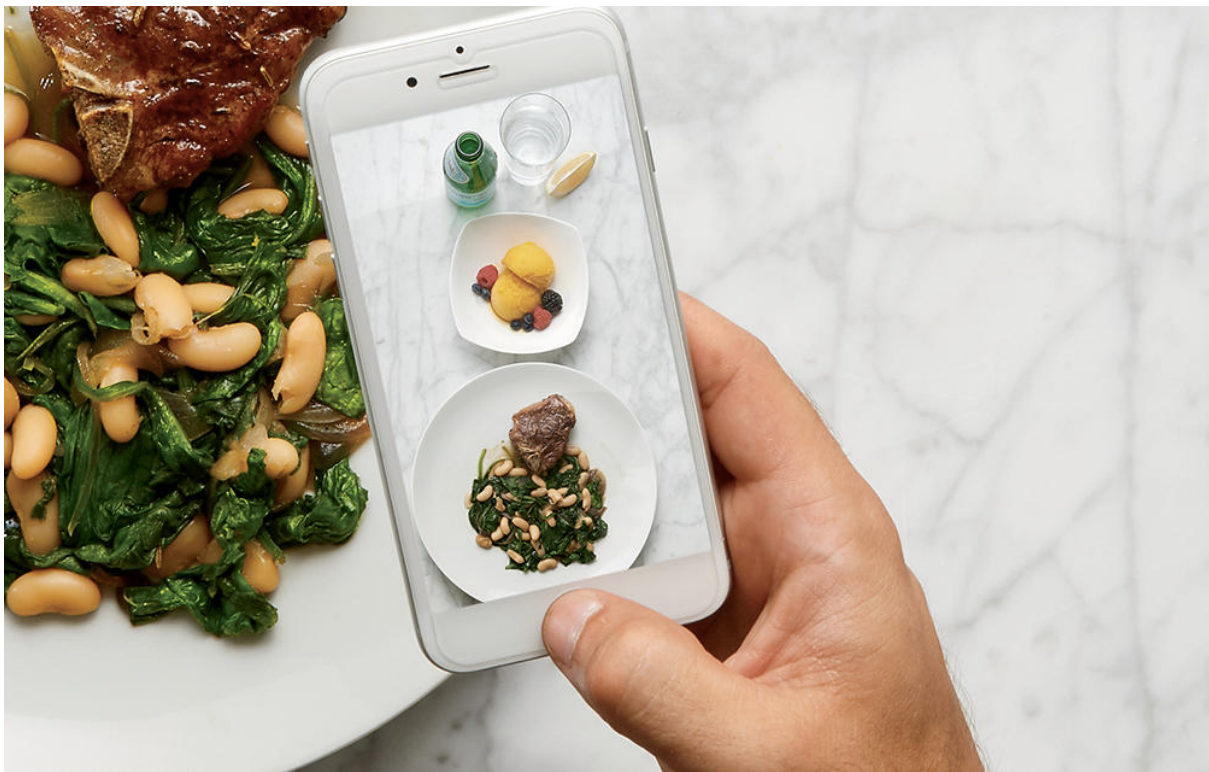


# The attitude of Generation Y regarding the green washing in the food industry



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# Abstract

This thesis will lead to greater insights of generation Y attitudes regarding green washing. Generation Y is coming in their highest spending level; therefore, it is key for companies to understand this segment which is the biggest segment living nowadays.

A board literature review is provided in order to have a clear understanding about who is really Generation Y and what are their specificities for their buying decision process. More precisely, the different influences that comes in the game when buying a green product.

Focus group will allow to have a better understanding of generation Y's level of awareness between food and green products and the role of green washing. It will also allow to understand their expectations and motivation regarding green food products.

During different aspect of green washing will be tested on the participants, such as their level of awareness regarding labels, different aggregates, the food companies' communication influence, the role of the government and their role regarding companies.

This thesis provides first insight about the generation Y and their attitude about greenwashing and the food industry and can be the base of further research achieved in a quantitative way.

Recommendations for companies will be provided after all in order to give them more information about what they should do in order to fulfill perfectly millennial's need regarding green products and why they should stop completely to do green washing

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# Research question

The 20th century has been the century of international exchanges. The level of trades, exports and imports continue to grow nowadays and does not seem to stop its expansion.

The different ways of communication, transportation, distribution, allowed the mass consumption. Over the last century, mass consumption has been a standard for the developed countries. This mass consumption led environmental problem. For instance, the natural resources are not enough to compensate inhabitant's needs. Moreover, the humanity is "in ecological overshoot" (Global Footprint Network, 2017): an additional 0,6 earth is needed to answer the demand of mass consumption and to ingest the waste generated.

Environmental awareness of people is described as "factual environmental knowledge, affective and behavioral attitudes toward environmental problem and values related to the environment" (Szagun, Pavlov, 1995, p.93). Moreover, it is socially constructed (Graumann, 1990). It means that the conscientiousness of preserving the environment is not innate but need to be learnt through education.

Generation Y, people born between 1977 and 1995, feels that it is important to respect the environment and that they do what they can in order to have a sustainable behavior in their everyday life. The awareness among millennial of environment and ethic is high (Hwang et. al., 2015). McKayn (2010) define those people in three R: reduce, reuse and recycle. They are more careful about environment and are willing to take action more easily.

He found out almost that 69 percent of this generation "recycle paper, plastic, or glass at home" (pp.12) Moreover, Millennial are, in fact, "responsible to themselves and others, and value being involved" (pp.12)

Generation Y is coming in their highest spending level, it is key for companies to understand this segment which is the biggest segment living nowadays. In fact, "it's estimated they'll be spending \$200 billion annually by 2017 and \$10 trillion over their lifetimes as consumers, in the U.S. alone" (Solomon, 2014). Also, they only think

global and cannot understand another kind of environment (PrincetonOne and Hobart, 2017). They build their own personality and universe and are proud to show it to the world (Talbot, 2012). Moreover, they expect companies to be sustainable in order to respect the environment (Talbot, 2012).

More than the environmental aspect, generation Y gives some importance in the different aspects of ethics. They support environmental friendly action (Solomon, 2015). Those various facets include for the company to have a sense of integrity, to be honest, open, respectful, fair and responsible (Institute of Business Ethics, 2007).

These customers expect companies to be socially responsible. It is defined as “business’s obligation to maximize its positive impact and minimize its negative impact on society” (Ferrell & Hirt, 2015, p.24). In other word, if a company does not act ethically, customers would rather choose another brand that has a positive ethic impact. They are willing to pay more for this type of products (Kavran, Cerovic & Jelusic, 2015).

According to Pickett-Baker and Ozaki, consumers would rather go for environmental respectful company (Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008). Due to the growing awareness toward environment, green purchasing became a standard of consumption (Raheem, Vishnu & Ahmed, 2014). Green purchasing is described as the purchase of an eco-friendly product.

The need of trust and information regarding products and companies is increasing. Moreover, since the horsemeat scandal, and some other food related issues, customers are very careful and attached to any information which might comfort them in the selection of a product. The goal is to reduce consumers’ lack of confidence about products’ quality and “to meet customers needs of reassurance” (Jeddi & Zaiem, 2010, p.2). Furthermore, the international exchanges allow the consumption of worldwide products, which leads to uncertainties regarding food products.

In order to make sure that customers consume better quality products, a part of them decided to eat green product. For a certain part of consumers, organic food is an answer to those uncertainties. Furthermore, according to Solomon (2014)

Generation Y is “twice as likely to care about whether or not their food is organic than are their non millennial counterparts”. It should the importance they have concerning green products. Food is considered as organic “if at least 95% of their agricultural ingredients meet the necessary standards” (Organic Farming - European Commission, n.d.). The demand of organic products from customers has been increasing and the producers adapt to answer this need. Actually, between 2002 and 2014, the production of organic food area doubled from 5,6 million hectares to 10.3 million hectares in Europe (European Commission, n.d.). It clearly shows that the need of organic food is increasing and producers are adapting their production to answer this specific of demand.

According to the European Parliament (May 2015), developed countries are the bigger consumers of organic products (USA, France, Germany, China, Canada), whereas the biggest producers are actually developing countries (India, Uganda, Mexico, Tanzania, Ethiopia). Importation of goods is necessary since the European suppliers cannot reply to the total demand. Moreover, the expansion of organic products has an exponential growth, for instance the sales in Europe represents €22.2 billion when it represented only €10.2 billion in 2002. Since the demand of organic product grew, industrials saw an opportunity and decided to increase their portfolio by offering organic products at low prices.

For some other customers, the answer would be to consume eco-friendly products which have a small footprint impact on the environment.

The Y generation is different from the others; they do not trust in the green advertisement anymore. In fact, about 50% of them do not (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014). Also, this generation is pretty different from the others: they get most of information on social media (Bergh, 2017) and are very connected. It means that they have access to a lot of information regarding companies.

Moreover, according to Chen and Chang (2012), there is a correlation between green washing and green trust. In fact, green washing has a positive influence on confusion of consumers but influence negatively green advertisement trust.

Nevertheless, since Generation Y does not trust in green advertisement anymore due to the green washing, it is important to have a better understanding about what do they feel about it, and what need to be changed in order for them to trust more the food industries regarding green products.

Consumers prefer to buy sustainable products for different reason such as their health and safety but also regarding the environment (Bartels, Hoogendam, 2011). They are however afraid to be victim of green washing. Green washing is defined as inexact/false information of companies that are advertising some eco-friendly assets when it is actually not the case (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2011). In order to be more truthful to customers, companies try their best to advertise their ecological assets, but it also happens that the advertised information are untrue.

Furthermore, it is however hard to describe the different appellation of green product (Orange, 2010). It leads to confusion among Generation Y consumers (Adweek.com, 2010) Also the numerous number of labels encourage this confusion. The awareness of all those labels is rather small which increase the level of skepticism regarding green products (Burrows, 2012).

Moreover, Millennial are willing to discuss with companies and providers each other needs in order to be more respectful of the environment (Solomon, 2014). Collaborate with companies that take into consideration their opinion is important to them. Company start a business and Generation Y finish this business (Solomon, 2014). This is why is it a significant asset to take millennial's opinion into consideration when building a strategy. Those discussions happen already over social media. In fact, many companies use social media such as Facebook and Twitter in order to talk about their environmental vision (Minton et al., 2012; Czapski, Olson, McNulty, 2014).

Then, for the generation Y, the role public authorities are key: they should play a bigger role regarding green washing (Solomon, 2015). Some governments tried to set laws and requirements about organic food products. However, clear common guidelines need to be defined in order to have an homogeneous control. (Zidianaki, 2013).



Therefore, the following research question will be addressed:

**What is the attitude of Generation Y regarding green washing in the food industry?**

This question will allow to make recommendations to food companies to approach generation Y more effectively. In order to answer this question, five propositions will be addressed based on the literature review:

- 1- Labels play an important role regarding green washing phenomenon
- 2- Generation Y is confused concerning the different green product assets.
- 3- Millennial is not a fool regarding food companies' green marketing
- 4- Generation Y wants public authorities to play a bigger role regarding green washing
- 5- Millennial are willing to take action in order help companies to be more respectful of the environment.

This thesis will lead to greater insights of generation Y influence regarding green washing.

Moreover, since most of papers use questionnaire as data collection method, focus group will allow to have a better understanding of generation Y's level of awareness between food and green products and the role of green washing. It will also allow to understand their expectations and motivation regarding environmental respectful food products.

Recommendations for companies will be provided after all in order to give them more information about what they should do in order to fulfill perfectly customer's need regarding green products and why they should stop completely to do green washing

# Limitations

This part will highlight the different limitations faced within this thesis. At first, based on the literature review, the field of the greenwashing concerning the generation Y is not a subject that allowed to have a board literature review only based on the topic. There is no empirical studies that allow to confirm or not the actual study. Therefore, the literature review is a compilation of the different aspect of the research question in order to have a better understanding of the different facets of the subject.

Due to the limited number of pages and the time limitation, it does not allow to have to have companies point of view of this study and to know if they are aware of this issue and if yes what are they doing in order to be more green and to make generation Y trusting them.

## Literature Review

In order to have a better understanding of the subject, a literature will allow to have an overview of the existing literature review in order to have insight about the generation Y, its green behavior, the environmental actions taken by governments and food companies but also the influences of those companies on the customer mindset and on the politics.

In order to perform the literature review, a first trial of a systematic literature method had been developed. According to Petticrew and Roberts (2006, p. 2) it is described as: "A method of making sense of large bodies of information, and a means to contributing to the answers to questions about what works and what does not".

However, it failed due to the fact that the existing literature concerning the generation Y about green washing regarding food industry is not a subject that have been studied as it is, only few documents related the generation Y and green washing.

On different database, the following keywords have been used: “Green washing OR green marketing”; “Food”, “Generation Y or millennial”. For instance, on EbscoHost, only two documents were showed and only one of them was somehow relevant.

Therefore, in order to have a better overview of the existing literature regarding all the aspect of the research question, a narrative literature review has been performed. A narrative research approach is defined as a summarize of “different primary studies into a holistic interpretation shaped by the reviewers” own experience, existing theories and models” (An, 2013, pp.42). It will allow to have a broad overview of the existing literature. It is less structured than a systematic literature review but allow to choose document relative to an unknown research problem. In order to have the most recent studies, most of the selected papers are from 2010 and above. However, the limitation of this method is a risk of bias and papers chosen by the author (Montori, Swiontkowski, Cook, 2003).

## Generation Y

### Insights

Generation is coming in their highest spending level, trend of sustainable food, key for companies to understand this segment.

Generation Y is defined as people born between 1979 and 1994. They are also called the Millennial or Echo Boomers. This generation is very different from their parents, the baby boomers. Those differences will be enlightened in the next paragraphs.

At first, the generation Y represents 60 million people, which is the biggest generation living nowadays. As young professionals nowadays, this segment is on its edge of spending, they have a high buying power. This is why it is key for companies to understand perfectly this segment since it has the biggest potential compared to the other generations (Hwang et al, 2015).

Moreover, this generation is pretty diverse: in fact 33% are Caucasian and the rest is coming from a melting pot (Talbot, 2012). It means that people are more open-minded and tolerant between each other. Therefore, they only think global and cannot understand another kind of environment (PrincetonOne and Hobart, 2017). They are much more tolerant regarding minorities, they are more likely to support gay marriage, approved single working mother with one child, unmarried people... (Solomon, 2015). They do not like to fall into stereotypes and have the volunteer to make the world a better place, where everybody support each other, to create one big community.

Millennial became independent very early. In fact, their parents used to come back late from work, meaning that this generation was on its own after school, had to do their homework, take care of themselves while waiting for their parents to come back. They had to be responsible and mature earlier than the previous generation (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014).

It is also confirmed with the fact that the number of divorced parents raised a lot. It also has impact on the millennial psychology: they express their individuality and seem much more self confident than the previous generation at the same age. They build their own personality and universe and are proud to show it to the world (Talbot, 2012).

Furthermore, generation Y grew up with technologies, especially with the use of internet: they are globally connected. The technology usage is high: they know perfectly how everything is working. In fact, for the last 20 years, a high number of innovation has been created and they used it from the beginning. They have big interest in those innovations and are very curious to try them all. However, all those different ideas make the millennial bored very easily (Talbot, 2012). Also, this generation is pretty different from the others: they get most of information on social media (Bergh, 2017). This is why it is very important for the companies to understand it clearly in order to influence this segment in a more efficient way. This will be discussed later on.

However, this generation does not own but rather share (Bergh, 2017). The different platform of sharing such as carpooling, shared apartment (for long term or short term such as AirBnb), Yerdle for second hand shop, Fon for sharing wifi... There is plenty of app for sharing and Millennial are very likely to use it. The participation of the society, having people helping each other matters to them.

Furthermore, millennial know what they want and what they expect from the companies. In fact, the development of social media allows the communication in both ways from companies to customer and from customer to companies. This was not the case with other type of medium such as TV and radio when the communication only goes in one way.

With the development of social media, companies understood the potential that they could get from their customer to understand their needs and requirements. Moreover, because internet is so fast, generation Y use social media as customer support as well and expect instant answer. This generation is willing to give some insight about themselves and how a company could improve their products (Talbott, 2012).

## Generation Y and green expectation

Moreover, millennial expect companies to be sustainable in order to respect the environment (Talbott, 2012). On the long term, the next generations should be able to live in a good environment and not trying to fix the environmental of the previous generation (Talbott, 2012).

Furthermore, it seems that this segment tends to be homogeneous. In fact, companies need to spread the same message over this generation: as they grow, the sub-segment remain to be very similar and there is no need for companies to separate people within this segment. (Khedaywi et. al., 2010)

The engagement of Generation Y regarding the environment is another point of differentiation. Generation Y feels that it is important to respect the environment and that they do what they can in order to have a sustainable behavior in their everyday

life. The awareness among millennial of environment and ethic is high (Hwang et. al., 2015).

Furthermore, McKayn (2010) define those people in three R: reduce, reuse and recycle. They are more careful about environment and are willing to take action more easily.

He found out almost that 69 percent of this generation “recycle paper, plastic, or glass at home” (pp.12) Moreover, Millennial are, in fact, “responsible to themselves and others, and value being involved” (pp.12). It shows that Generation Y is a generation that is concerned about their life but also about the others in order to live in the same community. They think that everybody should be responsible and respect the environment.

