



## GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF AN ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANING FIRM

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose-** Having started of climate change's impact shaped businesses' production process directly in 21st century. After consumers' attitudes and behaviours had affected marketplace, businesses started to show themselves in aspect of corporate social responsibility. Since 1970s, sustainability has been highlighted as a topic reflected to corporate's politics. Environmental sustainability is a variety of sustainability takes environment on center and keep providing products or services for this perspective. By using of green marketing mix, aim of a lot of brands to get profit take environment on center. From producing of packets to types of electric energy that use in factories, many effects started turning to metaphors with corporates' environmental sustainability politics. In context of ethical production and environmental sustainability, while animal testing is being removed vegan product production is tried to develop. Aim of this research is to understand on how environmental sustainability affects firms'/brands' production process.

**Methodology-** In this research, case study is applied as a types of qualitative research designs. By Turkey's representative of an eco-friendly cleaning firm that from Denmark, semi-structured in depth interview were conducted. Then, the semi-structure in depth interview transcribed and highlighted to topic which turned into codes. The codes were got together and tied to themes.

**Findings-** In result of the analysis reveals that 4 main themes which are 1) Scandinavian Morality and Ethical Production; 2) Green Sustainability; 3) Vegan Product; 4) Organic Product. To the analysis, Scandinavian morality has a big impact on ethical production. The firm's practices are related to green sustainability; almost all production processes become "green". In context of climate change, vegan perspective is rising day by day in the marketplace; producing animal-derived resources evaluate a part of climate change. Organic production is assessing an aspect of ecological life which is related to environmental sustainability.

**Conclusion-** In green marketing perspective, environmental sustainability is one of the most indispensable issue, especially, while climate change gaining visibility. Basic marketing mix turning to "green marketing mix". When brands and firms go green by politically, their production process goes directly green, as well. Climate change could be assessed like ethical issue in marketplace in context of environmental degradation. In addition, firms and brands caring about vegan and organic products, due to green conditions, are being positioned in environmental sustainability can be evaluated as a method of differentiation.

**Keywords:** Ethical production, climate change, green sustainability, nordic countries, vegan product

**JEL Codes:** M31, D21, Q01

### 1. INTRODUCTION

As a result of the growing activist movements since the 1960s, the process of gaining environmental and social rights on the basis of society has been reflected in businesses. The mainstreaming of human, animal and environmental rights has brought ethics to the agenda in the business world. Before the 1960s, business ethics was not a major concern for business people (Lantos, 2001: 597). Apart from human rights, the consideration of animal and environmental rights in the context of social justice has led to a multidimensional evaluation of sustainability. Since the 1970s, the development of environmentally sustainable policies has gained momentum. The prominence of the theme of ecology has also accelerated studies on the environment. Ecology deals with the interconnections between human life and the environment (Humm, 1995: 74). In particular, the fact that businesses focus only on the profit-oriented production process and cause an increase in environmental pollution and deterioration of the ecological order has started to attract the reaction of consumers in the marketplace. Accordingly, businesses have started to organize their standard policies in production processes according to environmentally sustainable policies. Sustainability is linked to world problems such as poverty, limited natural resources, climate change and environmental pollution (Buerke et al., 2017: 960). While sustainable development is being monitored with growing interest by academia, industry representatives and policy makers (Saunila, Ukko, & Rantala, 2018: 631), the

consequences of ethical and sustainable business practices cannot be ignored by both consumers and organizations (Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004: 214).

With postmodernism, the phenomenon of ethics has been compiled (Cherrier, 2007: 321). Ethical issues also include contributing to the solution of social and environmental problems (Kavaliauske and Ubartaite, 2014: 73). Ethical consumption brings an ethical management approach for businesses to protect the environment and evaluate products and services in the context of social responsibility (Oh and Yoon, 2014: 278). Although the issue of sustainability can be addressed in social, economic and environmental contexts, especially after the 2010s, corporate sustainability has come to the fore. The social dimension of sustainability is concerned with the well-being of societies, organizations and people (Saunila et al., 2018: 633), while the environmental dimension of sustainability focuses on the environment. Along with environmental sustainability, the concept of "green marketing" has also emerged. The term "green marketing" has its roots in the concept of ecological marketing and was first discussed in 1975 (Sohail, 2017: 230). As of the 21st century, green marketing has conceptually started to shape the corporate policies of many businesses.

The standard 4P marketing mix of product, price, promotion and place has started to evolve into the "green 4P marketing mix". Green product production has become prominent in export markets, and agreements between countries have directly affected green product production. In order to achieve the goal of cleaner industrial products, it is inevitable to produce green products that do not harm the environment and habitat (Kaur, Gangwar and Dash, 2022: 1). Whether the production locations of products are sustainable or not is of great importance in terms of marketing.