Furthermore, 84% of the Generation Y consider as their role to improve the world in term of environment. 71% of the Millennial wants brands to be more environmentally oriented, and 61% of them would prefer to observe social actions take along environmental actions (Keeble, 2013).

It is normal for them to maximize consumption in order to reduce footprint. For instance, at Stanford University, receipts have been banned and invoice are now send by email. It is something normal for this generation where, for older generations, they do not understand/accept is really.

The Y generation has specific desire and requirements in term of environmental actions. A research conducted during the World Economic Forum in 2012 determined how companies should behave in order to attract Millennial to buy sustainable products.

First, the Generation Y wants pure and simple products that create a minimum amount of waste. They want to follow the process of using what the need, reuse it if necessary, and give it back to the Earth. In order to achieve such a process, they are waiting more involvement from companies to help them to achieve such a recycling channel.

Then, the Generation Y requires simple sentences, words and labels on products packaging. Words such as “sustainability” doesn’t represents a concrete fact for this generation. They are more into words such as “water saving” or “reducing waste”, as they can link them to their everyday life and really know what they are doing to help the planet in term of environment.

Moreover, the Generation Y wants products that are sustainable, with a long duration. There is a long term involvement and they required from companies to offer quality products, different from what they can usually find in a store (Rafferty, 2014).

## Environment

Concerns about environment have started in 1960 when governments and populations began to worry about air and water pollution. A decade later, in 1970, the Earth day in the United-States took place, follow but the United Nations Conference for Human Environment in 1972. These action were the beginning of actions and thought about environment and how to solve environmental problems (Dunlap and Jorgenson, 2012).

The environment is defined by providing goods and services for human being. There are three main functions that can be explained. (Dunlap and Jorgenson, 2012)

On one hand, the environment contributes to offer renewable and nonrenewable resources essential for life such as clean air, water or food. On another hand, the second function is linked to the fact of consuming resources, a huge amount of waste is produced. This waste quantity could be seen as a depot to create thanks to recycling, useful substance for human life. If the amount of waste surmounts the environmental capacity, it starts to create air or water pollution.

Finally, the environment provides an habitat for the humans population. If the there is an overpopulation, the equilibrium won’t last and create issues among populations.



Since the last years, concerned about protecting the environment have increased dramatically in developed countries. The main issues are the excess of population, the extreme use of agricultural land that weakened the biodiversity; this lead to a climate change and global warming which fragile the use of lands; which impact on ocean temperature and resources there. This could be seen as a vicious circle which is nowadays the biggest global concerned (Dunlap and Jorgenson, 2012).

Worldwide governments and populations are involved and tried to focus on how to sustain environment and how to ensure a respectful way of life for the next generations. As the pollution is currently causing 5.5 millions of deaths every year (Amos, 2016). This is mainly due to the impact that pollution causes on human being, it could be health short term effects such as pneumonia or long term effects such as heart diseases, birth defects, or brain damaged. Furthermore, the entire ecosystem is impacted by the pollution, which causes a major global warming, and make our natural resources scarce.

## Government actions

In developed countries, governments are currently taking actions in order to decrease their environmental impacts. The main recent action took by governments is the COP21 in 2015 that has triggered human consciousness about ecology and global warming. As it is explained in the paper (Roberts, 2016), 187 worldwide governments took a common decision in order to decrease CO<sub>2</sub> gas emission and focus more into the environment.

As it is explained in the United-Kingdom government planning framework in the paragraphs 109 to 125 of the legislation, government is engaged to protect the natural environment, to fight for the geological conversation and soils, to maintain the ecosystem, to stop the deterioration of it, and mainly decrease the impact of humans being on the biodiversity. The government is also controlling new developments as they are not impacting the ecosystem or creating anymore pollution. Through this framework, the government is giving advice to local authorities about what they can do to preserve the environment (Gov.uk, 2017).

These environmental guidelines are also confirmed in the European legislation. As it is stated in the articles 11 and 191-193 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, under the article 191 « The EU has some of the world's highest environmental standards, developed over decades. Environment policy helps the EU economy become more environmentally friendly, protects Europe's natural resources, and safeguards the health and wellbeing of people living in the EU ». (Eur-lex.europa.eu, 2017)

In order to support our previous findings, the United-States legislation has also a focus on how to protect and improve the state in terms of environment. The government EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) which fights for sustainability, has more than 30 laws in favor of the environment; going from natural resources savings to waste management. Furthermore, these guidelines are in line with the one found in the European or United-Kingdom legislations (Epa.gov, 2017). Moreover, Barack Obama focused on a climate change plan which had for main objective to a 32 per cent reduce in carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by 2030 compared with 2005 levels (Obama's climate plans, 2015)

## Population actions

Furthermore, worldwide citizens also take actions in order to be more sustainable.

Moreover, ethics matters to customers: for instance, in a survey conducted among Boston citizens, it has been showed that customers await companies to act in an ethical way, and would likely prefer fair business and neglect the others with negative ethical behavior (Creyer, 1997).

Furthermore, Creyer (1997) distinguished three essential points: transparency, honesty and humility. At first, it is expected that a company gives clear information about their way of being ethical and do not trust those which act secretly. Second, the provided information needs to be honest, correct, and complete to express what are exactly the positive ethical actions taken by a firm. Third, humility is also a key. It is

required that a brand act in a respectful manner of doing ethic business without advertising about what they do.

In the United-States, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which is an independent organism linked to the US government in order to protect the environment; has gathered information on how the population is trying to be eco-friendlier, and how do they protect the environment. Small communities through the United-States has been created to fight against a specific issue such as air pollution, water saving, or property clean-up and reuse. The population is also aware that consume local has a concrete impact on the environment.

The organic food consumption has also increased a lot since few years and serve as a support to show the interest about environment and eco-friendly solutions for the population. In the case of the United-States, there is a link between governments and populations actions, as they are provided by the same agency EPA. This fact allow the law, guidelines and regulations to be more effective as they are in symbioses with different actors (Epa.gov, 2017).

Moreover, the global population in developed countries is taking action. For instance, some organism such as Global Citizens gather information and action to educate the population on how to be more sustainable. Then, the UNESCO has also small different communities who share common goals about biodiversity, climate changes, or waste management (Unesco, 2017).

## Food industry government measures

In addition, global governments are creating measures to control and regulate the food industry. Recently, governments started to promote sustainable food consumption, from organic food consumption to local consumption.

For instance, in the Netherland, the government support the consumption of sustainable food, and also encourage food companies who wants to become more sustainable by providing funding research and removing potential obstacles with the

legislation. Other actions taken by the Deutsh government, for instance are to support a sustainable livestock farming by creating better conditions for animal well-being, which allow them to decrease from 40% the consumption of diesel which is highly used in the dairy firms. Then, an important focus is bring in the meat and dairy productions. This sector has a high ecological footprint and the value chain involve more greenhouse effects than plant-based foods (Government.nl, 2017).

These measures are also available on the United-Kingdom government policy from 2010 to 2015. They are some identical measures found in the Dutch law. The main goal of the United-Kingdom government is to increase confidence in the food chain especially due to the horsemeat incident. The government is aware that they have to build a trust within the food industry, and that will make them more competitive in the future (Gov.uk, 2017).

An action state specifically, in California for instance, there is a food safety program that consist of having regular food inspections in farms through California (California leafy green marketing agreement, 2012).

Nevertheless, there is still some disparities inside the system to preserve and control the environmental impact. The main issue is the legal framework of the European Union which is not designed to make sustainable food consumption a social norm. The government needs to focus on educating the population in order to support food consumption in order for countries to be more sustainable (Zidianaki, Marilena, 2013). Currently, the government disposes of four instruments to act in favor of the environment. These instruments are regulatory instruments, voluntary environmental agreements, labels, and market-based instruments.

Moreover, Elkington explained that legislation has a significant role in helping companies respond to the People, Planet, Profit (c.f. Three Bottom Line). According to him, taxation should be adapted and developed in a way it reflects true prices: the economic, the environment and the social truth (Elkington, 1999).

# Influence of food industry

This section will present how the food industry influence the government when those want to implement new regulations and how food companies influence people lifestyle. This part will show the impact of companies lobbying on governments and how they affect consumer's mind.

## Influence of food companies on government

The influence of food companies over the government is mainly due to lobby. For instance, the food industry spends \$175 millions in lobbying in the United-States from 2009 to 2012.

The food industry use lobby to influence the following situation (Fairchild, 2005):

- funding research to confuse the evidence
- setting up front group to lobby on their behalf
- promising self regulations to prevent legislation

To emphasize our previous findings, for instance, the food industry created lobbying front group such as Center for Consumer Freedom (CCF) and Americans Against Food Taxes (AAFT), which prevent government regulations. Food companies use such front group in order not to be directly linked to them, and do not appear as they do not want government regulations (Karnani et al, 2014).

Food companies are also trying to slow down government interventions in the food industry, explaining that if the government needs to be involved on food regulation, it means that the food industry self regulatory efforts and corporate social responsibility initiative are not working. This statement is seen as a way to delay government actions in the the food regulations.

In these word said by Muhtar Kent, CEO of Coca-Cola "This is an important complicated societal issue that we all have to work together to provide a solution. That' s why we are working with government, business and civil society to have

active lifestyle programs in every country we operate by 2015.” (Telegraph.co.uk, 2012)

The hypocrisy of food companies can be observed. This is mainly based on the fact that food companies refuse government regulations related to their industry, and also scapegoating the population lifestyle as a main factor.

## Influence of food companies on people lifestyle

The influence of food companies over the population is mainly explained by the fact that they are looking for another scapegoat when they actually are the main negative factor. For instance, in his paper, Karnani explained the issue of obesity, explaining that food companies justifying that people lifestyle is the main factor of obesity and not the non healthy food the population consume. According to food companies, the population should exercise more in order to avoid obesity (Karnani et al, 2014).

However, it is explained in this paper that “a poor diet is a much greater determinant of obesity than lack of exercise” (Karnani et al, pp1, 2014). Food companies do not want the population to realize that obesity is mainly due to the non healthy products that food companies advertise. This situation shows the impact of food companies advertising on population mindset. and the indirect effects of food marketing on obesity and more wider on people lifestyle. Actually, food company focus on profits more on corporate social responsibility and use the trend of organic products to sell non healthy and organic products.

The term lean washing which can be defined “to describe the public relations and marketing activities of a firm that deceptively promote the perception that the firm is helping to solve the obesity problem and that deflect attention from the fact that it is directly contributing to the obesity crisis” (Karnani et al, pp.5, 2014) can be put into correlation with the term green washing which “describe the public relations and marketing activities of a firm that deceptively promote the perception that the firm’s strategies and actions are environmentally friendly” (Karnani et al, pp. 6, 2014). These terms put into evidence the furtive power that food companies have over the population, and how they exploit their resources to manipulate citizens’ mindset.

Furthermore, food companies are involved in philanthropic donations in order to gain a positive public relation and constraint criticism. For instance, Wal-Mart spent \$311.6 million, Wells Fargo \$275.5 million, Chevron (\$274.3 million), and Goldman Sachs \$262.6 million on donations in 2014 in order to get the positive effects of such actions (Myers, 2014).

## Green washing

This section will present how green washing is born and how companies started doing it in order to have a better brand perception of themselves.

### Green washing: how did it start

The term green washing has been used the first time by Jay Westerveld in 1983. He took the example of the hotel industry where he could see a sign saying to save the planet by keep using the same towel to reduce the amount of water used in the hotel he was. In fact, the hotel just wanted to reduce its water consumption to reduce the cost of the bill. This hotel did not achieve anything else back then to reduce its footprint. This is a good example of green washing.

Green washing has been described by several authors such as Orange (2010): “organizations that spend more time and money advertising that they are green than on actually putting into place environmentally friendly practices.” (pp.30)

Karnani et al. (2014) describe it as “the public relations and marketing activities of a firm that deceptively promote the perception that the firm’s strategies and actions are environmentally friendly”.

It clearly shows the motivation for company to advertise about their green actions when in fact it is just a marketing asset but does not involved any type of positive action for the environment or society behind it.



The evolution of green product consumerism shows the fast reaction of companies when the demand for green products started and could explained first green washing influencers. In the 1980, a few product have environmental marketing messages, however organic and natural products start to be consume. Furthermore, consumer awareness increase and more green purchase are made. The term “green” start to become a way to market products. Then, in 1990, there is a boom in consumer willingness to consume green products. In order to respond to this new demand, 92% of European multinationals redesign their product in order to be more “green”, and at that time green brand represents a niche market. In 2000, eco labels and green certifications are increasing considerably, and the total number of green product increase by 79%, and packaging is already playing a significant role on the buying decision process. (Air Quality Science, 2010).

The awareness of the environmental issues is growing among consumers. However, as Hwang et al. stated, “Even with an increasing universal awareness of environmental and ethical issues, consumers (...) are often confused by the meaning of sustainability” (p.97). This is mainly due to the different appellation used.

Moreover, in order to describe a green product, there is many existing terms, each for specific green assets. However, this lead to a big confusion. In order to have a better understanding about the different terms, the most famous ones will be explained.

There is a first confusion between the terms “natural” and “organic”. On one hand, the term natural “applies broadly to foods that are minimally processed and free of synthetic preservatives; artificial sweeteners, colors, flavors and other artificial additives; growth hormones; antibiotics; hydrogenated oils; stabilizers; and emulsifiers.” (Food Marketing Institute 2002, p.1) However, the products labels as natural are not subject to government regulation. On another hand, the term organic can be “refers not only to the food itself but also to how it was produced”. Organic products must be certified under the National Organic Program (NOP). Organic product require to be processed using organic farming methods that recycle resources and promote biodiversity but also “95% of agricultural ingredients meet the necessary standards” (Food Marketing Institute 2002, pp.6)

Moreover, the denomination fair trade can be defined as “a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency, and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, disadvantaged producers and workers—especially in the South” (FINE, 1998, n.p.)

Then, eco-friendly products “are synonyms used to refer to goods and services, laws, guidelines and policies considered to inflict minimal or no harm on the environment.” (Sehgal, Singh, 2010, pp. 1).

Finally, the appellation sustainability can be defined as “environmental sustainability as the maintenance of natural capital and as a concept apart from, but connected to, both social sustainability and economic sustainability” (Morelli, 2011, pp. 1).

It is important to underline that labels are submit to specific controls. Each labels has a specific meaning and possess a certain degree of organic ingredients. For instance, a product made with 70% to 95% of organic ingredients must have on his packaging the appellation “Made with organic product” and not solely “organic product” (Food Marketing Institute, 2002).

## Influence of green washing on consumers

Green washing has in general a negative impact on consumer behavior. In fact, they feel betrayed and cannot trust 100% companies about their green action taken. Indeed, “greenwash is positively associated with green consumer confusion and green perceived risk which would negatively affect green trust.” (Chen & Chang, 2012, p.497). It has been found that there is a negative correlation between green washing perception and green trust. In other words, the green washing reduces consumers’ green trust.

Moreover, this lack of trust impacts the real green businesses who suffer from the green washing of the other big companies.

The generation Y take into consideration different criteria's in order to determine if a product is respectful of the environment, such as the company reputation, product labels, and a observation on the packaging that might help them to judge if this specific is environmentally friendly (Smith, Brower, 2012). The Y generation as well as consumers in general, are looking beyond the first impression they had for a certain product. This specific attention while buying a environmental friendly product is due to the increase skepticism that consumers have causes with the increase of the green washing phenomenon.

Moreover, most of the generation Y do not trust in the green advertisement. In fact, about 50% of them do not (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014). This paper developed by Picart, Gueny and Dupont express millennial expression of need: in their empirical study, about 71% are interested in buying ecological product, the first reason why behind it is the the sustainable development (46%), quality (31%), to protect the planet (20%).

However, green washing seems to be something generation Y is used to: 31% of the respondent feel betrayed but about 29% are not surprised about specific brand which is doing green washing (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014). The others are either disappointed or become more suspicious about the brand.

## Green marketing

Furthermore, companies marketing campaign have a consequent impact on people lifestyle. On one hand, green marketing can be defined as “all efforts to consume, produce, distribute, promote, package and reclaim products in a manner that is sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns” (Czaplewski et al, 2014, pp.32). On another hand, green advertising can be explained as promoting a green lifestyle with or without highlighting a product or service (Minton et all, 2012).

Then, Minton explained the communication through social media, stated that it is much more easy to target people who are into lifestyle and sustainability. Actually, as it is explained on the paper, social media is the most appropriate platform for green

advertising and social campaigns. That is why food companies use mainly social media to target people. with green marketing.

Furthermore, as the generation Y was the most generation connected to social networks, there is a correlation with the use of social media for green marketing and the generation Y as a target. Social medias are a significant channel resource for food companies, it allow interaction and also to personalize the message based on specific segment. Green advertisers can capitalize on these findings by creating advertising campaigns where the consumer feels that he or she is doing a part in sustaining the future of the world. Food companies are aware that it is easier to transmit an eco-friendly message through social media, and as the generation Y is the most connected generation, it is the most affected by green advertising.

Furthermore, green marketing creates confusion among customer causes by green marketing is explained. A lot of products are described as eco-friendly even if they are not sustainable (Robert, 2010).

Food companies use also other type of channel for green advertising. For instance, the use of athletes to sponsor unhealthy brands like during the Olympic games. Athletes are renowned to have a healthy lifestyle, and food companies use this perception to sell their unhealthy products (Karnani, 2014).

However, green washing could have a major negative impact on companies who experience it. The Advertising Standard Authority has the power to put in court companies who tried to greenwash consumers. Once a company tried to advertise a non organic product has being organic and respectful of the environment, if such a situation has been denouncing and made public, the company lost its honesty in term of environmental product and would never be able to gain the trust of its consumer (Pearce, 2008).

# Consumer behavior

In order to understand fully the generation Y's awareness regarding green washing, it is important to understand the consumer behavior and millennial' specificities. It will allow to have a better understanding about this generation and how do they do to choose a product rather than an other.

According to Assael (1992), there is different types of consumer buying decision. In fact, depending on the type of product that a consumer wants to buy, no matter from which generation he/she is, the level of involvement is different as well as the process of decision.

## - Impulse buying

At first, the impulse buying decision require a very low level of involvement. In fact, it is simply the action of purchasing a product without the intention of buying at the first place. It could be for example chewing gum at the checkout stand, and you are tempted to take it. It could also be snakes, when seeing it, a customer realize he is hungry. This type of impulse buying decision require a very low cognitive effort, moreover it is also due to the fact that it involved small spending since it is usually for cheap product. Impulse buying seems unimportant when it actually is: in fact, 52% of generation Y is more likely to do impulse purchase compared to the other generation (Tuttle, 2012)

## - Routine response behavior

The second type of behavior involve a little bit more involvement. For instance, doing grocery shopping is part of this category. The purchase of a product in-store does not involve financial risks or the risk to do a mistake. This type of behavior is usually used for inexpensive and often bought product. The consumption of organic food uses a routine response behavior. There is no specific information needed in order to take a decision. Those purchase are most of the time based on the routine: a customer knows which type of product he is looking for, what is the choice and the

brand available for his needs. There is repetitive purchase of the same product when a customer is loyal to a specific brand.

### - Limited problem solving

The third one, limited problem solving behavior, require more cognitive effort. In fact, sometimes, customer needs more information about a product and it involves a research about this product. The awareness of some brands exist, but he does not have knowledge about all of them and the different products they offer. This is why it required to search more information about a certain category of product. Those products are not bought very often. It is the case for example for a mobile phone, a TV... Those products are more expensive: there is more risks and a higher chance to make a mistake compared to the routine response behavior.

### - Expensive problem solving

Finally, there is a fourth type of buying decision that happen for expensive problem solving. This behavior requires a high degree of involvement and cognitive effort. It includes purchasing with a high financial risk and require a certain level of knowledge in order to create criteria and to take a decision. This knowledge is possible with an extensive search of information. This type of purchase is pretty rare. There is furthermore a higher chance to make a mistake without having all the information needed and awareness about the different existing brand and the product they propose. This could be the case for example when buying a house, a new car...

Since this project is about the purchase of green products for food, it will be focused on the routine response behavior and limited problem solving. Moreover, concerning routine response behavior, there is nearly no cognitive effort and search from customers when they buy a green product if there are for instance loyal to the same brand. It could be seen also as limited problem solving behavior. In fact, when looking for a green product it includes to look for product specificities and involve a small cognitive effort. However, in order to make a decision, there is many factors that influence the buying decision process. The next section will show the different

influences the generation Y can face before and during their buying decision process.

## Buying decision process

Generation Y has nearly the same buying decision process than anyone, there is still few differences for this generation which will be presented. This part will be based mainly on Schiffman, Hansen and Kanuk' framework (2012) of the simple model of consumer decision making.

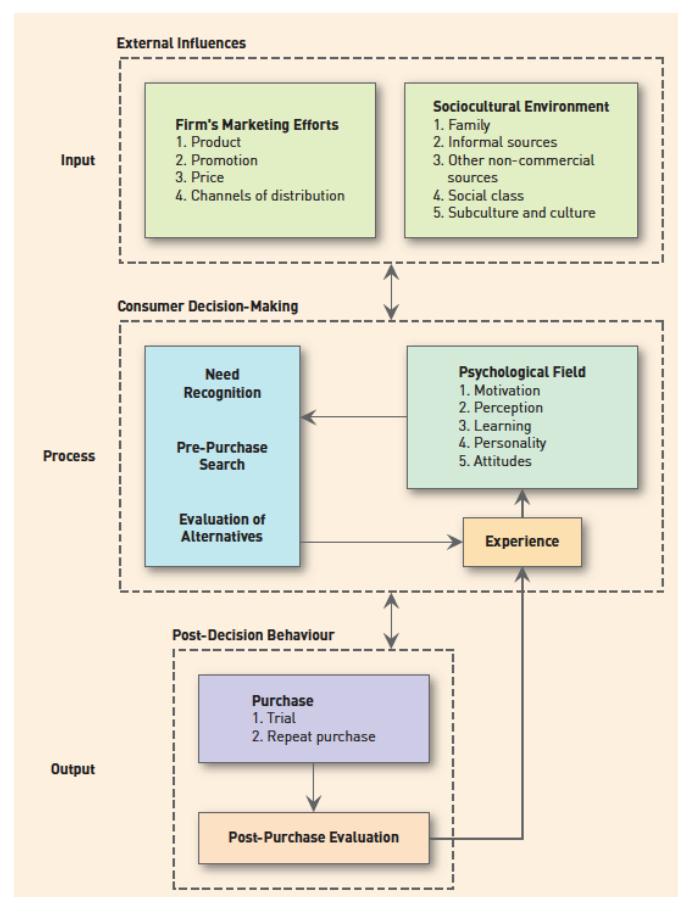


Figure 1: A simple model of consumer decision making, Schiffman, Hansen and Kanuk (2012) p.69

## External influences

Customers, before to have a need for a certain product are influenced by many factors. Those influences could be either from companies, but more important, also



from their peers and their social environment. Those two type of influencers will be presented in the following paragraphs.

### Firm's marketing efforts

In order to influence potential customer to buy their product, companies use different channel in order to reach those customers. It is the marketing mix, which is also called the 4 Ps (Product, Promotion, Price, Place). This include all the aspect of the company's communication and advertisement about a product. The product could be advertised on the packaging, mass media campaign on social medias, TV, radio, posters, in-store placement, price reduction... Marketer use those different aspect of the marketing mix in order to make customer aware of a need they might have (Verlegh, 1999).

However, the biggest part of the communication need to take place on social media and more generally on internet, since this is where millennial stay informed and receive a lot of information (Bergh, 2017). This is the main link a company can communicate to the generation Y.

The main reason for generation Y to be on social media according to Young (2015) is to first see what their friends are talking about to know what is trendy, what are the hot topics or find entertaining things. Therefore companies use influencers to advertisers their product, since it is seen as more efficient than basic marketing tools.

### Sociocultural environment

As Solomon stated, generation Y's parents are seen as "heroes" (Solomon, 2015). Millennial know they can rely on their parents and that they will help them. Family is as important as work for them: they take a big part in their mind since family and work are on the same level. Their parents influence a lot their decision (PrincetonOne, Hobart, 2017). In fact, when they have questions about any subject, they most of the time refer to their parents which are always available for their kids.

Generation Y is furthermore well influenced by their friends. As stated previously, the use of social media is primarily used in order to see what their friends are sharing, to stay informed about the trends...(Young, 2015; Bergh, 2017). Those group of reference are very important. Moreover, they use social media to see what the influencers they follow are doing as well as their favorite stars in order to be inspired from them. Trends are actually the highest influencer among other factors according to Ordun (2015) compared to the other generation. Trend is described as “being perceived as popular or being identified “cool” by social media” (Ordun, 2015, pp.47). Therefore, friends’ opinion on social media is the greater influencer.

The influence of the peers such as family and friends are seen as informal sources. This is the case of the society unwritten codes such as politeness, the influences of social classes... that actually influence consequently the purchasing decision (Schiffman, Hansen, Kanuk, 2012). Another example of informal sources would be for instance the different conversation happening all around people that influence choices as well: it could be for instance the fact of reading a post or a blog article and then to read the comments after it, even to take part of the conversation.

All in all, even before to have a need of recognition, which is the next step in the buying decision process, a millennial customer got already many external factors that condition somehow its future choice, which could be either from the marketing mix or from the sociocultural environment.

## Customer decision making

### Need of recognition

After all those external influences comes the process of decision making of the customer. Here, the internal influences come into the game and will influence the final decision. However, in order to do a purchase, a customer should have a need or a desire for something. This can be created by either an internal or some external stimuli (Munthiu 2009). From this stimuli, a customer will create a need for a certain

type of product. This need has to be created by a customer: marketer cannot create this need, they can just create a desire, awareness about their products and their company. Marketer can create stimuli but only the consumer can create a need.

Moreover, a person develops different kind of needs which are prioritized. It will be explaining in the next part.

## Maslow pyramid

There is a hierarchy of needs which has been developed by Maslow (1943). In fact, he developed a pyramid of needs. It is composed of five stages of needs: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self actualization.

In order to express needs from the top of the pyramid such as the need of self-fulfillment, the needs from the bottom of the pyramid, physiological needs for instance, has to be fulfill in order to go higher in the pyramid of need.

The first type of needs is physiological; it covers all the primary needs such as the need of food, drink and sex. It is the vital need that a human can have. Since this project is based on the food industry, this primary need will be in the center of the evaluation of the impact of green washing regarding food products.

Then there is the need of safety and security, which means the need of home, health, protection, safe environment. For instance, organic products are known to be safeties than normal product since it does not use any chemicals for its production and respect somehow more the environment than any other product. It increases then the level of safety of food consumption and can. Therefore, the need of green product can also be part of the second level of Maslow's pyramid.

The third type of need is love and belonging. It means that it is important to take part of social groups and to be socially accepted. People want to be integrated in different circles such as friends, co-worker, family, neighborhood... And then to consume the right product. The consumption of green product can be expressed in order to be

easily accepted into one social group. It shows the wish to share the same value, the same concerns as a particular group. This is why it also take part of social need.

Furthermore, the fourth one is the esteem need. This need is related to the respect expressed, the respect that a person shows to the others and the self respect. It leads to feeling such as pride, accomplishment, confidence... This respect can be earned through the type of product consumed. In the case of green product consumption, it can be the expression of a need of prestige, a need of respect and inspiration.

So far, the green consumption can be part of the fourth first level of Maslow's pyramid. Nevertheless, at the top of the pyramid exist a last stage, the need of self actualization. It represents the use of somebody's qualities, the possibility to achieve their own goal and who have a high self esteem but the consumption of organic food does not take part of this stage. It could if for instance the goal of a person would be to make the world a greener place, but it is however an infirmed minority of people from Generation Y.

## Psychological fields

In order to do understand fully the buying decision of the generation Y it is important to understand their 5 different psychological fields.

### Motivation

The motivation behind the purchase of a product can differ: in fact, a product fulfill several needs, it is the case for the consumption of green product regarding food industry which has been explained with the pyramid of Maslow (1943). Depending on the goal a consumer wants to achieve, his motivation regarding this purchase will be different.

### Perception

The perception is a concept which is very important for marketer. In fact, there is a gap between the reality and how a consumer perceives the world, how he represents his own picture of the world. Everyone has his own perception; therefore, it cannot be unique. Moreover this perception influence the customer behavior. Millennial have their own perception of the world, for example of what is fair for them or not since they believe that it is possible for human to live all together and to make the world a better place (Solomon, 2015).

### Learning

Most of the human beliefs are learnt. In mean, that based on different experiences and different purchases made, a customer have either a positive or a negative point of view regarding a given brand. For instance, if a customer has a positive experience with a brand, he will be more likely to try other products produced by this same brand (Kotler, Keller, 2011).

### Personality

It is important to distinguish personality because it influence the buying decision process as well. The personality of the generation Y, regarding their buying decision process, is described by Ordun (2015). For him, "Gen Y buyers select and consume products that helps them to define who they are, what is important to them and what they value in life also serve to express some aspect of their own personality or image. They use their considerable knowledge about the latest trends, images, and reputations of retailers, products, and brand names to be considered experts or leaders among peers" (pp.44).

### Attitudes

As previously explained, generation Y has and share common values. Moreover, if a company shares and communicates different values than those shared by the generation Y, then this segment of customer will have a negative attitude toward this brand and won't be likely to buy its products. Therefore, if a company decides to target millennial, it is important to first understand its characteristics and values in

order to share a message that they will listen to and agree on. This will lead to a positive attitude.

Therefore, all is different philological fields have influence on the buying decision process

## Pre-purchase search

The pre-purchase search is a stage that happened once a need has been created by someone. Before to purchase a product, a consumer will need to have information about product that can fit his needs. Therefore, there are two types of research: internal and external.

Before to go deeper for explanation of those researches, it is important to specify that the need of information increase with the cost of a product that need to be bought and the rarity of purchase of this type of product (cf. types of consumer buying decision). This need of information can be higher at the beginning of a consumer who will buy green product for the first time.

At first, there is the internal search: a consumer will try to use his memory in order to remember his previous experiences concerning a similar need he already had. If his previous experience with a product was more than satisfying, then this customer will be more likely to based his judgment mainly on it and will require less external information (Schiffman, Hansen, Kanuk 2012)

Then, there is the stage of external search. With this type of research, a consumer will seek for more information to support or complete his internal information. Different kind of external information are taken into consideration. For instance, internet is one of the greatest tool customers use in order to have more information. It could be to evaluate different products at the same time, to have more information about the features of a certain product... However, this search of external information can be skipped based on the product purchased (Bentzen, 2016).

Moreover, the different commercial advertisements faced by a consumer at the stage take part in the external information but here is also the public information such as the mass media, brochure or the previous customer reviews.

Furthermore, in-store, many information are provided to a potential consumer through the packaging. For instance, it is possible to evaluate the shape, the size, the color, the labels of different product at the same time. The decision might be taken based on those different aspects of the product. Those information available in-store concerning food product are very important when it comes to choose a food product.

Labels have a great influence on the buying decision process. In fact, more than 75% of young consumers read labels of food product before to take any decision (Kumar, Kapoor, 2016). It clearly shows a relationship between labels and its influence on buying decision process. This is why companies have the tendency to put many labels on their product.

Furthermore, concerning the generation Y, more than 66% are positively influenced when there is the presence of an ecological label on a food product (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014). This is a big factor to take into consideration. It seems a little bit that no matter what the label is about, it provides positive responses.

However, as stated by Burrows (2012), there are 431 labels in the world regarding green product. This is a huge amount which confused consumers. The use of too many labels is very confusing, it become difficult for consumer to evaluate clearly which ones are proper green certified labels and those that are here for green washing.

Nevertheless, as Kotler and Armstrong (2008) described, personal information are usually more effective than advertising campaign. In fact, the influence of a personal member such as member of a family, a friend, workplace.. have greater influence on than commercial campaign.

Having those information, a millennial got many insights about the product he should choose. It is a huge amount of information to filter in order to take a decision. Those information are however classified unconsciously in customer's mind when he takes a decision.

## Evaluation of alternative

Once a customer has all the information he needs in order to make a decision, the evaluation of alternatives will be achieved in order to select the brand and the product that is the closer to satisfy all the different wishes he has for taking a product.

The different factors that influence the buying decision process are treated in order to have a good evaluation among all the available products.

However, during the buying decision process, psychological needs influence the buying decision process.

## Post decision behavior

Once the product has been bought, a customer will proceed to its evaluation and see if he has been fully satisfied by a product. If the product is more satisfying than its expectation, a customer will probably buy the product again. Moreover, if a customer has a positive experience with a brand, he will be more likely to try other product produced by this same brand (Kotler, Keller, 2011).

However, if the product does not satisfy the customer or is at the same level of expectation, he will be likely to try something else that would suit his need better.



# Ethical decision making

The ethical decision making is a framework that is used to take decision. It has been used mainly for the health sector for instance by McDonald, Rodney and Starzomski (2001) to talk about actions in the medicine sector, but also by Winnepeg Regional Health Authority. However, it can be used for the case of green consumption.

The first important question to ask is what is ethic? Ethic has been for instance described as philosophy which distinguish good and bad behavior. When someone takes a decision, he has the possibility to do something right or wrong, to influence positively or negatively, directly or indirectly his congeners. It is a set of rules that should guide people in their everyday life. It is however confusing somehow because it is not written rules. Ethics is about how people should live and act together in order to be in a sustainable society (Butts & Rich 2012)(SOAS University, 2013).

## Ethical purchase behavior

There is two different type of ethical purchase behavior (Tallontire,Rentsendorj, Blowfield, 2001). The explanation of those two behaviors will lead a better understanding of the customer and its purchase regarding green product.

At first, there is the negative ethical purchase behavior. This can be defined as boycott. In fact, over the history, after a food scandal, such as horse meat scandal in 2013, the mad cow problems in the 90's, Nestlé milk scandal in the 70's... affected the buying decision process and the simple answer from the consumers was the boycott of unsafe food products. Their decision of stopping to buy such products, individually or in group, was decided after alerts. The decision was taken downstream an event.

Then there is the positive ethical purchase behavior. This type of behavior consumes upstream food scandals. Those consumers take care of themselves and the others

in order to consume in an ethical way. It is however hard to define an ethical product, depending on the different attributes of a product (Mintel 1997).