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GAINING VISIBILITY IN THE BUSINESS WORLD**

The economic paradigm is one of the most important factors in the structure of human society, culture and history (Shin et al., 2008: 1823). Although the acceleration of industrial and technological developments has improved the standard of living (Akhtar et al., 2021: 2), sustainability has become a central issue in both the political and economic spheres in the 21st century as an inevitable consequence of the exploitation of the environment since the Industrial Revolution (Graciano et al., 2022: 458). The rise of global concerns about the harmful effects of natural resources used for economic development towards the end of the 1980s was the starting point of sustainable development (Wan, Chan and Huang, 2017: 87). Sustainability values have their roots in voluntary corporate social responsibility and environmental disclosures in the 1970s (Livesey and Kearins, 2002: 234). In the early 1990s, the focus was on the win-win effect in climate policies (Jänicke, 2012: 14). Sustainability is not only an important issue in the context of global politics and macroeconomics, but also in business processes and consumers' way of life (Cantele and Cassia, 2020: 1).

Sustainability has become a topic of interest in academia, business, government and society (Sajjad, Jillani, & Raziq, 2018: 714). If perceived as resource adequacy, advocating sustainability as a philosophical rationality is a social welfare debate (Thompson & Nardone, 1999: 116). This concept, which can be handled in different dimensions, has been examined in environmental, social and economic contexts, and recently, corporate sustainability has come to the forefront. The concept, which is shaped on the basis of the use of resources owned by businesses, is also important in terms of market dynamics. Within the framework of sustainability, it is possible to reconsider goals, objectives, stakeholders, activities, inputs and outputs (Santos-Corrada and Figueroa, 2012: 534). While in the traditional sense, organizations are only responsible for the financial well-being of their customers and investors (Zhou, 2021: 3), focusing only on profit on the basis of sustainable policies can also be evaluated negatively by consumers in the marketplace.

Corporate social responsibility and sustainability are very close in concept and sometimes used interchangeably (Reilly and Larya, 2018: 621). The business world can emphasize environmental sustainability policies in the context of corporate social responsibility. The main factors affecting green sustainability include environmental pollution, the attitudes and behaviors of consumers in the marketplace, economic and political factors in order to take measures against global climate change, the effects of which have become more evident in the 21st century. Organizations have a great impact on all kinds of people around the world (Ludwig and Sassen, 2022: 1). Businesses are moving forward with dynamic business cycles to ensure the continuity of sustainable developments (Putra, Lestari, & Nasionalita, 2017: 234). Since sustainability is considered not only on the basis of environmental but also social and economic issues (Machová et al., 2022: 2), various social issues lead to other motives, and accordingly the presentation of information is significantly different (Fux and Čater, 2018: 30). Businesses share more information about human rights, labor and environmental policies than ever before (Kapstein, 2001: 114).

Consumers are aware of environmental, economic and social events (Niezgoda and Kowalska, 2020: 2) and this can directly affect the functioning of organizations. In order to win consumers, businesses can pay attention to value creation. Corporate social responsibility can be considered as a strategic investment in the creation of value, the organization of competitive advantage and the best performance of businesses (Bacinello, Tontini, & Alberton, 2021: 776). Value creation is seen as the most important critical, objective perspective in the strategic decision-making processes of businesses (Burke & Logsdon, 1996: 496). In the context of value creation, environmental sustainability policies may have meaning for the consumer in the marketplace. In many areas of society, stakeholders expect businesses to fulfill their responsibilities towards society and nature (Wong et al., 2021: 1). Businesses that embrace social responsibility make special efforts to integrate other stakeholders in their policies, decisions and operations (Carroll, 2015: 87). Marketers have the advantage of being leaders

when other stakeholders take social responsibility (Lantos, 2001: 622). Core values are linked to the brand's mission, vision and humanistic organizational values in the internal process of brand building (Kent and Stone, 2007: 532). More and more organizations are involved in social responsibility activities around the world, which leads to more social and environmental information being communicated to the public (Tilt, 2016: 1). As consumer segments have become more differentiated and unique, the marketplace has become more diverse. Economic drivers can be simultaneously cooperative and competitive (Kallmuenzer et al., 2021: 2). Uncertainty and dynamism in competitive markets ensure that organizations continue to seek innovation (Elsharnouby and Elbanna, 2021: 2).