However, two main type of green products are seeking by consumer in order to act in a positive ethical way: the purchase of organic and/or fair trade product. The awareness of such product increased over the last years. This influence the buying decision process of consumers who are more careful when choosing a product regarding its attributes.

For instance, between 2002 and 2013 the sales of organic food product raised from €10.2 billion to €22.2 billion (Sabbati, Katsarova, 2015) in Europe. Also, consumers spent +15% in fair trade product between 2012 and 2013 (Fair Trade International 2013). It clearly shows the implication and the raise of positive ethical behavior.

However, within the ethical behavior, there is different approaches that need to be taken into consideration. Those will be explained in the following part.

## Different approaches of ethical decisions

There is different approach: those will be briefly explained in order to have a better understanding of the framework of the ethical decision. This part will be based on the work of Velasquez et. al. (1988), Bonde & Firenze (2013).

### The Utilitarian Approach

This approach measures the amount of pleasure or pain an action will produce. It is an approach used especially among big communities. Since every action will produce good and bad effect on population, the best choice is to do an action that will produce the highest amount of good among people. It is required at first to evaluate the different possible actions, then to analyze the weight of good and bad of each of them to finally choose the one on which will produce the highest amount of good.

## The Rights Approach

In this approach, a person has a dignity, such as the other human. Based on this, every human has the right of privacy which means that a person has the right to choose how to lead his life, to believe in what he wants and to act freely. There is also the right to know the truth and the right to not getting pain from others unless a punishment is justified. Finally there is the right of agreement: somebody deserve to receive what has been promised to him such as in a contract. Those rights can be expressed as long as they respect others. However, some authors say that unhuman things have also a dignity such as the robots and the animals.

## The Justice Approach

In this approach, every person should be treated as equal. There is no distinction between human being: everybody has the same rights and obligations. This approach as a goal is to be fair to everyone. The favoritism provides unjustified benefits to certain persons and the discrimination disadvantages to others without reasons as well: they should not exist because it will lead to inequities. Moreover, equality it is the fundamental principle of justice: being fair between all the citizens.

## The Common Good Approach

In this approach, common goods should be shared equally to everybody. For instance, environments, institutions, socials weather, educational system... should be accessed to everyone without any type of restriction as far as everyone has the same presentation and the same privileges. Everyone is free to pursue its own goal however, those basics are shared with everyone. It is a fundamental for a democratic society: being part of the same community, sharing the same basics with the freedom to pursue goals.

## The Virtue Approach

This approach focus on the potential that each person should develop at the maximum. When a characteristic is in possession of someone, it become part of his personality. He should then develop it and acquire other characteristics as well. For instance, according to Velasquez et. al. it could be “honesty, courage, compassion, generosity, fidelity, integrity, fairness, self-control, prudence” (1988, np). Those ideals should be achieved in order to develop the biggest potential of a person. It is done according to what a person would like to become and to the best way to achieve his action.

## Framework of ethical decisions making

The framework if making ethical decisions is somehow similar to the buying decision process framework. However, this one is seen from a specific perspective: the ethical decision. The work of Velasquez et. al. will be used. Therefore, the following figure summarize their findings.

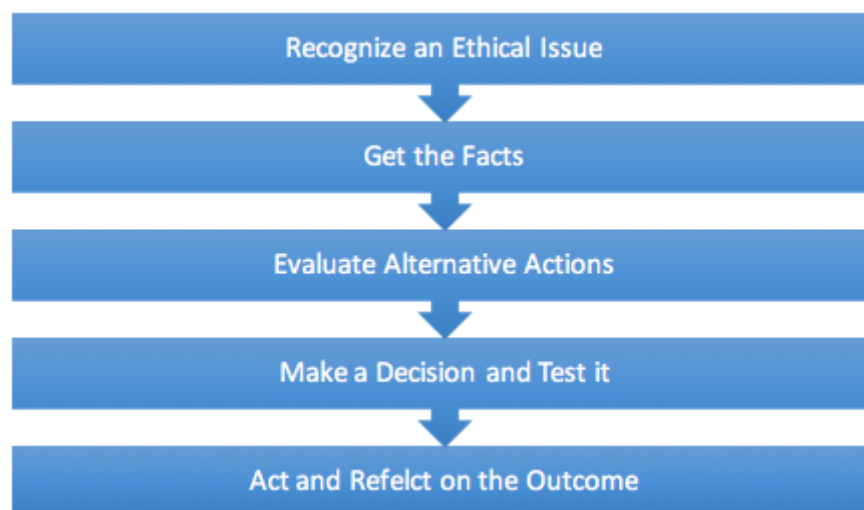


Figure 2: Framework of ethical decision making - Velasquez et. al. (1988)

### Recognize an Ethical Issue

At first, a customer detects an ethical issue. This issue could be related to the product he consumes and the impact it has on people, the environment, the society.

From there, it is important to evaluate the weight of good or bad outcome produced from it.

For instance, it could be the fact to buy coffee beans at a very cheap price. Questions such as does this product caused negative outcome among a group of people? Could I choose an other product to deliver better positive outcome? Does it hurt a part of the community? The choice made of cheap coffee beans deliver positive outcome? Can it be improved? Once those questions have been asked, an ethical issue has been recognized by a consumer.

## Get the Facts

In order to have a better understanding of an ethical issue, it is essential to know the facts behind such an issue. A consumer should have greater insight about a situation in order to take better decision. By having the fact, a consumer will have a better understanding of the choice he makes and its implications. Those insights could be to know if the group of people affected by a decision have been consulted, which options are offered to take the best action...

To come back with the coffee beans example it could be to know if workers are well treated, if they have a proper salary, if children are involved or not in the harvest of the coffee beans, if they are exposed to chemicals, if those chemicals cause effect on the environment... And more important, what are the options for acting in order to take an optimal decision?

With those questions, the amount of facts awareness will grow and consumer should have a clear image of the different implication a decision might do. It will then allow to know the different options available.

## Evaluate Alternative Actions

It will be then possible for a consumer to evaluate which options is the best based on the different approaches explained earlier. For instance, it would be to evaluate

which options provide the greater amount of positive outcome (Utilitarian), the one which respect the most both parties in the contract, and in which people are respected for who they are (Rights Approach). Also to know which one make sure that people are equal (Justice approach), which one is best for the community (Common Good Approach), which options represent the best type of customer he would like to be (Virtue Approach).

Still with the coffee beans example, those question could be:

Utilitarian: Make sure that the product chosen will deliver the best amount of positive outcome and the one with a minimum of negative outcome on the population.

Rights: Workers should work in good environment, as human and not as slaves (Fair Trade)

Justice: People should be treated as equal and receive a proper salary (Fair Trade)

Common Good: The best for the community: to respect the environment, to respect people (Eco-friendly, Organic, Fair trade product)

Virtue: I would like to be a consumer who respect its health, the health of others, the environment (Fair Trade, Organic, Eco-friendly)

## Make a Decision and Test it

With all the different options, the best options need to be chosen. Once the best option has been chosen, here it would be a brand who combine different assets such as eco-friendly, organic and fair trade, the option need to be tested.

## Act and Reflect on the Outcome

Once is has been tested, a consumer can step back and see if he learns something with this specific situation and if his action provided to best possible outcomes.

Even though the ethical decision making framework has been used especially for the health sector, it can be applicable to the individual consumption of good.

## Ethical/buying decision making mix framework

However, the ethical decision making process is related to the buying decision process. In fact, it allows to take actions with positive outcomes. This framework can definitely be an added value to the basic consumer's decision process regarding green food product.

In fact, the two frameworks can be combined in order to have one framework of buying decision process that will include the ethic standpoint.

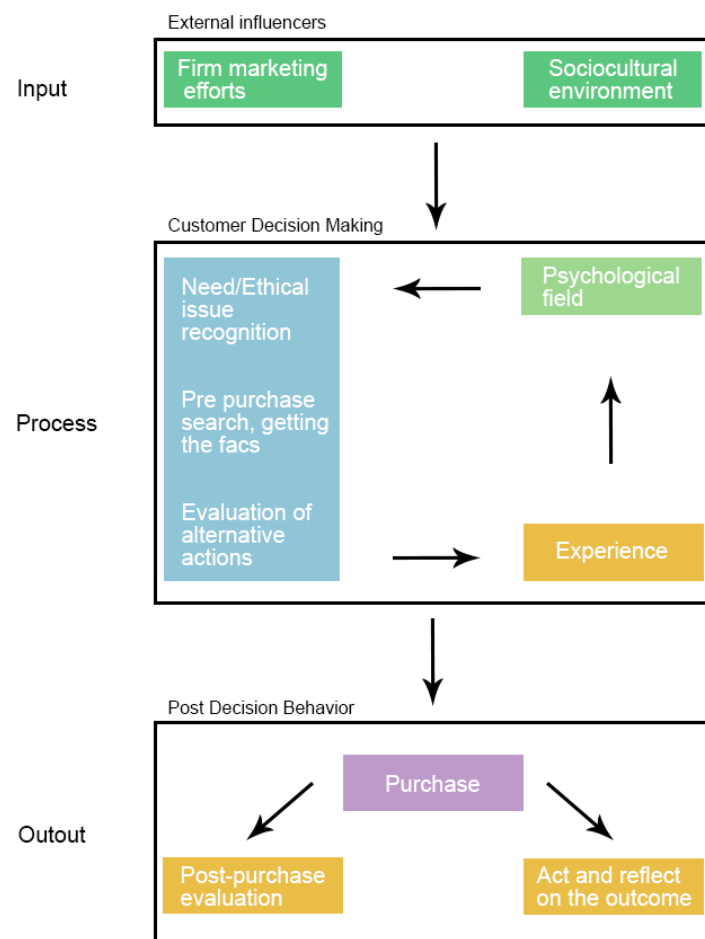


Figure 3: Ethical/buying decision making mix framework

When doing a purchase, a consumer usually have a basic buying decision process.

However, when it comes to green consumption, it make sense to include the ethic standpoint. In fact, when a consumer buy a green product, in its buying decision process, ethic plays a role. The different green product have different asset on the community, on the environment, workers... and deliver more positive outcome rather than a random product.

In fact, when choosing a product, based on his personal conviction, will rather go for a product with at least one ethical asset. It can be a single or a combination of green assets such as local business product, fair trade, organic...

Moreover, it makes sense to include the ethic decision process into the buying decision process. Indeed, a green consumer will go ahead to to silole model of buying decision process and think about its positive outcome. A green consumer will be more likely to support local business, fair trade, organic product.. in order to define who he is by its consumption. The different approaches into the ethical decision making represent somehow all the positive effect a product can have on the society.

This framework allow to have a better understanding of a green consumer buying decision process.

## The Triple Bottom Line

### The Triple Bottom Line for companies

In 1997, Elkington incorporated three dimensions to incorporate into a company accounting: people, planet profit. This framework of bottom line can also be called 3PL or 3 pillars. In fact, accounting used to take in consideration only the profit. However, Elkington indicated that not only the profit needs to be measure but two other dimensions need to be taken into account: the environmental and the social benefit. It provides a broader idea of the impact of a company.



To be more specific, Savitz (2006) stated that the triple bottom line “captures the essence of sustainability by measuring the impact of an organization's activities on the world... including both its profitability and shareholder values and its social, human and environmental capital” pp.XIII. However, there is not common unit of measurement; therefore Slaper and Hall (2011) advice to use index in order to do comparison. It will, moreover, help companies to develop sustainable goals, to to measure their achievement.

At first, the impact on the society (people) of a company is important. In fact, a company should respect its employees, their communities. This could include “measurements of education, equity and access to social resources, health and well-being, quality of life, and social capital” (Slaper, Hall, 2011, pp.5).

Then, there is the second dimension: environmental. This include the different positive actions taken by companies and their negative impact on the planet. It is also a way to reduce the cost by taking action in order to be more sustainable and respectful of the environment. For example, action can be taken to reduce the emission of co2, the electricity consumption...

At third, there is the more traditional way of evaluating a business: profit. However, in this case, it is associated to a sustainable way. It is significant here to ensure that all the resources are fairly distributed. Here, a company needs to make sure that its business operations does not create trouble within a community.

### The Triple Bottom line for consumers

The triple bottom line has been designed by Elkington for companies. However, it is possible to adapt this model to consumers. In fact, when the housekeeper does the accounting, it is important to look at the impact of its family's action on the environment and on the society by its all.

Therefore, the three bottom line or three P can be described for consumer as the three S: Spending, Society, Sphere. It will allow to use Elkington's model on the

consumers as well. The three S will be explained in order to have a better comprehension of how it could be applicable to individuals.

The first S, which stand for spending makes sense because a household, as its first activity spend money where a company generates profit. Since the main activity of a household is to spend money it is important to look at the amount spend but not only. In fact, other factors can be evaluated.

For instance, the second S stands for Society. In fact, based on the products they consume, a household could see their impact. For example, it could be the fact to consume fair trade product to make sure that people who produced the product are well treated, or it could be product made by local producers, to support local businesses...

Finally, the third S would stand for sphere. It would allow household to evaluate their impact on the environment. From their consumption, such as organic product to reduce the amount of pesticide use on the planet and to buy product of local business to reduce the CO2 footprint. But it could take into consideration their gas/electric/water consumption... It is also a way to reduce their spending on energy and to have a better impact on the environment.

All in all, this framework is applicable to household. It make sense, not only for companies but also for individuals, to measure their impact on the society and on the environment. It could be a great added-value to see things positively rather than just see negative spending. What is important is not how much money has been spent but how it has been spent.

## Methodology

This chapter will present the different philosophical approach. The research methodology is the process of clarify an issue by using relevant data

According to Patilit, it represents “the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology ” (Patilit, 2016, p.3).

This chapter is divided in four section. At first, the philosophical and the theoretical level will be explained in order to discussing the issues of ontology. Then the epistemological problem will describe the view on how knowledge should be understood. Furthermore, the methodological approach will be analyzed discussion of the overall research. Finally, the method and techniques for the data collection will be presented as well as the justification of the one selected.

## Philosophical and theoretical level

Bryman and Bell have described the theory of paradigm (2011, p.25) as “a cluster of beliefs and dictates which for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be done, [and] how results should be interpreted.”

Thomas Kuhn in 1970 also characterize the paradigm as “every field of research is characterized by a set of common understanding of what phenomenon is being studied, the kind of questions that are useful to ask about the phenomenon, how researchers should structure their approach to answering their research questions, and how the results should be interpreted” (Kuada, 2010, p. 35).

The notion of “ontology” is according to Kuada (2010, p.36), characterizes “the nature of what the researcher seeks to know something about (i.e. knowable or reality)”.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011, p.20), the main purpose of ontology is whether social entities can be perceived as objective or subjective. Implying that perceptions and actions are used to build social construction. These two aspects could be referred as “objectivism” and “constructionism” (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Objectivism can be defined as the ontological position in which social phenomenon and their meanings exist interdependently from the social actors. The organization is perceived as a tangible commodity with specific rules and regulations designed by standardized procedures (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Thus, the organization as a reality external to the people perception who are in it.

Moreover, the notion of “constructionism” is the adverse of “objectivism”. It describes that human and the social actors construct the reality with their synergy. Therefore, the social actors have no specified role in the culture and the organization creation since they are external realities and that the organization is already in place. However, according to Bryman & Bell (2011) nowadays, scientists used to have their own definition of the reality and to use it rather than to use already made definition.

In this paper, the main topic of this paper is placed under research of the green washing effect on the food industry, originating from developed economies and the buying decision process of consumers regarding food products. Therefore, the ontological stance on this paper is the objectivist perspective because from the empirical study conclusions are built in order to see in what extent the green washing, regarding the food industry has an impact on the buying decision process.

## Epistemological level

The epistemological level takes into consideration the eligible knowledge and how a researcher can find it (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

There are four philosophies made with assumption which include ontological and epistemological reasoning: interpretivism, realism, positivism, and pragmatism. The description of these four philosophies will be made, then the explanation on which aspect correspond to this research will be detailed.

## Positivism

The positivism is a philosophy based on quantitative datas which provide objective findings used to draw assumptions. August Comte, a French philosopher, started to

develop this concept of positivism in the 19th century. The positivism takes into consideration only concrete observation, that can be achieved with the five senses, on what can be observed and measured. It is based on empirical observation. Moreover, the positivist facts are based on logic, verifiable, absolute and solid experiences.

## Realism

The realism is the philosophy that combine interpretivism and positivism. There are two different types

of realism: direct realism and critical realism. The direct realism is based on the positivism. Therefore, the knowledge is made out of the reality facts that can be observed. Nevertheless, the critical realism is slightly different: it took into consideration the sensation in order to change the world perception. This approach is more closer to the interpretivism that will be explained later on.

## Pragmatism

Pragmatism is the research that takes into consideration quantitative and qualitative data: it does not pay attention to the nature of the data collection but focus more the problem itself and how it can solve it. In order to resolve a research problem, the objective and subjective knowledge are both acceptable for the resolution.

## Interpretivism

Finally, the last philosophy is called interpretivism. Myers defined interpretivism as an “interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments”. (Myers, 2008) This philosophy is much more subjective rather than objective because interaction are socially constructed. It accepts more flexible structure rather than the positivist philosophy. In fact, reality is

complex: it is a superposition of different system which makes the reality difficult to define as one. The purpose is to explain the signification of each human behavior instead of generalized all human behavior as unique.