The first wave of post-war involvement in environmental protection took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s and saw a mutual grouping of consumers and those concerned about the environment (Schlegelmilch, Bohlen, & Diamantopoulos, 1996: 37). Concern for the environment influences people's environment-related behavior, especially consumers' purchasing behavior (Chen, Wu, & Jiang, 2022: 1). Simply having a green label is not enough for today's consumers (Baybars & Ventura, 2020: 470). Green consumerism is necessitated by the market where the products are located and manifests itself in products that include eco-labeling and energy efficiency (Akenji, 2014: 15). Green consumerism can be addressed under 2 headings; individuals' attitudes, behaviors and environmental awareness and behavioral intensity, decision-making process and paying to be happy (Sharma, Chen, & Liu, 2020: 922). Businesses are perceived as role models, albeit taking on different identities, by helping other communities, adapting green habits and policies, and connecting stakeholders through business operations (Raza et al., 2021: 1107). Today, associations of consumer groups, socially responsible investors, labor unions, environmentalists and human rights activists - mostly in affluent countries - can be nervous about current changes in the global economy (Kapstein, 2001: 108).

Rapidly advancing climate change in the late 20th and early 21st centuries drew attention to the unnecessary use of fossil fuels by humans (Luke, 2019: 161). Household energy demand is growing worldwide and is a major driver of greenhouse gas emissions (Blumberga et al., 2014: 134). Environmental sustainability cannot succeed without clean energy sources (Vand et al., 2019: 1). The agricultural system relies on natural resources as well as renewable and non-renewable economic investments (Wang, Shen and Zhang, 2014: 510). The main environmental problems are the greenhouse gas effect, air pollution, and human-induced ecological imbalances (Ahmed et al., 2023: 11473). Greenhouse gas emissions contribute to climate change regardless of the location of their source (Vita et al., 2019: 13). Stratospheric ozone depletion and biodiversity loss are prominent issues in the context of climate change (Jabbour and Flachsland, 2017: 193). Carbon tax has started to be used by governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Dong, Liu and Shen, 2019: 193). Consumers can be informed through applications that can measure the carbon footprint in different categories according to water saving, the type of motor vehicles used, and the types of food eaten on a daily basis. Basic water management strategies include water saving devices and wastewater reuse (Mendoza et al., 2023: 494). Water efficiency is a reflection of the effectiveness of water use and the tools used to save water (Balaji, Jiang, & Jha, 2019: 3289).

### **2.1. The "Green" Evolution of Standard Marketing Mixes**

Ethical consumerism points to the social and environmental consequences of global trade (Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004: 214). Green marketing has never played such an important role as it has in the 21st century (Machová et al., 2022: 1). Green marketing is concerned with the protection and promotion of the environment in determining the satisfaction of consumers' needs, wants and desires (Gustiani et al., 2022: 3501). Consumers have the power to reduce or avoid environmental damage by purchasing green products (Lim et al., 2022: 80). The growing customer desire for environmentally friendly products is competing with businesses to switch to environmentally friendly materials (Fauziah and Mulyana, 2018: 171). "Animal welfare" and "eco-friendly" are often used to sell niche products in the marketplace because they carry emotional meaning in social value (Siegford, Powers, & Grimes-Casey, 2008: 380). Second-hand goods, electric cars or, more broadly, products such as coffee, tea and garbage bags can have ethical values ranging from environmentalism and solidarity to fair trade, health and community (Cherrier, 2007: 321).

Adding the use of ethics and social responsibility to products and services as a means of differentiation can be perceived as marketing ethical products (Crane, 1997: 561). Understanding consumers' willingness to use and purchase green products is important for organizations and businesses (Suganda, Theresia, & Wijaya, 2022: 3). In the regulation of contemporary beauty products, the natural "green" cosmetic standard has become a necessity rather than an option for industrial production (Shimul, Cheah, & Khan, 2022: 37). Clean beauty has become the norm as a result of increased demand for safety, transparency and sustainable options (Grappe et al., 2022: 2). Green products can often be sold at higher prices than standard products (Balzarova, 2020: 165).

Consumer behavior is complex; it is influenced by internal factors such as personal values, attitudes, psychological factors as well as external factors such as price and advertising (Gilitwala & Nag, 2021: 444). The main factor that distinguishes the traditional marketing mix from the green marketing mix is consumer preferences for sustainable lifestyles and sustainable consumption habits that are not harmful to the environment (Sohail, 2017: 231). Many businesses have started to shape their processes in the theme of "green" in line with their environmental sustainability policies. Green marketing is also referred to as "sustainable marketing" or "environmentally friendly marketing" and is used in product and service promotion in the

context of environmental advantage and value (Kaur et al., 2022: 1). Green 4P marketing mix is defined as green product, green price, green positioning and green place. Businesses contribute to the development of green products in achieving their environmental sustainable goals (Dangelico, 2016: 560-561). Green products are typically produced in more environmentally friendly processes (Davari & Strutton, 2014: 566). Consumers' actual green purchasing behavior is directly linked to their knowledge of green products and in turn depends on the green marketing efforts undertaken by product providers (Hong and Guo, 2019: 155). Green pricing is one of the most important elements in the marketing of green products. The environmental awareness of the consumer may require evaluation in the consumption of green products and the pricing of green products (Sana, 2020: 1). Green promotion tools are mostly focused on attracting consumers' decisions to "go green" in order to persuade consumers in terms of environmental benefits in order to explain messages (Davari & Strutton, 2014: 566). The availability of green products at the right time, in the right quantity and in the right place by marketers is an element of the green marketing mix as green distribution (Kaur et al., 2022: 4). Green distribution is the distribution of green products from production to consumption by incorporating management tactics (Davari & Strutton, 2014: 567). Supply chain management has started to gain importance in reducing the environmental impact of businesses (Wycherley, 1999: 120).