## Methodological approach

In this part of the paper, a precise definition of the research design will be introduced. This section explain why, based on Kuada (2010), a specific method has been chosen (p.57).

In order to build this scientific paper, a deep theoretical background has been performed. The use of diverse theories have been studied to create propositions based on them. Based on these findings, the interpretivism has been chosen. In fact, as previously stated, the buying decision process is complex and is influenced by several factors: they are more or less important depending of every single human behavior.

The extended review of the literature allowed to create a set of propositions that will be tested by performing a qualitative research with a focus group experiment. Indeed, this approach has many advantage that can allow an added value to this project.

This analysis collects opinions and perspectives of participants from a subjective point of view. In fact, subjectivity is scenario which is true to some people in all situations: since only the generation Y is being studied, the objectivist cannot apply to all people.

Thus, with both qualitative and empirical researches, and the interpretation of the results of the experiments, this project is following a subjective-interpretivist stance.

# Methods and Techniques Research Design

This section, according to Kuada (2010), present how the data collection and the techniques have been applied. This part is necessary in order to provide information on how to get the results (Bryman and Bell, 2011)

A deductive process has been applied for this analysis through which the research topic has been developed through an extensive literature review (figure 4). Moreover, qualitative researchers pursue an evolving identification of the research investigation (Bryman & Bell, 2011).



Figure 4 The Process of Deduction (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.11)

On this research, the identification of the main topic was created following a theoretical background, with a focus about green washing effect in the buying decision process.

Then propositions have been developed in order to confirm or disprove them by doing focus groups. In fact, only few research papers were dealing with green washing with a focus on generation y. Therefore, most of them were based on quantitative data. This is why it is significant to have greater insights about the generation Y and its awareness regarding green washing. The goal of the focus groups is to interview a 3 groups of people from the Y generation from Europe or North America in order to evaluate the impact of the green washing on their buying decision process.

It will allow to see what matters to them when choosing a product by showing them different products and different information such as price, country-of-origin, visual information of packaging... It will allow to analyze what factors might influence their buying decision process.

## Focus groups

### Defining a focus group

Focus groups is performed as a form of a discussion to investigate the social content. It is more efficient and natural way of testing in order to brainstorm and find ideas, than individual interview (Krueger, 2002). Focus groups show how people behave and are influenced and can influence each other within a group.

A focus group is a small discussion group of five to ten people lead by a skilled researcher. The number of people is important as the group should not be too big and not too small as well. A large group could involve isolated people, and a too small group could slow down brainstorming. A focus group should take a maximum of two hours (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Morgan, 1997).

The definition of focus group is described as a "Carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (Krueger, 1994, pp.5).



The focus groups of this research has been designed on the theoretical background findings and on the propositions found.

The following research has been based on 3 focus groups. These 3 groups gather a total average of 6 participants per group with an total average time of 80min per group.

The 3 focus groups are composed of Europe and North America from generation Y. They have different occupations, such as doctoral students or young workers from different sectors and countries. The first 2 groups have been done with European participants, and the last group with North America participants in order to have realistic results based on their own continent labels. The separation between European and North American has not been achieved in order to do comparison but in order for one of the study to stick to their home continent products and not to confused them even more by showing other continent product.

The average age of the participants were 26 years old. Each group was composed of half men and women in order to not have an influence based on the sex participants.

## Recruiting participants

The use of diverse criteria has been used to recruit the participants.

The creation of a online survey has been spread on Facebook in order to gather people from Europe and North America. The survey has been shared on different random facebook groups from different cities such as Pokemon Go Los Angeles, Humans of New York, compra y venta Madrid y alrededores... As well as, the use of private networks.

In order to get a concrete investment from the participants, an incentive has been proposed to them. The offer was a gift card of 20\$ for Amazon. Thus, data from targeted continents has been obtained.

The following questions has been proposed:

-What is your gender? Male / Female / Others

-How old are you?

-What is your occupation? Student / Worker / Unemployed / Others

-What is your revenue net per month?

-In which country do you live?

-In which city do you live?

-What is your email address?

-What is your Skype username?

-When would you be available for a group meeting on Skype ?

For Europeans: May 20th at 15:00 CET / May 21st at 15:00 CET

For North America: May 20th at 19:30 CET / May 21st 19:30 CET

Three focus group were then constructed:

Focus group 1: 1 from Poland, 1 from Germany, 1 from Portugal, 1 from Italy, 1 from Spain

Focus group 2: 3 people from the United States and 2 from Canada

Focus group 3: 1 from Spain, 1 from Poland, 1 from Germany, 1 from Italy, 1 from Portugal, 1 from France,

# Conducting the focus group

At first, before to start the anonymous focus group, participants were asked to sign an approval document for participating in this focus group which enable the use of their opinions.

As an introduction, inquiries related to the organic food consumption has been asked to have first insight of their habits. Those questions included *“Do you consume food organic products? How often do you buy this type of product? Where do you buy it? When did you started? What is important for you when you choose food item? Which type of food organic product do you buy? How do evaluate if a product is organic or not?”*

Those questions will allow to have some understanding about their perception of food organic product and their eating habits. It will allow to have a first overview of the food organic consumption within the Generation Y and their behavior regarding it. It will be then possible to see at first what influence their buying decision process.

## Experiments conducted

### Experiment 1

Based on the literature, labels have a great influence on the buying decision process. In fact, more than 75% of young consumers read labels of food product before to take any decision (Kumar, Kapoor, 2016). It clearly shows a relationship between labels and its influence on buying decision process. This is why companies have the tendency to put many labels on their product.

Furthermore, concerning the generation Y, more than 66% are positively influenced when there is the presence of an ecological label on a food product (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014). This is a big factor to take into consideration.

Moreover, there are numerous number of labels encourage confusion among generation Y. For instance, there is actually 431 labels in the world. Those have different purpose such as labels for the footprint, labels for organic product, labels for fair trade... The awareness of all those labels is rather small which increase the level of skepticism regarding green products (Burrows, 2012). Also, there is a confusion among the different labels, it is hard somehow to differentiate them. Labels are on the packaging which is also already playing a significant role on the buying decision process (Air Quality Science, 2010).

According to Coghlan (2011, n.p), very “often products are labelled “green” with no proof, or their claims cannot be substantiated by easily accessible information or by a reliable third-party”. Labels is one of the main thing companies do in order to deliver greenwashed product.

Therefore, the first proposition has been formulated as the follows: **Labels play an important role regarding green washing phenomenon.**

In order to try out this proposition, some different food products packaging has been showed to the participants. They have been asked to choose the ones, according to them, are organic product. Organic product has been chosen as an example in order to evaluate if they can make the difference between an organic product and other products based on the packaging. This experiment will be achieved by showing them twelve food items. Those products are showed in the Appendix 4. During the focus group, product have been showed 360 degrees in order for the participant to be able to see the different faces of the packaging. Among all the products showed, only two were actually organic, the others used either green washing or other logos which have no organic purpose. Moreover, in order to be consistent, European products were shown to two focus group with people from Europe and American ones for the focus group from Canada and the United States.

This is will allow to prove that labels have a great influence on the Generation Y decision process regarding green product and that there is a confusion existing regarding those products.

## Experiment 2

Based on the literature, customers are confused regarding green products. In fact, companies used words to describe and advertise them such as “natural”, “climate friendly”... People tend to think that products are automatically good (Orange, 2010), but it is not necessary the case. Customers have a wrong image about what is a green product and are “very confused about what's truly green and what isn't. Some products can be green in one instance and not in another. So it's all potentially confusing” according to Jacqueline Ottman (Adweek.com, 2010).

Consumers see aggregates as a symbol of quality compared to an unlabeled product. However, they do not have enough knowledge about each one to know the concrete meaning of them to determine their environmental aspect. Aggregates are perceived as a way to differentiate products, but are not recognized as a way to assess the environmental or organic level of the product. Then involve then a confusion during the buying decision making process (Brécard, 2015). Moreover, In 2000, eco labels and green certifications are increasing considerably, and the total number of green product increase by 79% (Air Quality Science, 2010).

Therefore, the first proposition has been formulated as the follows: **Generation Y is confused concerning the different green product assets.**

In order to justify this proposition, a certain number of appellation have been stated. Participant have been asked to define them based on their own knowledge. The following terms have been stated:

- eco-friendly product
- natural product
- organic product
- fair-trade

## Experiment 3

According to the paper (Karnani et al, 2014), multinational food companies' advertisement use their power to sell non green products but to sell a green brand perception. This is called green marketing in which "all efforts to consume, produce, distribute, promote, package and reclaim products in a manner that is sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns" (Czaplewski et al, 2014, pp.32). Green marketing creates confusion among customers but mainly influence the Y generation decision making process. Food companies' green marketing campaigns is done for example through social media (Czaplewski et al, 2014). However, as described by William Thompson: "In this world of information overload, (Millennial) no longer reads or thinks; he watches and feels." (Gailewicz, 2014, n.p). It means that generation Y has more like a feeling rather than a proper understanding regarding a brand. Even though they still look for information in order to mix their insights about a brand and to do a judgment, the feeling they have for a brand is bigger. (Gailewicz, 2014).

Therefore, the third proposition has been formulated as the follows:

### **Millennial is not a fool regarding food companies' green marketing**

In order to support this proposition, several advertisements have been showed to the participants. Among those advertisements, some of them are selling pure green products and some others are not. They have been asked to point out the ads which are green and to justify their choice, but also to express their feelings about those different ads.

In this advertisement the French brand **BN** advertises that they use whole grains in their products, which provide more energy to their consumers. This increase of energy among their consumers leads to more running and walking from the customer side, which will help to decrease CO2 emissions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQkNsXMg2Fw>

The second advertisement showed to the participants is made by **Coca-Cola**. The company created a green billboard with trees and a specific recycling system which

use rain water. Coca-Cola states that this initiative has as purpose to decrease CO<sub>2</sub> in Manila, which is one of the most polluted city in Asia.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NpgwgDMZdg>

The third advertisement uses in the focus group is made by the company **Organic Valley**. This brand shows a girl who produce grass at home, without any chemicals and wait for the grass to grow naturally. Then, once the grass has grown enough, she fed one of the farm's cow with it. The purpose of this advertisement is to show the Organic Valley milk as an organic product without any chemicals, and to let customers supposed that it is how their milk is produced.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAIKgL5J6qQ>

The last advertisement showed to the participants is made by **McDonald, McCafé**. It is explained that every coffee served at McCafé are respecting the environment, as produced along with the RainForest Alliance. The purpose of this advertisement is to let customers think that every coffee beans are produced in certified and natural areas.

However, the RainForest Alliance labels means that some ingredients come from certified forest, but doesn't mean that there is no chemicals or others unrespectful substances in the product composition (RainForest Alliance.org).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7c1FjCmmLw&feature=youtu.be>

## Experiment 4

According to the paper (Michigan State University, Deloitte), the Generation Y needs more involvement from governments into the trend of green products. This paper explained that the Millennial generation is missing informations about green products and that is influencing their buying decision making process. The Millennial cannot assess if a product is respectful for the environment and if they are doing the correct choice by buying a specific products qualified as green.

The help from governments such as regulations or education is then needed in order to reduce the green washing phenomenon. According to Solomon (2015), "Government should do more to solve problems".

Therefore, the fourth proposition has been formulated as the follows: **Generation Y wants public authorities to play a bigger role regarding green washing.**

In order to justify this proposition, a set of questions have been asked to the participants. The purpose is to understand their expectations and the level of implication that the government should have concerning green washing worldwide.

The following questions have been asked:

- Do you expect measures from your own government in order to regulate green washing?
- Do you have some examples of measures that could be taken ?
- In the last political election, is the green aspect of one participant's program has played a role in your decision?

## Experiment 5

Generation Y is willing to discuss with companies and providers each other needs in order to be more respectful of the environment (Solomon, 2014).

Second, according to Schawbel, 62% would be likely to engage with brand on social media and 42% to co-create a product with the firms in order to have a product designed for them. Those are action that generation Y is willing to do.

Also, Millennial agree to test the new green product and provide feedback. As a result, food companies can improve their products and understand better what is the current demand, how to attract their target, and to acquire knowledge about the Generation Y (Keeble, 2013).



Collaborate with companies that take into consideration their opinion is important to them. Company starts a business and Generation Y finish this business (Solomon, 2014). This is why is it a significant asset to take millennial' opinion into consideration when building a strategy.

Therefore, the fifth proposition has been formulated as the follows: **Millennial are willing to take action in order help food companies to be more respectful of the environment.**

In order to support this last proposition, several questions have been asked to the focus group. Indeed, this is important to understand the Generation Y willingness to take measures and work along with food companies to improve today's environmental issue.

The following questions have been asked to the participants:

-Would you agree to support food companies to be more focus on environment?

Why? Why not?

-Which kind of actions would you like to take to fight against this issue?

# Findings

## Findings of experiment 1

### **Labels play an important role regarding green washing phenomenon**

According to the experiment achieved, it shows that the labels influence a lot the generation Y during the buying decision process. In fact, out of the 16 participants, only 3 participants found the exact two organic product showed.

Indeed, 13 others included fair trade product product. It shows at first that there is a confusion between organic and fair trade product. In fact, they associated the two

labels as being organic. This first result show that the generation Y misses information in order to assess what is an organic product.

Then, within this 11 participants, 4 participants choose vegan product as being organic. Again it shows that there is a disinformation regarding labels and their meaning. Moreover, they associated fair-trade and vegan product as being organic.

The result of this experimentation clearly show a big confusion among millennial. Therefore, the 100% organic product are differentiated themselves somehow from product with other labels such as Fairtrade and vegan. The proposition is therefore approved.

## Findings of experiment 2

### **Generation Y is confused concerning the different green product assets.**

At first, participants have been asked to define eco-friendly product. As a reminder, eco-friendly product are “synonyms used to refer to goods and services, laws, guidelines and policies considered to inflict minimal or no harm on the environment.” (Sehgal, Singh, 2010, pp. 1).

Participants described it as something that *“takes care of the environment”*. For few of them, it is a product *“that is made as natural as possible, no using chemicals, or anything to conserve the product”*, they did reference also about the power consumption with renewable energy. For one it is also related also on the transportation choice. However, is has been stated also that this aggregate does not have any meaning since everything can be eco-friendly, *“for example if a company recycling paper, they can say we are eco-friendly but they are not but they use something by which the company can have the label eco-friendly”*. For this definition, the participants were correct and have a good understanding about what is an eco-friendly product. For this definition, participants had a good understanding about what is an eco-friendly product, however, it seems that some of the participants were skeptical about it.

The second definition that has been asked is natural product which “applies broadly to foods that are minimally processed and free of synthetic preservatives; artificial sweeteners, colors, flavors and other artificial additives; growth hormones; antibiotics; hydrogenated oils; stabilizers; and emulsifiers.” (Food Marketing Institute 2002, p.1).

For them it is product that “*is not transformed*”. It is the case for fruits and vegetables. With the example that they given about pasta and beer which are processed product, this does not belong to the category of natural product. It is product “*without conservative, chemical, pesticide, more friendly and respectful of the environment*”. They emphasize also a lot the fact that natural product is “*local*” products. It means that those products are product locally and are not imported product from far away. However, several mentioned the fact that natural product is actually organic product, something that is “*similar to organic products*”. “*product that have organic ingredients*”, It is also a product that respect the environment also for several participants.

All in all, participants had a part of the definition, but had additional assets such as the respect the environment, or product made with organic, which is not the truth, also, the local dimension does not exist within the definition of natural product. Within their own definition of natural product, several definition of other green asset are overlapping in their mine.

Then they have been asked to define what is an organic product. An organic product requires to be processed using organic farming methods that recycle resources and promote biodiversity but also “95% of agricultural ingredients meet the necessary standards” (Food Marketing Institute 2002, pp.6)

Participants emphasize a lot the fact that organic product respect the environment, that “*does not damaging the environment and not bad for my health*”. Then, half of the participant, organic product as a little bit of pesticides in it, “*without more than necessary chemicals*”. For the other half it is no pesticide at all, it is “*properly grown without chemicals*”. It is also “*not genetically change*” For some also, there is still this dimension of being “*local*”. For one of the participant, it is vegetables that are

produced on a *“land that need to be 10 years without using any pesticides (..) according to the regulations”*. Once again, the participant has a wrong definition of what is an organic product since there is again this overlapping in the definition, of local and natural product.

At third participants were asked to define fair-trade product. Fair trade can be defined as “a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency, and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, disadvantaged producers and workers—especially in the South” (FINE, 1998, n.p.).

All the respondent emphasizes the fact that the *“workers are respected for what they do”* but also that companies *“provide a fair salary to the workers”*. With the aggregate everybody agreed on the salary and on better working conditions. Also several mentioned that it prevents children labor. The different arguments that participants provided are correct regarding the definition of fair trade.

To summarize, something interesting is that no one mentioned the fact that it was organic. Indeed, with the first study, when they have been asked to pick the right organic product, 11 participants took fair trade product as organic, however, then they think about what is the definition of fair trade product, it does not come to their mind as it was when they had to pick a product. It shows that there is a gap between how to they choose a product and the knowledge they have: they do not link their knowledge with the information they need to have when choosing a product. Also, most of the definitions they provided are overlapping. They don't have a clear understanding of the different aggregate and therefore are still confuse about them. This experiment confirmed the proposition.

## Findings of experiment 3

In this experiment, participants saw four different ads and have been asked to react and to evaluate if it is actually selling a green product or not.

**Generation Y is not a fool regarding food companies' green marketing**

## BN

The first one was unanimous: they all agree that it was not a green product, *“it is full of crap”, “Simply bullshit”, “there is no link between eating these cookies and improve the environment”, “I think this company is thinking that we are naive”*. They came with the conclusion that this ad is pure greenwashing which is the truth: *“they are trying to manipulate us”*.

## Coca Cola

Participants all agreed also that it was a greenwashed advertisement. For instance, there are numbers stated in the ads but no one can really tell what it represents in terms of pollution reduction *“they mentioned the numbers, tones of CO2 that convert to oxygen, I don’t know how much that is, that sounds very big, but the billboard itself is not very big, if you say a size of football bill is cutting it’s more realistic for the consumer to have a vision of Coca is really doing”*. Therefore, they consider this ad as *“just influential”*. *“I don’t think Coca really care about the environment, they just wanna sell their product.”*

Moreover, they were plot by the label displayed on the billboard of WWF, *“it is interesting because WWF is very well known label”* Also, they were not really enthusiastic about the billboard because it might be good for the environment, *“they built a giant metal structure which is obviously not environmentally friendly”*. Also, they had in mind that Coca Cola does not have a positive impact on people, they are just *“stealing water from poor farmers of palms in India”*. However, most of the respondent talked about Coca-Cola and their activities on social media. It is something that they appreciated: *“they are one of the biggest social media star, their social content is amazing”*.

Therefore, even though they think that their action was not really something positive since *“they do it but have twice more pollution in their factories or something”* but it is just a marketing campaign to make people talking about them but there is nothing to take into consideration since they won’t change anything in their process of production.

## Organic Valley

At first they all think that this ad might be for organic product. However, very fast, some questions came to their mind and start to doubt since *"they didn't said it is really organic, it didn't shows any labels"*. *"Grass doesn't necessary means it is hormone free. If you look at free range to legally classified something as organic or as free range, it still means the same number of cows by place"* It shows that there is a need of further information in order to confirm their point of view, *"this advertisement I have a positive feeling but I cannot be 100% sure that their milk is organic"*. When asking where would they look for information, they stayed either on *"their website or on their social media"*.

Moreover, the name was disturbing, *"calling your company organic valley kind of mean that your product is organic, and if their product is not, then these companies would just make our generation more paranoid and skeptics than before"*. It shows that even though the product was actually organic, they are confused, due to the fact there is no label displayed and are unsure about the validity of their name "Organic Valley".

## McDonald

McDonald in this campaign use a logo that one of the participant had knowledge about: *"I actually know the rainforest alliance before, I was looking at chocolate barre the other day, and i saw the logo and wanted to know what it is. The logo means that they guarantee at least 30% of the cacao beans or coffee in this case, come from certified rainforest alliance cacao or coffee farms that were supposed to be very good for the environment. At least 30% or only a 30% is coming from certified product, so 60% are not, then I was wondering why they are proud of that because 30% is such a low value"*. He is right because actually the rainforest alliance just looks at the land of where the coffee is produced but not at all about the bad effect such a forest can have around it.

McDonald has a bad brand perception from the participants, *“coming from McDonald you don’t believe anything”, “I doubt McDonald’s”, “I’m skeptical”* ... Moreover, they qualified this ad of being *“very cliché”*, fast foods are trying to have a better green image but *“I don’t think they care about the environment”*. Moreover, in their perception, *“McDonald never use good quality product and always try to find cheaper product or ingredients”*. Nevertheless, they stated that *“it’s better than nothing”* but many people didn’t know this label of rainforest alliance and therefore *“need more information to decide”*.

All in all, participant did not trust any of the advertisement rather if it is green product or not. They are very skeptical and do not believe in what companies are selling to them regarding green product. They know that companies are trying to buy a green brand perception but it does not work among Generation Y. It confirms also Chen and Chang (2012) conclusion: there is a correlation between green washing and green trust. In fact, green washing has a positive influence on confusion of consumers and influence negatively green advertisement trust. They are not able to truly make a distinction between green and non green product: every advertisement is greenwashed. They have a pretty clear understanding about what the companies are trying to do with all those green advertisements and are not influenced by what they are trying to do. The proposition number three is therefore accepted.

## Findings of Experiment 4

### **Generation Y wants public authorities to play a bigger role regarding green washing**

Participants have many expectations for the different governments and the actions they need to take in order to avoid greenwashing. At first, education was a big issue *“we need education”, we need “educational system, financed by the government”*, It is important to *“educate companies and population”*.

They would like also governments *“to determine fix standards”, “to have official label”,* and probably *“to create a kind of committee”,* then they won't be lost anymore within all the labels and aggregates.

The Generation Y wants government to *“require transparency”* to the food companies. They want more *“transparency”* of food companies regarding their business and the different green assets that are attributed to them. They want more transparency of the food companies but also of the governments by itself as well. Nowadays, *“Big food companies having too much influence over politician”* Indeed, *“food companies influenced the government, and government are linked to food companies due to lobbies”*.

For instance, in the US, *“the free range in the US should be a certain amount of chicken per kilometer and the government lower that surface, so there is way more chicken per space, so when you look at free range it is just means they can stand up, they cannot run, it is deplorable conditions”*. It shows that government favor a lot food companies and that to do so, companies influence a lot governments.

In fact, government should put more pressure on the food companies by imposing *“strict in term of taxes”*. They should *“increasing taxes”* for companies that do not respect the green aggregates.

Participants understand perfectly that *“it is not priority”* for government to take care about the food industry, however, *“the interest about green products will have a biggest importance”*. There is many changes that Generation Y want regarding greenwashing and companies in order to stop completely greenwashing and to make sure companies respects the rules and do not create them by doing lobbying. They want governments to play a bigger role, therefore the proposition 4 is supported.

## Findings of Experiment 5

**Millennial are willing to take action in order help companies to be more respectful of the environment.**



Many respondents are willing to take action. Indeed, *"We are all responsible and need to take action instead of continue to complain"*, it would be great to *"sit with companies and give them my ideas and how I feel about what they are doing. I don't know if it will have a huge impact, but I want to try"*.

Indeed, *"They need to make a better changes for the environment, like not just do anything for money"*. Many would do it over social media *"I would share my feelings on social medias, explain my relatives also what is greenwashing and try to be more careful about that. But I really think governments have higher power"*

They insisted especially on the labels, *"I will contribute to sit down with companies just to see if they are really willing to improve labelling and answer our demand"*. Some of them have already several ideas like, *"we can for instance have all the labels in one side of the product and look through them and maybe have 5, 6 labels at the top that are already being used and if you see there are 1 then they are 5 missing. They are easily recognizable as labels as well"*. It would allow to have recognizable labels and to have them standardized for all the food products. Also, *"If I can make a footprint difference I would definitely be interested by bringing something, an idea, that could make things easier for consumers to see as a visual what the product is."*

Some also emphasized on the role of the third party to evaluate companies: *"I will be happy to give my thoughts about companies should cooperate with more legitimate authorities and having a better labelling skill"*

However, some respondent were already skeptical about this idea: *"They might tell us what we want to hear but in fact we know what is happening behind the scene. I'm quite sceptical about the fact that's possible but I think we really need to have it regulated."*

This is why some respondent imagined some other type of collaboration. *"I would prefer to support one NGO because I think it has a biggest impact than sitting with food companies. I do not trust them, not as much as I could trust an NGO"* *"I think it's*

not our role to do it but I would like to do it. Just to discuss with them and let them understand that they need to take actions”

Generation Y is willing to discuss with a companies for the majority in order to take action and to help companies to understand their needs and to adjust their product. They find the idea very interesting and would do it either with the companies right away or through social media. However, few of them would prefer to talk with NGO that would after all talk with companies.

## Discussion and further researches

This chapter provides a brief summary of the research and considers the findings and proposes a base for future actions to take for food companies. This part will be divided in 3 parts in order to cover a global vision of the different actions a company can take in order to gain Generation Y's trust.

### Business to customer

In order to gain the Generation Y's trust, companies should have more transparency in their methods and avoid greenwashing. Through the findings, the results show that the Generation Y didn't believe in company's green advertisement (Picart, Gueny and Dupont, 2014), even if some ads were green. This is negative for companies as they cannot sell their green products even if they really have one.

Stopping greenwashing would be the first thing to do in order to gain more trust from the millennial customers regarding their green products and even their products and services in general. It will allow to inverse the correlation of Chen and Chang (2012), between green washing and green trust.

More transparency concerning their positive and negative actions, methods, process, suppliers, and so on, would also allow customers to have a better understanding of each company ethic and the Generation Y would assess easily if a company is fair.

The best option would be to have this information on the company website and their social media as the Millennial is the most connected generation. If a company does thing properly they should not be ashamed of what they do and publish their positive and negative effect on the different bottom line: planet, people, profit. This would allow them a better transparency in their activities, which is something that Generation Y is looking for in order to gain some trust in the companies.

Furthermore, in order to gain more information, companies should create live Facebook for instance, with online questions from Millennials. Then, more information would be transmitted, and the trust and understanding regarding a specific company would be improved. For instance, a representative of different sector could present what he does and interact directly with the consumers and answer live questions. It might be risky, but it is worth in order to show the willingness of a company to be more trustful and transparent for the Millennial.

Moreover, companies should use this connected generation by essentially advertising online in order to have a bigger impact and target specifically the Generation Y. Indeed, the online advertisement have a better impact rather than the offline advertisement on them. It would be a way to reduce companies cost and CO2 emission.

Another solution would be to adapt labels and packaging for the Generation Y. Indeed, as we said earlier on this paper, the Generation Y prefers simple design packaging, with the most significant information underline. They want to have an easy access to the information of a specific product. Thus, labels should be improved and simplified as well. Companies could for example create specific labels and decide to let them appear on one side of the product. The customer then would know where to look for information and would be able to assess the level of greenness of a specific product. The best would be, as suggested by the participant, to have standardized labels for all food company's actors in order to have a clear, fast, and general understanding about the green asset of a product and be rid of the unnecessary labels which is one of the biggest influencer in the greenwashing.

In order to be more accessible and willing to share information, companies should organize meetings and conferences with the Millennial. These meetings could have different aspects. For instance, a debate to create or improve a product that would fit Generation Y demand. It could also be an informative conference when free questions are allowed. The purpose is to be more human and show the Generation Y, which is the most concerned generation about the environment, that this specific company is definitely involved in CSR, ethical or green measures. As the participants stated in the focus group, they are willing to sit with the food companies and to share with them their needs and their wishes concerning food products. It is a good way to collaborate and to improve the brand image. Moreover, those meetings should be advertised on companies' social media since Millennials get a lot of information on it.

## Business to business

Another aspect is for companies to improve their supply. During our focus group, the local aspect of products has been put into evidence. A partnership created with a local supplier would have positive externalities. The Millennial would first trust more the brand, and appreciate the fact that they are creating jobs in their own countries or cities. Also, the Generation Y is aware that the transportation is one of the most important actors regarding pollution. Creating a local product rather than importing them from far away would also allow to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which is something that Millennials are very conscious about since, as seen in the literature, they gratified sustainable companies much more than those which polluted a lot. It is furthermore important for them to consume products that have a positive impact on their community.

These suppliers could be local, but also organic producers. Then, certified labels would appear on their products and again involve more trust in Generation Y consumption and during their buying decision process. Those labels should however be recognized and certified labels since the majority of the labels are confusing.

Furthermore, if there is not enough local supply, companies should at least work with fair suppliers. This would allow to increase the positive impact on the society and the

product they consume. Indeed, Generation Y consumption need to have good influence since they take care of the others and on the impact their consumption have.

They could for example use solar energy or having specific waste management process. This would be a way to show that they are eco responsible. However, proves of their efforts need to be showed and measure by a recognized third party in order to be truthful by the Millennial otherwise they would associate it with greenwashing.

## Business to government

As found during the focus group, the Millennial are expecting actions from the government in order to reduce or completely avoid greenwashing. Considering this fact, companies should start to work along with their own government and take decisions to improve themselves. Indeed, green political parties are not the priority yet, but the Generation Y still take into consideration a little bit the environmental program of their own president. If companies do not take actions before their government establish regulations, these laws or regulations could have a huge negative impact on their business. Therefore, if they work together with government but do not try to influence them it would be a great start. However, government and food companies should be two separate entities. Indeed, lobbying is something that is highly appreciated from the generation Y.

Some governments already started to control labels and green products, but this is not a global action yet. The food companies by working along with the government and accept control and regulation would institute a trustful relationship with their own government. Companies should accept government decision and not try to change its mind in order to be more profitable to companies.

Furthermore, the lack of education of consumers from government and food companies has been put into evidence during the focus group. Companies should create educational campaigns or program at school in order to teach the Generation

Y and the next generations what is an organic product, what is green product and what is not green. The Millennial are currently missing information which makes their consumption choice much harder, they basically do not know what they buy and are very confused about all those aggregates and labels. By creating awareness about that, food companies would again gain some trust from the Generation Y.

## Further Research

This study gave a first insight about the Generation Y attitude regarding greenwashing in the food industry.

The empirical study conducted was more like a pre-study in order to find some patterns and see if the propositions based on the papers were supported or not.

Moreover, a quantitative research with a wider scope can be achieved, in which these hypotheses can be supported by the findings. It would allow to have insight based on a much higher number of responses and then analyze if the findings of this study are supported.

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1 : Focus group 1

R: You have been asked to participate in a focus group designed, is going to be use as a, this discussion is to try to understand your buy decision process of green food product the information collected in the focus group will be use to design a master thesis, you can choose whether or not to participate to this focus group and you can stop at any time. All the responses will remain anonymous and the names will not mentioned in the report. There is no right or wrong answer, I just yon to hear you point of vue, and I would like to get it from everyone, I hope we will be honest even if you responses are not in agreement with the rest of the group, respect of each other, I will like one and individual speak at a time and you responses will be keep confidential.

R-First I just want to know more about you green product consumption like do you buy often green product such as organic product. such as fair trade product and so on, I would like to know how often or which kind of product do you buy?

M-I am not a buyer freak, I like to eat consciously so I often prepare my morning bowl banana, but also include many green green and organic product, kind of berries (bleu and other type). And I always buy organic and buy them online, because you can find better prices, cheaper than in specialized stores

R-which type of website do you buy?

M-I bought online because prices are even cheaper, but we have to be careful because often the products are come from china for instance for pumpkin seeds they are very bad, it seems to be bio but when you read about it it's not the case, and origin is important for product

R-what is important for you when you choose a brand for example?

M-I always try to google it, so I check the reviews, check the certification of course, see the certifications, I check the brand also, what is it about, but I don't have really specifications for brands

R-so you don't buy like green product in store right?

M-I do it very rarely, just when there is promotion

B-Me as well, I prefer to eat and to buy when I cook at home, green product, I cannot control when I am eating outside, but if I cook at home I would prefer to buy the bio product, I do buy green product in a specialized store for organic product, I am also not used to go to organic restaurant, but I also go to normal supermarket, and I buy there organic fruit and vegetables when it is possible but if they dont have the fruit or vegetable organic I want I go for the normal ones.

RA-I don't look about the stuff like green or organic I go more for the price but sometimes I try to be more healthy and I obviously try out to buy green stuff. I dont buy every green product but if it is a major company you can trust somehow and it is more likely to be like, like organic or environmental than someone you dont know if it's just a green print and sell it and have their own logo which is same organic but who buy thing from a company you know and not from a seller, because who does know what type is in the small shops. So if it is a big company I go for green but if it is not I am suspicious about that

R-So you buy green product with a well-known brand right?

RA-Yes

R-Which type of green product do you buy for example?

RA-Vegetable, fruits, pasta, rice

R-you buy them in store?

RA-Yes

R-how do you recognize a product when it is green?

RA-Because mostly have a logo on it which say EU, and the colouring of the package for which you can find out, it is a different brand and you can see if it is fair trade, organic, other green things...

A-I am not buying often some green product, I am buying from time to time organic meat or vegetables, I am just going sometimes to bio restaurant but I think there is like this trend. I don't really like to buy it in store because you never know if the brand is supposed to be worldwide known or not. I'd rather go to for products from small producers which said the products are organic but they don't have the certification, I prefer talking to the person he can help and advise me about the product

R-for how long have you been buying green product?

A-Maybe 2 or 3 years, but it is also expensive so I can't buy only green products

R-when did you buy green product

M-I come from a small village and my parents are emphasizes we should eat green food, and we buy it at the supermarket, we also have farmer around my village, so I also buy directly from them, a friend of my dad is a blueberry farmer, and I realize, blue berries are not eatable after 2 days in the fridge because he doesn't use any pesticide, for example last week I bought blueberry at the supermarket and they are still eatable after 2 days storage in the fridge. I have a friend who is also a blueberry farmer and I went to the grocery shops with him and he said organic food is a non-sense, he doesn't believe in this because his parents are really farmers, he tell me the prices to get a certificate of organic food are so expensive and it is unbelievable.