### **3. SHAPING THE MARKETPLACE OF VEGAN LIFESTYLE IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

The increasing importance of ethical behavior by business owners has been influenced by the rapid changes expected from the performance of organizations in the late 1960s and early 1980s (Cleek & Leonard, 1998: 620). As the concepts of well-being and ethics have gained importance all over the world, they have also started to shape societies. Environmental issues such as climate change, animal welfare, pollution, deforestation and loss of biodiversity are widely discussed, and the consequences of this are creating ecological movements (Wuisan & Februadi, 2022: 35). Both the increasing effects of climate change and the rise of animal rights discourses in society have brought the vegan lifestyle to the fore. Ethical, health, environmental and spiritual motives (Jamieson, 2017: 19), which are at the basis of vegetarian life, can affect the attitudes and behaviors of vegetarian consumers. Participation in the ethical production decision is situational as it is a decision or preference (Bezençon & Bliili, 2010: 1309). In particular, the vegan lifestyle, which has become widely known after the 2010s, has started to shape the marketplace. Although the transformation of the animal rights movement into a way of life is often defined as veganism, some people consider veganism only as a food habit and not as a way of life (Fux & Čater, 2018: 32-33). External factors, including economic, institutional, social and cultural factors, can influence an individual's ethical decision-making (Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018: 420).

The concept of "ethical consumer" can carry various meanings and be subjective for businesses and consumers (Carrigan, Szmigin and Wright, 2004: 401). The increasing visibility of ethical consumption in the marketplace can also be reflected in the policies of businesses. The destructive impact of animal industries on the environment has also found its way into the corporate policies of businesses. Brands have started to participate in vegan certification programs and receive vegan certificates that they produce vegan products. Veganism is a way of life that not only does not consume animal output, but also rejects the use of products that experiment on animals. The fact that a product is plant-based does not directly make it vegan, because some brands in the marketplace do not qualify as vegan products because they experiment on animals, even though they are plant-based.

#### **3.1. Cruelty-Free Product Production**

In the 21st century marketplace, businesses demonstrate their awareness of ethical and human rights issues by increasing their responsibilities through economic, environmental and social activities (Kanji and Chopra, 2010: 119). In addition to human rights, environmental and animal rights have also started to transform societies. Ethics is closely related to values, and value focuses on our actions, the meaning given to our lives, how to be "good", and living together with others (Crony and Anthony, 2011: 539-540). The pursuit of rights for the environment and animals has started to be considered as a social problem and has begun to be included in the concept of justice. Animal rights, like human rights, can be addressed in the context of social justice. Attitude is a form formed in the context of an individual's beliefs and values (Akhtar et al., 2021: 2). With animal rights gaining a place in society, elements that contain elements of violence against animals have started to affect the purchasing behavior and attitudes of consumers.

Experimentation/testing on animals has become very vocal, especially after the 2010s with the proliferation of social media platforms. Compared to traditional media, social media can reach a wider audience at a lower cost and can contribute to raising awareness of social issues, as it allows for higher exposure (Fux & Čater, 2018: 30). Although some people think that animal testing is harmless, animal testing practices have negative impacts on both the environment and animals (Wuisan & Februadi, 2022: 34). The publication of videos on social media platforms about animals being imprisoned in laboratories and experimenting on them has started to affect consumers' attitudes and behaviors. For example, in 2021, the short film "Save Ralph" went viral on social media by visualizing what experimental animals go through in the form of animation.

In the marketplace, cruelty-free and vegan products can cause confusion. The cruelty-free label indicates that the product is not tested on animals (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022: 34). Not all cruelty-free products are vegan products, as some products may contain direct animal outputs even if they are not tested on animals. For example, a soap brand can be included in the