R-For how long have you been eating green product

B-When I was living in with my parents, I was buying on the market in the street, and we buy directly from the local producers, and then I moved to New York and I stopped, but I when I came back few years later I went back to the same producers, and tried to get green products again.

RA-It was 2 years ago, and the reason is because I moved out from my parents' house and of course I had to buy food myself, that's how I started

R-What about you Elsa?

E- I usually buy organic food in the super market but especially vegetables, because I think the quality is better for health, the thing is that we cannot find a lot of organic restaurants, so it is really difficult to continue to eat organically that is why I am not under organic diet all the time but I am trying to eat organic food as much as possible.

R- where do you buy organic products?

E-The super market

R-on what do you base your judgment if the product is green or not

E-I can see when they are sold separately, and there is a logo that said that it's organic and you can see if it looks better or not

R-What about you EL?

EL-I am trying to buy the more I can, I can buy locally somewhere near by my place, when I go to the supermarket there is not product necessarily trusted because you don't have the connection with company for example. You can't always know and only trust what you've been told and also it is very expensive to be labeled as organic products, sometimes a product might be organic but doesn't necessarily has a logo. It's tuff to know what's best to choose.

R-Then, here they are several products, I'd to invite you to look at them and let me know which one are organic or not.

R- Do you know some different label? And what does that mean for you for example eco-friendly (definition)

M-It doesn't destroy eco system

E- It doesn't mean organic but it takes care of the environment

RA-I think eco friendly is also organic and ecologic because if you use chemicals is also disturbing the nature

A- I think eco-friendly is really wild because everything could be eco-friendly and it doesn't mean anything, for example if a company recycling paper, they can say we are eco-friendly but they are not but they use something by which the company can have the label eco-friendly. They are doing some incentive to look like eco-friendly but they are not

R- what do you think about natural product? And what is a natural product for you?

EL- Natural product can be anything, can be vegetables, or fruits, product that is not transformed, for example pasta it is...

M-Processed, so everything that is not processed

RA-A thing was made with additional things, for example beer need only 3 ingredients but if you add something in order then it is unnatural

R- what about organic product now?

M-The one who don't use pesticide and antibiotics

A- And also the land need to be 10 years without using any pesticides, it is rare, I think all of the land have pesticides in them, and it is really rare to find an healthy ground according with this regulation

B-It is not damaging the environment and you are not consuming some hormones or thing that you should not be consuming. The perfect organic is the one who does not damaging the environment and not bad for my health.

RA-Not genetically change

R/ what about fair trade?

M-It does not abuse people in farm in them countries, no child labour

EL-There is a certain percentage maybe 30% of the process, if they have 30% they can have the label.

R/ what do you think that fair trade logo get involved more thing rather than just the way they treat the workers? Other added values?

A-I think it is wrong for vegetables and things like that because they don't have any rules to respect regarding the land

M- Same for meat. They don't feed chicken with additional food to make them big, and feed them as fast as possible, and let the chicken be free in the wild

A-Fair trade allows to producer to have a decent revenue it should not be less than a certain price, and the company paying them higher than before and the farmer can have more money and the farm is be able to grow

E-I don't know exactly what fair trade is but, I have never seen it before that is why I don't have a real opinion, but when I see it, it is something related to eco-friendly. Names are a bit confusing.

R/ what about sustainable product?

M-It doesn't damage the environment

A-To be sustainable you have to be eco friendly

B- I agree, but also to make sure that something is produced in a good way to preserve the next generation

M-Natural growing for plants and also for animals

E- Agree

R- I will show you 4 ads about different companies promoting themselves as green, I'd like you to tell if they are selling properly green product or not or it is a greenwashed product

Ads 1

M- No

E: No

EL:No

M: Simply has fibre

A: Simply bullshit

R: Agree

B: Mee too

2nd ads

E- I think yeah it's a green product, here organic

M- It seems to

EL: Yeah it seems to

E-But they didn't said it is really organic, it didn't shows any labels, it is present as organic but there is not organic label.

M- Yeah, just the name, but didnt really said that it is organic, but i think they would be suit of they would use the name organic without the permission because they suggest that they are organic

EL- Yeah but they are called organic Valley so

M- They present themselves as organic but there is no organic labels so, there is no proove...

B- I dont think it is organic

M- Me neither, they just try to fool the others

E- I think if anyone see this afvertisement, everyone will think it's organic

RA-I think they're organic

EL- I think so as well

A- They might be but we cannot know, we need more information

M- The message was that they are organic but I think they need the proove, the label is missing

R-If you need to see some information about this company where would you go?

A- On their website or on their social media

M- Yeah

A- But they are also controlling the information

M-They is probably a worldwide website with every organic companies so you can check if it is really organic or not

3rd ads

EL- I would say yeah it is greenwashed

M-I would say yes as well, I think McDonald's has a bad reputation right now, because all fast food try to change their image, they try to introduce some organic product to have a better image

RA-I am not sure they are organic, they said eco-friendly, they are doing something, they are not destroying the environment but we don't know how they produce the product

E-The ad was with a lot of green colour, but we need more information to decide

M-They said the coffee was with milk, they talk about the coffee beans but not about the milk

A- The coffee might be organic but MacDonalld is not organic at all, but the coffee could be organic. They just talk about eco-friendly but not at all about organic or fair trade. It is not really lying but I don't trust this information

B-I have never seen this label before and I doubts McDonald's, that they can create a label just for them, and they are using them own matrix so I don't think it is a green product

A- But I think the label has been used by other companies, It is about helping the forest, we dont see this logo often but it is something real

M- They mention only sustainable growth, but i'd say that the coffee is organic and the milk not

EL-I don't think it is a government regulation thing, I think they just made it themselves, but it's better than nothing

4 ads

EL-I think it is interesting because WWF is very well known label, however they built a giant metal structure which is obviously not environmentally friendly. It is really just marketing to generate more sales

E:I agree

M- I agree also

A-They trying to change their image such as MacDonalld's, it is definitely the same file, coca cola produce a product with green stamp, cocacola life, on it but it is not organic or anything, they just want to get a better image, it Is a good initiative, could be good for the city and less pollution but it doesn't change the all brand, because they do it but have twice more pollution in their factories or something

M-This big brand they're trying to face of consequences about society awareness and the healthy thinking but also of the population, they try to go against is somehow, but it is just marketing

B- Yes, they're trying to change their image and they're trying to do something that people could see, they see the plant behind there, so they see they are doing it. We don't blame Coca-Cola for what they can do. They're just trying to change their image on the way they could, they cannot change their production, they cannot do anything, just trying to do something that could work

RA-It's a great PR and marketing operation, we know how Coca-Cola is and how marketing works to sell their stuff, obviously if it has benefit for them they do PR stuff and social media, they are one of the biggest social media stars, their social content is amazing so obviously they know how to PR themselves, and you have the bad side of Coca-Cola like stealing water from poor farmers of palms in India, it's a nice thing and somehow we believe they are somewhat green, but if you know the other side, it's hard to believe that they are really green.

M-It's the same with Nestle, they are trying to grow plants for palm oil and when still forest in India.

R-Would you think your own government should regulate the greenwashing? Have you heard about some measure that I've been taken from government to reduce greenwashing? For the last or future election, would you take into consideration the environmental program to choose your candidate?

M- For my country we have problems, of course there is this huge trend about being eco and green, but in Poland we have other important problem. There is a huge confusion concerning labels, and I think we need education on this topic. We need regulation in the EU to educate the population on labels and maybe make some specific labels, standardize labels. More you have labels the more you think this is a good and healthy product, but it's not necessarily the case.

E-In Spain, we have most important issues, so in the moment I'm not really thinking about it, but it's true that it's becoming an important issue so of course I will take it into consideration but it wouldn't be my first thing to take into account at the moment.

R-But do you think the government can have a positive impact regarding greenwashing or not?

E-I think yes, they should educate companies and population, and set some restrictions because companies are doing a lot to pollute and everything. The government should at least require transparency from companies for the customers, then, we know exactly what each company does.

M-In Poland, they wanted to introduce and sign a contract with Canada about GMO and the population was manifesting on the street because they didn't want any modified food, and at the end the contract has not been signed.

B-In Italy we have big issues, most of food companies influenced the government, and government are linked to food companies due to lobbies. Then, I would like to have more regulations about labels, about how the food is produced, especially meat and eggs, but at some point, it's hard for me to believe that the government will really do something as food companies have too much power over the government.

RA-I think they should regulate greenwashing, but it's also freedom of people and marketing to use this. It depends which parties are in the power and what the population wants at the moment. I do believe that in few years, interest about green products will have a biggest importance, but at the moment, concerns are not sufficient to government to take action on this.

EL-There is so many more important things than worrying about the marketing strategies. As long as is legal there is no point to regulate it at the moment. However, I'm personally concerned about all these labels that confused us, and I think that talking to my family and friends about it, do some research and learn more about labels, is the best option that every individual can do at the moment. The government cares about environment, but as I said, this is not the priority.



A-I think in France, there is already some staff does from the government to try to be more legal on environment, but they also created some logos/labels especially for meat, eggs, vegan food, so many different logos that we do not know what they mean, at the end we are confused. It's hard for the consumer to know what is organic or not. The government also try to stop big food companies, like GMO.

R-Would you agree to support more the food companies to be more focus on environment? Would you be willing to help somehow, to sit with them and give them some insights about they should do or not do? Give your point of view?

M-I think it's a very nice idea, and ideally it should be done this way. But there is no real agreement on how to treat things, and how to deal with that. So most of the time companies prefer to go to a foreign country where they can pay less and do not need to deal with such problems, as there is corruption they can fix everything with money. It would be ideally perfect if we could make it for our own health, but I don't see it coming.

R-What about social media ?

M-Yes I think it's very important and of course we can do it for social media. They might tell us what we want to hear but in fact we know what is happening behind the scene. I'm quite sceptical about the fact that's possible but I think we really need to have it regulated.

E-I think it's very important. I would like to do it, sit with companies and give them my ideas and how I feel about what they are doing. I don't know if it will have a huge impact, but I want to try.

EL-I personally would do it only if I have time. We are all responsible and need to take action instead of continue to complain. If there is something I can do, I will do it for sure.

B- I would prefer to support one NGO because I think it has a biggest impact than sitting with food companies. I do not trust them, not as much as I could trust an NGO.

RA-I would also prefer to deal with NGO, and then let the NGO deal with companies. I think they would have more power than us.

A-I think it's not our role to do it but I would like to do it. Just to discuss with them and let them understand that they need to take actions.

## Appendix 2 : Focus Group 2

R-We will start this focus, I'm going to ask you some questions about a specific topic. You are free to say everything you want. Let's start with Tegan, do you buy organic products?

T-I only buy vegan food, but usually it is pretty green because it is organic.

R-Between organic, eco friendly, or fair trade products for instance, what do you prefer ?

T-I prefer fair trade and organic foods, and I read all the labels, what different symbols means, which fair trade companies are reputable and which are not.

R-Where do you buy these products ?

T-In local farms for vegetables, and for the rest in vegans store.

R-For how long have you been buying organic products ?

T-I grew up in green household, everything was made from scratch and organic, so everything was organic since day one.

R-What about you Mark, do you buy organic products?

M- I do not buy a lot of organic products, but I preferably buy organic milk or coffee. It is more for the quality than the purpose to be ecological. Apart from that, it is not a conscious effort for buying green.

R-How long have you been buying organic products?

M-Not very long, like a year ago. It is mostly because of my ex girlfriend. She told me a gross story about McDonald milk so I couldn't eat or drink any non organic milk. Then, I started to buy organic eco friendly products.

R-Where do you buy them?

M-In organic store because I am sure to buy an organic product then, in a supermarket it is hard to differentiate what is organic and what is not with all these labels and diverse packaging.

R-What about you Ida, do you buy organic products?

I-I consume a bit of organic products. I mainly buy organic fruits and eggs.

R-How long have you been buying organic products?

I-2 years now. It became more usual to buy organic fruits and eggs, I followed the mouvement.

R-Where do you buy them ?

I-In supermarket, but not in a specific store.

R-What about you B, do you buy organic products?

B-I buy green products because I have been influenced by my wife. Before I was not consuming organic products at all. She eat organic fruits, eggs, and organic food in general. She is very conscious about that and transfer that consciousness to me. So now I buy organic products.

R-Since when did you start to buy organic products then ?

B-Around 3 years ago, I have got married 2 years ago, and it took me a certain amount of time before starting to care about what I buy and the environment in general.

R-Where do you buy them ?

B-In groceries stores, it is easier for me to buy it a supermarket more than a specific organic store. And most of the time it is more expensive in an organic store.

R-What do you take into consideration when you buy an organic product ?

B-I mainly look at the packaging and labels also. I try to understand if a product is organic or not from what my wife teach me.

R-What about you H, do you buy organic products?

H-I buy organic products, mostly fruits and eggs, but also simple staff such as pasta or rice. But for me fruits is really important, there are a lot of chemicals in non organic products. It is mainly for the healthy part but I also care about the environment and I think it's a big topic for everyone all over the world.

R-Where do you buy them?

H-In a supermarket most of the time because it is more accessible, but I might go to organic store as well just to have a look at their products.

R-Since when did you start to buy organic products then ?

H-Since 2 or 3 years, I don't remember exactly, when I started to work and have a real salary and live alone without my parents, I decided to buy organic products.

R-Here there is a lot of different products, I invite you to have a look and determine which products are organics. Do not discuss it, do not debate it, just write when you see something organic. We will then discuss about it at the end of the focus group.

R-Then, I will ask you to give me the definition of some specific words. The first word to define is eco-friendly:

H- For me it's a product made in order to respect the environment as possible. It's more fruits and vegetables than other type of product.

T- An eco-friendly product is a product produced in a way that it respect the environment. It's not natural, it means that they can have some additives and everything, but the way it's produced, respect the environment.

M- For me it's like an organic product, I don't really see the difference between both. Like a product without any bad ingredients on it.

B- Yes I think an eco-friendly product is created in a way it respect the environment as possible but not totally. It can have a specific recycling packaging for example.

I- I also think that it's a product that respect the environment for sure.

R-Then, what is a natural product ?

T- A natural product is a product made with natural ingredients, like organic ingredients.

H-For me it's a product that do not necessarily respect the environment, but has natural ingredients which make it healthy.

I-Yes it is a product that respect the environment, more local for example, and good and healthy ingredients.

M-I also saw it more local, and similar to organic products.

B-A natural product is for me a product that have organic ingredients. Like vegetable grow in a farm without pesticide for example.

R-So then, what is an organic product?

MA organic product respect the environment and doesn't have too much conservative, but it's not 100% organic. For me natural product is the purest one, and an organic product is below a natural product in term of ingredients.

B-I agree, it's a product made with less as possible conservative and stuff like that.

I-When it's local or properly grown without chemicals, without more than necessary chemicals. Because I would prefer to consume something which is less organic that local, than something organic but has to be shipped.

T-Every decision that company will take would take care of the environment for people and animals. It doesn't have to be local for me, but in a way people and animal are treated fairly and no chemicals in the natural product that I define for myself.

R-What about fair trade?

LE- For me fair trade is about involving people, support a poor region or people to make them more fortune by buying their product.

LA-Is also I think about people that are not exploited, no child labor, and have salary in a fair way, and that is why maybe the product cost a bit more than it should cost.

J-For me it is the same, proper work and work conditions.

F-Basically the same, but also they are less suppliers and it's more directly.

R-I would like to show you 4 advertisements, and tell me what you think, what is your opinion about the brand, do you think it is greenwashing advertisement or a proper advertisement. The first one is in french but I will translate it for you.

R-What do you think about this first advertisement ?

T-I think it is full of crap, it has nothing to do with CO2 emissions.

B-I like the idea because a lot of people are now conscious about waste and CO2 and stuff, this is influenceable. I think this advertisement is true because I do not pay attention to CO2 staff specifically, so I don't know how we can reduce it.

M-It looks like it is a green product from the way they advertise it, but I do not believe that because it is whole grain the CO2 emission will be less.

H- I think they are trying to manipulate us. It's not like walking more will help decrease the CO2 emissions. And what about the pollution they create for producing a packet of this BN. I don't believe this advertisement.

I-Me neither, I don't want to be paranoid about all the advertisement, but this one is pretty obvious.

R-The second advertisement is about Coca-Cola, let me know what do you think about this one.

B-I think it is contradictory between the social media things and the idea. The idea is great, but they affecting not many people, it is not good for the planet also at the same time. the social media boom creates also a lot of negativity. But I like the idea of plants absorbing CO2 emissions, it's really creative.

R- What do you think about the Coca-Cola part ?

B-The Coca part is just influential, nothing more.

R-What do you think about this advertisement Ida?

I-I think the same, but at the end the company tried to make us consume more. So it is contradictory, but the idea is good.

M-I think this advertisement is kind of true, it is better than doing anything, but it could be worst also, because it makes people believe that Coca is a company that have a net positive effect on the environment. And my opinion is that it doesn't, it make people think that things

are going to the right direction, which is a false understanding of how it actually looks like. There is a lack of consciousness from Coca, it is a company that aggressively marketing and expanding their market in other countries and it is hard to see that as anything else than a marketing product.