"cruelty-free product" category because it does not test its products containing cow's milk on animals, but it cannot be included in the "vegan product" category because the soap directly contains cow's milk. Every vegan product is also a cruelty-free product because, by its very nature, veganism rejects the consumption of products that do not contain animal output, as well as the consumption of experiments on animals.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study was conducted to explore the green policies in the production processes of a company that does not experiment on animals and carries out sustainable production. Within the scope of the research, the researcher identified the companies engaged in vegan production and reached the relevant company in this study. A semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted with the Turkish representative of the Denmark-based company through an online platform. Before the interview was conducted, the participant was informed that a voice recording device would be used during the interview. After the semi-structured in-depth interview, the audio recording was transcribed. During the transcription process, the researcher listened to the recording over and over again for the correct transfer of each word. After the transcription process was completed, the researcher sent the written version of the interview to the participant. Descriptive analysis technique was used in the research. The process proceeded as follows; the end of the in-depth interview, the transcription of the audio-recorded interview, coding and finally transforming the codes into themes. Criterion sampling method, which is a type of purposive sampling, was applied in the study. Criterion sampling is the consideration of all conditions that meet predetermined criteria (Yağar & Dökme, 2018: 6). As a research constraint, there is only one participant in this study because there are only a limited number of brands that have an environmentally friendly production process abroad and also sell their products in Turkey. In this context, only one brand's representative in Turkey was reached. In terms of future studies, more comprehensive studies can be conducted with the representatives of brands that only have environmentally friendly production processes by ensuring participant diversity.

##### **4.1. Aim of the Study**

Whether environmental sustainability is practiced as greenwashing or actually internalized as corporate policy can directly affect consumers' attitudes and behaviors. Attitudes can be shaped positively or negatively on a topic or an object and are linked to beliefs (Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018: 422). Moral obligations can serve as a link between decision-making and mental practices (Akhtar et al., 2021: 3). In this study, the focus is on exploring the environmental sensitivity of a company that determines environmental sustainability as a corporate policy in its production processes. This study was carried out in order to make sense of the sensitivity of an organization that adopts environmental sustainability to the environment in its production processes.

##### **4.2. Research Model and Sample Selection**

In this study, case study research, a type of qualitative research method, was applied. Criterion sampling, one of the types of purposive sampling, was used as a research technique in this study. In this context, the number of brands that have only environmentally friendly production processes abroad and also sell their products in the Turkish market is limited. In this context, only one brand's representative in Turkey was reached. For the research, a semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted with the Turkish representative of a Danish detergent brand with environmentally friendly production. The prominent factor in the selection of the relevant brand was the brand shares that they care about the environment as a corporate policy, and the fact that they do not experiment on animals and produce vegan products was another factor.

#### **5. FINDINGS**

The research was evaluated in terms of understanding how organizations can reflect environmental sustainability practices to their production processes. This study was conducted with the research question "What are the production policies adopted by organizations in their environmental sustainability policies?". The elaboration of the research question, what kind of a framework is used in terms of the concept, leads to the collection of data and the appropriate evaluation of the analysis (Sofaer, 2002: 334). The resulting data were named according to appropriate themes and explained and interpreted with the support of the literature. In the creation of themes, the topics that are related to each other were connected in the main theme and the subheadings of the theme were created. The division of themes into subheadings was done to facilitate the comprehensibility of the subject.

##### **5.1. Scandinavian Morality and Ethical Production**

Ethical judgment is the attitudinal development that occurs as a result of the determination of positive or negative evaluations in human behavior in moral standards (Alsaad, 2021: 1). Ethical consumption can lead to the transformation of organizations and in this context, there may be a relationship between corporate social responsibility and ethical consumption. The rising social consciousness in the 1960s brought the test of business behavior and various situations to corporate social responsibility (Carroll, 2015: 87-88). While the 1960s was the period in which unstoppable social movements, drawn on a large scale in terms of business and society relations, shaped social changes (Carroll, 2021: 1259), the concept of business

ethics rose rapidly and gained success after the 1980s (Carroll, 2021: 1262). The purchase decision is the process by which consumers define their needs, identify options and choose the product and brand (Gustiani et al., 2022: 3503). Ethics is concerned with choices and judgments about acceptable standards of conduct that guide individuals and groups (Erundu, Sharland, & Okpara, 2004: 350). The importance of the development of ethical values in businesses leads to the establishment or promotion of ethical standards in the daily actions of these businesses (Chun et al., 2013: 854). The code of ethics draws attention to internal rules for businesses and is a very important tool that improves the level of compliance with the rules in the legal order (Vitolla et al., 2021: 1). Codes of ethics are supported by ethical statements, value statements, ethical principles, mission and vision statements (Pollach, 2003: 283). The code of ethics covers the responsibilities, principles, values and norms of the organization (Donker, Poff, & Zahir, 2008: 527). While the corporate policies of the business directly affect the production process, the policies of the country where the business is located can also shape the production process. The link between environmental issues and business practices is more developed in developed countries, both in terms of public concern and governments (Lita et al., 2014: 262). The marketing of country names can differentiate many product or service options. The fact that Denmark is a Scandinavian country and that Scandinavian countries have a positive image around the world can directly shape the strategies of brands.

*"...we produce really clean products. In other words, we produce products that are free of any fraud and scrap, and thus we give confidence to our customers...Now, when you say "Scandinavian country", no matter which country, no matter which product, people in all around the world trust it. Why do they trust? Because of this ethic. And this is our biggest difference...we don't cheat, we don't scrap, of course, when I say "we don't" here, if you look at the products, there are already eco certificates, vegan standard, the standard that the bottles are recycled, the standard that the boxes are made from controlled cut trees or recycled paper...all of the standards are already there. In other words, we don't just say "We produce clean" and say "Buy this product"... You have to trust the certificate you receive. That's why, for example, our certificates are the most honest, the highest quality certificates; but we don't say "we got the certificate, we have a certificate anyway, let it say this on the outside of the certificate, let it say that on the inside"... When that man sees the inscription "Made in Denmark", he doesn't even hesitate. That trust is a very different thing... Look at it this way; Denmark has such a feature, I mean, this should not be considered only as a company, I mean, whether it is Denmark or other Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Norway, we went to Denmark during the contract stages, while we were chatting with the officials of the company there, the official of the company said, "We are the biggest company in Denmark in this regard. Since we produce an environmentally friendly, clean product, the country and the state provide great support and incentives, but they also inspect it very strictly. Do you know why it inspects this? It's not because we cheat or not, we wouldn't do such a thing anyway, but it inspects to prevent damage to the name of Denmark, the name of the country." This is the critical point of the issue. Denmark is Denmark; that's why people who know Denmark, or the culture there, or the standards there, already look at it, and when they see the words "Made in Denmark", they buy it without even looking at it...He said that Danish brands are not at the forefront as a brand, but as a state...for example, what you call "LEGO" is also of Danish origin. Why do you trust LEGO? You trust LEGO not because it is LEGO, but because it is Danish. In other words, the country is in the foreground, the product is in the background. And in order to ensure this, people actually inspect it, like I said, people have no intention of cheating, but if they do, they know the punishment they will face... The most distinguishing feature is trust, nothing else. After all, I'm telling you, you're not making a space shuttle, that's a different thing, you're making detergent, so your difference should be these kinds of things. I mean, when people buy it, they shouldn't really think, "Is there this, is there that, is there this?" That's what we are trying to ensure, we are trying to establish this... now it's like this; you are a company that produces a chemical product, you see that there is such a market here, "Let's produce this, let's produce this next to it"...it is not a subsidiary, it is an organization established for a direct purpose. Therefore, this is our aim, to leave a decent world for our children and future generations. In the meantime, of course, you are doing business, you will make money...there is nothing more natural than that. I mean, but the work you do gives you peace of mind... but of course, commercially, we want it to sell more, that's the essence of it... Now go to Denmark or something like that, they have done such things that it's mind-boggling, you know those wind turbines in the middle of the sea. Everywhere, mountains, stones, wind energy. They are investing in these. They are really trying to do work at very high standards in very empty spots...now, when the man is establishing this, whether he is Danish or German, I mean, you look at the companies that have grown up with that culture, the man enters these businesses with the foresight of 20 years, 30 years, 50 years ahead. He says, "Look, the world has reached the end of its life in the chemical sense, the situation is bad. There is global warming. There is this and that, we are eating poisonous things, we need to put a stop to this." And he sets out with this consciousness. So that is the first starting consciousness here, making money is secondary. Therefore, you look and see that the country you call Germany has a 500-year-old company. The country you call Denmark has a 300-year-old company. I mean, it was established 300 years ago, 500 years ago, and it is still standing. Because they do the right job. That's the thing... As I said, what I would add is the issue of morality. That is the most important thing. Of course, you will also trust the standards, so there is nothing to do... But there, that company that gives that certificate should really be auditing." [Iliker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

## 5.2. Green Sustainability

As the effects of climate change are becoming more evident day by day, the attitudes and behaviors of consumers in the marketplace have also begun to change. With the further damage to the ecological environment in the 1990s, consumers'

development of environmental protection and sustainability has increased and the concept of green consumption has become visible (Wang et al., 2022: 2). Although the production systems developed with the Industrial Revolution encouraged consumers to consume more, differentiation in consumption practices has started, especially with the development of social media. One of the most important and complex questions in the concept of sustainable development is the successful interaction between economic development and the environment (Juknys, Liobikiene, & Dagiliute, 2014: 54). The visibility of a more environmentally friendly form of consumption in the marketplace has led businesses to change their corporate policies. The phenomenon of "consuming more" is beginning to be replaced by the phenomenon of "consuming greener". The addition of recycled production techniques to production processes is also reflected in labeling systems. Green growth affects not only the quality of growth but also the entire production (Jänicke, 2012: 14).