T-It is more about what the PR does, green is trendy, they know it sell, Coca is notorious in underdeveloped countries by going in corrupted countries. They are not a green company and they doesn't care about anybody, and they also doesn't care about pollution.

M-Also when they mentioned the numbers, tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> that convert to oxygene, I don't know how much that is, that sounds very big, but the billboard itself is not very big, if you say a size of football bill is cutting it's more realistic for the consumer to have a vision of Coca is really doing. Concerning this billboard it might not be as much.

H- I really like the idea, but I think this is again just a way to sell us a product. I have been in Manila and using the poverty and the high pollution image of this country, just make me hate Coca-Cola more. Companies are trying to seems green but at the end they are destroying their image even more.

R-Then I will show you the third video and let me know what do you think about this one.

T-Grass doesn't necessary means it is hormone free. If you look at free range to legally classified something as organic or as free range, it still means the same number of cows by place. So it is called organic valley because it is organic or because of the name, it is another story.

M-I don't know anything about what is it required to be called organic, but I did think about the name. if you call it organic valley it means that maybe it is just the name they taken from multiple sources where they get the milk. They are some brands that have the name of an actual place, and I think it is more credible than something called organic valley because it is organic. It sounds incredulous.

B-The advertisement looks good, as a buyer I wouldn't try to know if organic valley is a real place or not. For this advertisement I have a positive feeling but I cannot be 100% sure that their milk is organic.

I-The milk must have other additives.

T-It can be classified organic even if they are some additives, they can called it organic as a name but not be classified as an organic product.

H- Yes exactly that is why it is confusing. Calling your company organic valley kind of mean that your product is organic, and if there product is not, then these companies would just make our generation more paranoid and skeptics than before.

R-The last advertisement is from McDonald. Let me know what you think.

I-Coming from McDonald you don't believe anything.

T-It is more sustainable than other things, but it is not benefiting anybody.

M-I actually know the rainforest alliance before, I was looking at chocolate barre the other day, and i saw the logo and wanted to know what it is. The logo means that they guarantee at least 30% of the cacao beans or coffee in this case, come from certified rainforest alliance cacao or coffee farms that were supposed to be very good for the environment. At least 30% or only a 30% is coming from certified product, so 60% are not, then I was wondering why they are proud of that because 30% is such a low value. Because of that pre condition, I am not having a positive feeling for this advertisement, but in this case maybe it is different. It is always hard to be sure of something we don't have any knowledge.

B-Mark influenced my thought, I didn't know the logo, and I don't drink coffee. The advertisement is very cliché, I don't like it, the farmers in the forest, the nice girl sitting somewhere drinking coffee. I don't like it, people who work for the coffee beans doesn't get a lot of money and we kind of use them to sell this product with this unknow logo.

H-I agree with Ida when she said that coming from McDonald you don't believe anything. I think trusting a commercial or not depends a lot from the company who advertise it. If it was a new brand maybe we wouldn't be so skeptical.

R-Then, let's move on another topic. Do you expect measure from the government in order to regulate the greenwashing. In the last political election did you take into consideration the environmental aspect of their program ? Do you have any example?

T-In the US, I take into consideration this aspect for voting. We expect the government to take measures about that. For instance, the free range in the US should be a certain amount of chicken per kilometer and the government lower that surface, so there are way more chicken per space, so when you look at free range it is just means they can stand up, they cannot run, it is deplorable conditions, but it is free range because they can stand up. The US government also took measure of about exporting live animals by increasing taxes because they were dying on the trip, they took a measure because human rights were doing pressure and also because too much of the animals were dying on the way and couldn't be sell. Taxing they can do about, they didn't do it for the animals but mainly because of the taxes they can get from that.

B-I think governments should be more strict about exportation, especially for products they bring. I think they come from poor countries and farmers, and take action by being more strict in term of taxes. For the political election part, I am interested. I was looking at the french election recently and I didn't notice if they spoke about environment or not. To be honest it wouldn't be my first criteria to choose a candidate but I will have a look yes.

R-Do you think government should take action regarding the greenwashing?

B-I think they should take actions, but to be honest I don't really know why exactly. Maybe create a kind of committee to regulate labels and commercials.

M-I don't know if the government does a lot in Canada, I think it is free market where products can be called ecological or not and private institution allows it, which can be an issue if a product is labeled as organic and it's not. They can have for instance 30% of organic product and still be classified as organic. The government should do something about it because you cannot trust private actors with the incentive to sell as much as possible will be responsible in such handling, in fact we can even argue that the market forces will make it any possible for producers not to greenwash, because even if everybody else does it, and actors start doing it, and keep their sell without, need government regulations about what is allowed and how it is allowed, they already have quality check on food/fruit, within the institution who already does that to certified green product, then it will be more trustworthy for customers to choose the great product.

I-When i choose a candidate, I will take into consideration the candidates programs about environment but I think there is other things to take care of you know. But I think it places important role.

R-And regarding greenwashing?

I-It will be great if the government regulate it, and also should educate the consumers.

H- I'm from the US, and I think the government as a lot to do concerning labels and greenwashing in general. We need to regulate that, create maybe one unique label understandable for everyone. I want to be sure when I buy something that it is actually organic, or what is not organic inside this product. I'm tired to don't know what I'm eating, I wanna know and I want the government to help me to get more knowledge about that, or to make it simple.

R-We arrive at the last question. Would you agree to support food companies to be more focus on the environment, why or why not ? Would you be able to sit with companies and to talk about environmental issues and create new products for example ?

T-Yes totally. Looking at all the brands we have, you can see that fair trade is not being organic, vegan is not being organic, they can still be full of chemicals. Hormone free is not organic or free range, it is always false advertising, and people should know what they put in their body because they are not like me about reading and searching everything. They need to make a better changes for the environment, like not just do anything for money.

M-I will be happy to give my thoughts about companies should cooperate with more legitimate authorities and having a better labelling skill. I get very influenced by a color of a paquet, if it is green I might think it is somehow more green than another, and that make me very skeptical from the first place. because I don't know what the different labels means, I don't know what to look for. And I find it interesting to sit down for few hours and I'd like to be easier, and right now I feel.

T-It should be easier, we shouldn't need to do thousand of research.

M-Yes it should be easier, we can for instance have all the labels in one side of the product and look through them and maybe have 5, 6 labels at the top that are already being used and if you see they are 1 then they are 5 missing. They are easily recognizable as labels as well. Right now, it is like I don't know how many labels they are, I don't know where to look for them, and what they means. Then for me it is impossible to tell us as non interested consumers if this product is green or not. I just don't know and I guess that is why I don't really care for looking for green when I buy something because I think I'm gonna be pretty fool anyway.

B-I'm not an expert about this to be honest, but yes if I can make a footprint difference I would definitely be interested by bringing something, an idea, that could make things easier for consumers to see as a visual what the product is. I do not really spend a long time to read labels, I've just been influenced about the color and what is look like. I can usually be fool by the green product. It can be very useful if they are clear guidelines or labels, something that help consumers to decide a lot faster and a more efficient way.

I-I will contribute to sit down with companies just to see if they are really willing to improve labelling and answer our demand.

H-Same as everyone, I will totally sit with companies to create a new product or give my feedback about how to improve labelling. I think it is really important to do it, and I know some friends who would also agree to do that.

## Appendix 3 : Focus Group 3

R: You have been asked to participate in a focus group designed, is going to be use as a, this discussion is to try to understand your buy decision process of green food product the information collected in the focus group will be use to design a master thesis, you can choose whether or not to participate to this focus group and you can stop at any time.

All the responses will remain anonymous and the names will not mentioned in the report

There is no right or wrong answer, I just yon to hear you point of vue, and I would like to get it from everyone, I hope we will be honest even if you responses are not in agreement with the rest of the group, respect of each other, I will like one and individual speak at a time and you responses will be keep confidential.

R-How often do you buy green product, when did you started to buy these type of product, and where do you buy them?

LA-I buy green products quite often, I started doing it during my last year of university, and since I work I have more money to buy them. I mainly buy them in normal supermarket, I am not going in organic because it is usually more expensive.

R-How do you evaluate if a product is green or not?

LA-I look at the ingredients, where the product come from, and also labels.

J-I buy green product in grocery shopping, I tried to buy them once a week in a market and if I have no time in a supermarket. I look if the product is fresh, also the labels. i started to consume green products also during the university.

R-Which type of product do you buy?

J-Mostly vegetables, also frozen one.

F-I always tried to get green food and local foods. I have been lucky because I was leaving in a small town with a local market and fresh vegetables, and suppliers goes directly. I always try to get fresh food. But if it is from Spain for example I don't buy them because it is not good for the environment.

R-What about you Lenny?

LE-I mostly buy organic meat because I think it's better quality. I buy them from local grocery store and also in a supermarket. I started to buy organic since all these scandals about animals and how they are treated.

R-What about you Sara?

S-For me, I started I buy organic products, mainly vegetables and eggs, 2, 3 years ago. I started to care about the environment and animals also as Lenny said, so I decided that it was important to consume smart. And, I buy them in a supermarket because it's more convenient.

R-Then, here they are several products, I invite you to look at them and let me know which one are organic or not.

R-I will ask you to define some words. The first is eco-friendly:

LE- Something produce in a way that there are not much gas emissions. In overall, the company should take care of everything that is good of the environment, they should take that decision over the financial decision.

J-It's products that are made as natural as possible, no using chemicals, or anything to conserve the product.

LA- An eco-friendly product should be something produce without damaging the environment. Using the natural power of everything, without adding further stuff that will change the taste or destroy nutrition value of the product. Like instead of 1 tomato we will get 10 tomatoes, they wouldn't have insect destroying the product. And it is the same for animals that haven't been exploited or over feed.

F-For me it's depend from where it is coming from, transportation choice, water needs to get these vegetables or meat be done, depend of the space needed to grow, and the correlation on how many vitamins they are.

S-An eco-friendly product is a product made with respect of the environment. But to be honest I don't know if this product will be 100% respectful of the environment.

R-Then, what is a natural product from your perspective ?

F-If they are no unnatural ingredients or things that do not belong to the product to eat it, and if it's also ecological. Being ecological but without being very good as a supplier, meaning that we will pollute more with transportation and everything.

LE-Product without conservative, chemical, pesticide, more friendly and respectful of the environment.

J-For me it's most important because they taste better, in the case of a natural product I can recognize the taste. When I buy something from the countryside, I know how it's produced and if it's local. I know if is not produced, it is local.

LA-For me, they are 2 kinds of natural products. If we talk about raw ingredients like flour or eggs, they are in general produce without being created with alternative products. And another hand, if we talk about a complex product made of different ingredients that has only natural raw ingredients.

R-What about an organic product?

LA-A organic product respect the environment and doesn't have too much conservative, but it's not 100% organic. For me natural product is the purest one, and an organic product is below a natural product in term of ingredients.

J- Yeah, it's a product made with less as possible conservative and stuff like that.

F-When it's local or properly grown without chemicals, without more than necessary chemicals. Because I would prefer to consume something which is less organic that local, than something organic but has to be shipped.

LE-Every decision that company will take would take care of the environment for people and animals. It doesn't have to be local for me, but in a way people and animal are treated fairly and no chemicals in the natural product that I define for myself.

R-What about fair trade?

LE- For me fair trade is about involving people, support a poor region or people to make them more fortune by buying their product.

LA-Is also I think about people that are not exploited, no child labor, and have salary in a fair way, and that is why maybe the product cost a bit more than it should cost.

J-For me it is the same, proper work and work conditions.

F-Basically the same, but also they are less suppliers and it's more directly.

R-I will show you some advertisement and I invite you to let me know if you think it is greenwashing.

#### 1-Advertisement BN

J-I think kids doesn't understand at this moment how the environment is working and company are using that lack of information. For me it is definitely greenwashing.

F-I also think it is lies and greenwashing, there is no link between eating these cookies and improve the environment.

LA-This advertisement is totally bullshit.

LE-I agree, there is absolutely no correlation between environment and cookies. And what about their pollution to make these cookies..

S-Yes, I think this company is thinking that we are naif. This is not a good strategy for them to do such bad advertisement.

#### 2-Advertisement Coca-Cola

LE-This is only a way to sell product, so greenwashing. Actually, planting a tree is the same, it is easier, and sustainable.

F-I would like to know how much CO2 extracted while building it, if it is for example what 1 car is producing in a year. Because in this case, it can be nothing. Also, when you know what Coca is doing in Africa for example with the water you know it is complete bullshit.

LA-This initiative looks nice and they tried to make something simple. Planting something to absorb CO2, they didn't created something new so it is not impressive for me. And I don't think Coca really care about the environment, they just wanna sell their product.

J-On another hand, Coca is famous and do not need to advertise. If they are doing something great in one place, it might give inspiration to other people. It's nice they at least try to do something because they don't have to.

LA-Yes, but everyone know they do it for branding.

S-Coca is really talented to make good advertisement. In this case I don't think they really care about the environment, but are just following the trend about green stuff.

#### 3-Advertisement Organic Valley

LE-The advertisement seems nice but it's not enough to be called organic. I won't say it's greenwashing, because Coca add was worst, but this one I'm in between, I'm not sure.

LA-I'm wondering how they can register this name, because the name states "organic" but it doesn't say if the product is organic. They want to show that the cow get natural food. It is confusing to consumers because consumers might think it is organic. For me it is not a green add, they pretend to be green but are not.

J-I think they wanted to show that other companies are using something extra to make their grass, that them don't. For me this is not a green add as well.

F-For me it is not green add, they want themselves to look green by using this name and doing this add, but still it's not a green product.

S-For me this is not a green, I think the grass might be organic, but then what about others ingredients ? So it's confusing.

#### 4- Advertisement McDonald

J-McDonald never use good quality product and always try to find cheaper product or ingredients. But for me this is greenwashing.

LA-Maybe it's an advertisement for special type of coffee they sell which could be more expensive. This would be a green add but just for a small product that try to improve the overall picture of McDonald.

F-It might be true they are using good coffee beans, but the add implies that everybody is happy and implying that there is only a small family that is making the coffee. I could believe that they are really trying to get more fair, but maybe organic coffee is not really environment friendly or fair trade. The add sounds good but it is not actually that good.



LE-I am not so negative about this add, it's the only company add we saw that show what they make to be more green. They are also the only one that give us something to test like this Rainforest label. So, for me it is a green add.

S-For me I'm skeptical, as I don't know what the RainForest label means. I would say it's greenwashing, because it's McDonald, and I don't think they care about the environment.

R-In order to reduce the greenwashing, do you think the government should be much more involved ? For the last election, did you take into consideration the environmental program of the different candidates? Do you have examples that have been taken by governments ?

LA-I think the government should be more involved, whenever someone claim to be organic determine fix standards and if you comply with them you can define your product as organic. I don't really support the green political party, it is not as important as others part of the program, but I would appreciate more green action from my government.

R-It would be good to have official label, do you think big organisation should create those label in order to have those standards everywhere ?

LA-They need to licence those labels, meaning that organisation create a label and licence it, so people needs to apply and comply with the requirements, and once they prove that they get the possibility to get this logo on their product.

LE-I feel like the Europe is doing a lot about environment already. And Germany also, being organic in Germany really means something. I have trust for my government to deal with these environmental issue, and i support it. I think any party kind of support green action. For me I feel like measure and regulations have be done in Germany.

J-The European union are doing these labels, in Poland we have high standards for organic products, but too high and involve some food waste. I think this is not the priority of my country for the moment, but I'd like to see more regulations and actions from my government.

F-I think the government should control the greenwashing more. Big food companies having too much influence over politician because they tried several times in Portugal because some party blocked it. I think it is more an initiative that should be taken by the educational system, financed by the government. A lot of people don't understand what all these labels means and how to recognize a green product.

S-Governments have big power, they need to regulate these advertisement and labels. This is the priority. Then, for the rest, education would be a lot and people might not be interested. They just need to control, but I think it really depends of the country. Government might be dependant of big food companies like in the US for example.

R- Would you agree to support companies and to give them your insight about what you await from certain type of product, talk about green products, and give them your opinion.

LA-I would definitely agree, it would be interesting to show us that we understand when an advertisement is fake for instance.

J-Yes I would like to, but I would need to be sure that what I'm doing is important and is going to improve the situation.

F-It depends of companies, I would prefer to sit with an already fair trade or organic company because I know I can trust them and they are going to take care of my solutions and feedback; rather than McDonald for example which is only going to make this environmental improvement meeting a marketing campaign.

LE- I would prefer to sit with McDonald because it will have a bigger impact.

S-Sitting with companies could be a good way to explain our feelings about it; but I don't think it will have a big impact.

LA-I think it's an interesting idea, and if one day a Coca for example invite me to talk about green product, I will be skeptical.

J-Same, I'm very skeptical about the impact of such a meeting could have.

R-What actions would you take in order to reduce the greenwashing in general ?

J-Explain to my friend and family, check by myself more information in internet and find few sources to compare. I'm also expecting from the government to do the same and to check better these information, not only in internet.

L-Which would be more sensitive to that and prefer a better product over a cheaper product. Provide education about that.

F-For me pure greenwashing should be forbidden.

L-As an individual is to boycott the product you don't agree with.

S-I would share my feelings on social medias, explain my relatives also what is greenwashing and try to be more careful about that. But I really think governments have higher power.

# Appendix 4 : North American and European products used

## European products







## North American products