*"...[Participant says the name of an environmentally friendly cleaning company] that's already one of the purposes of its establishment... to oppose climate change. Because if you produce naturally, I mean, it doesn't matter if it's detergent, tomatoes, I don't know, textiles. If you are doing something natural, it means you are already against it, you are saying "protest". Again (Participant says the name of an environmentally friendly cleaning company here), of course, being Denmark, those Scandinavian countries have a standard structure above Europe... I mean, people's values are very different. Therefore, Denmark is above all these, let me tell you that. I mean really above them, as a country and so on. Now (The participant here says the name of an environmentally friendly cleaning company) has the following feature; for one thing, the content of the products it produces is completely natural, and this is enough in itself. Plus, the plastics used in the packaging are completely recycled plastics, it is an environmentally friendly product, in that sense, that is, in terms of waste, it recollects the discarded products and brings them back to the economy, brings them to the environment, in that sense." [İlker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

Business practices combined with green marketing support sustainable development (Zaremozhzabieh et al., 2021: 732). With the establishment of an environmental system and consumers' awareness of green consumption, business decision-makers pay attention to the production and marketing processes of green products (Wann et al., 2022: 2). When consumers prefer to purchase green electricity, wind energy can stand out from an environmental perspective (Ek, 2005: 1678). Wind energy is defined as one of the cleanest energy sources (Vand et al., 2019: 7). The use of wind turbines as a type of energy production has become prominent in the brand promotion of many businesses.

*"The electricity used in production is entirely clean energy obtained from wind energy, which is another thing. As I said, these are things with very high standards...if you look at the level of education, people in Europe now go to the extent of education and awareness, of course the budget should also allow; but generally comfortable people go and look at those logos on the products, look at the values written on the packaging, and buy accordingly. Therefore, in that sense, our environmentalist approach is very important. We look at recycled plastic, its content is completely natural, its electricity is produced in such a way, it is produced in such a way, so these (Participant says the name of an environmentally friendly cleaning company here) are products that help the environment as much as they can." [İlker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

Each organism in the ecosystem is interconnected and significantly affects the well-being of the environment (Akhtar et al., 2021: 3). In studies conducted in the green context, consumers' values and beliefs as well as their green behaviors are very important (Jeong et al., 2014: 11). Environmental image is related to how concerned consumers are about environmental issues (Ahmed et al., 2023: 11476). Environmental knowledge and awareness directly affect consumers' attitude towards green products (Zaremozhzabieh et al., 2021: 734). Consumers with environmental awareness may tend to have altruistic motivation in the context of green values (Jeong et al., 2014: 11). The prominence of products with their environmental image can make a difference in terms of differentiation of brands. Brands can support the sustainable production process at the point where they attach importance to production quality as well as environmentally friendly production processes.

*"...we produce sustainably sourced products...all of our ingredients are natural. Now, in order for it to be natural, it is already a naturalness based on agriculture because it is of plant origin. Look, the majority of the content used by companies producing such products is sugar beet. Now, in order to respond to such a production, such a pen, beet fields need to increase, it is that clear. The raw material of what you call "SLS" in natural products is coconut. Now, coconut trees need to grow in order to meet this demand. Likewise, the fragrance you smell is of herbal origin; it comes from lavender, I don't know, orange, eucalyptus. These need to multiply in order to meet the demand. Therefore, the product itself already contributes to the sustainability of that ecological system. Plus, the electricity you use is clean energy, so what it does is it prevents the consumption of fossil fuels. What does it do, like obtaining it from the wind. That's why we are directly involved in this business. Likewise, our packaging, whether it's labeling or boxes, is produced from controlled cut trees or recycled paper that are produced just for this job. What does this do? It causes the consumption of existing forests to decrease... Moreover, of course, people don't pay much attention to these; but now our products are really... products that do business. Now, what is a product that works? Now, the surface that you clean in one spraying, if a commercially immoral manufacturer is doing it, you clean it in 10 sprayings with the product of another brand. Your product runs out in 3 months, the other product runs out in 1 month. After 1 month, they buy 1 more product, after 1 month, they buy 1 more product. So they inevitably have a negative impact on this ecological balance." [İlker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

### 5.3. Vegan Products

Production is a process that can also directly affect the consumer. Prioritizing ethical values in the production process can directly affect the existence of a business in the marketplace. When a belief is adopted personally, the individual performs his/her actions in line with this belief (Ojo et al., 2019: 249). The theme of "ecology", which has become prominent in the corporate policies of businesses, can also be reflected in production processes. In particular, the ethical and environmentalist motives of veganism can be directly involved in business policies. Individual responsibility also extends to informed consumers with well-developed decision-making mechanisms (Zaremozhzabieh et al., 2021: 734). Ethical consumption is a growing phenomenon and can be embedded in many ethical business approaches such as social justice, environmental and animal welfare (Annunziata et al., 2011: 520). Animal outputs from animal farms can be perceived as valuable by people, and the pollution generated in these places has negative impacts on human health and the environment in which people live (Thompson and Nardone, 1999: 116). Since a brand's products must also be free of animal experiments in order to be vegan, some organizations can give the vegan logo in such a way that the logo of their organization is also visible through their own audits. Since the fact that the content of a product is only herbal does not mean that the product can be considered "vegan", some brands can be audited by organizations that can issue vegan certificates.

*"...Now trade is getting so difficult that you try to earn something by making a difference... but in the end, there is also trade in the back dimension of the business. You are doing trade. Now someone says "My product cleans very well", someone says "My product is organic", someone says "My product is natural", someone says "I produce cruelty-free vegan products". So in that sense, in my opinion, veganism will be a very big, how can I put it to you, event in the future, because the world is already moving towards veganism. Now, in such a trend, of course, our production of vegan products makes a difference... Now, there are so many product productions that each product cannot keep up with the production. Therefore, new companies, new organizations are emerging... But the Vegan Society, that logo you see on our products is the most valuable logo, I mean, it is the biggest organization, the most valuable organization that really tests with very strict rules, inspects with very strict rules... so it's not just about naturalness, veganism, this and that. There is also the commercial dimension. Now, what the man is doing is like this, they all have a cost, now getting that vegan certificate is a matter of money, no matter what you do. The Vegan Society says, "I will give you this logo, I will check it thoroughly. My right is - for example - 100 liras. The man says, "Adam, we don't have 100 liras to pay for this." He starts researching. Of course, this leads to sub-segments. Another vegan certification company says, "We can give it for 70 liras." That's why new sub-firms are emerging, after all, the business is commercial, I mean, those people also earn money, no one is doing this for charity. Therefore, our company strategy, our idea is to put the best possible logos and the best certificates on the product. Eco-Cert, which is one of the most stringent inspection companies, is already at the top. Vegan (meaning Vegan Society) is the same way. So for example, when we look at our products, you can see the right logos." [Ilker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

### 5.4. Organic Products

Green products do not pollute the environment and do not harm natural resources, but are recyclable and save energy (Wang et al., 2022: 2). Sustainability and organic production are highly interrelated (Browne et al., 2000: 71). Consumers can make decisions on the purchase of organic products in a broad framework such as health, environment, ethics and quality (Annunziata et al., 2011: 521). The growing interest in organic, ethical production and trade is influenced by consumer and business motivators (Browne et al., 2000: 70). Ethical products are often referred to as "organic products" because the word "organic" is perceived by many as linked to social and environmental phenomena (Kavaliauske & Ubartaite, 2014: 73). Cooperation with relevant certification firms in terms of the inspection of organic products can affect the image of brands in front of consumers. The fact that organic production is seen as a part of ecological life may lead businesses to attach importance to the production of organic products.

*"...(for the brand's) organic part is of 2 types; one organic, one natural. Now (Participant says the name of an environmentally friendly cleaning company here), in the product range, there is a completely natural group, that is, not in the sense of organic, the lane of organic is a little different, there is also a completely natural group, also Eco-Cert certified. There is also an Eco-Cert certified organic group, so we produce 2 types of products. But of course, the natural one also has criteria stemming from Eco-Cert and the Danish government's own laws and rules. In other words, it is natural, but it does not contain GMOs, it is natural, but it has to meet the criteria of so and so. Therefore, we produce 2 kinds of products, both natural and organic." [Ilker, Turkey Representative of an Eco-friendly Cleaning Firm]*

## 6. CONCLUSION

The rapid globalization of the world since the 1970s has led to the removal of many borders. With mass production, supporting excessive consumption by putting the consumer at the center has started to harm the environment. The evaluation of environmental rights in the context of social justice has caused consumers in the marketplace to question the corporate policies of businesses. The environmental dimension of sustainability has started to be considered as a necessity for many companies or brands in the 21st century. The concept of "green marketing" supported by environmental sustainability has tried to emphasize the differentiation process by many businesses or brands. The fact that being green in



the marketplace has begun to be defined as differentiation can lead to a green state of competition. Ethical and sustainable business practices are important for competitive advantage in terms of consumer value and consumer trust (Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004: 214). The development of environmental justice awareness has also started to highlighted itself in green sustainability projects. In particular, with the 21st century, global climate change has become more evident and has started to affect the attitudes and behaviors of consumers in the marketplace towards businesses.

With the rise of ethical consumerism, consumers want ethical values to be included in the production process in their purchasing decisions (Bezençon & Blili, 2010: 1306). Issues such as global warming and environmental pollution have started to attract attention all over the world (Dong et al., 2019: 193). In the green purchasing process, consumers' decision-making process is affected by the interaction of the physical and social environment and external factors (Kim & Rha, 2014: 46). In the new century, humanity's main struggle is to find fair and sustainable production, consumption and living (Narimanfar & Nezhad, 2022). In addition to human rights, animal rights and environmentally sensitive businesses have come to the forefront. Organizations should identify the sources of environmental problems and translate their operational activities according to these problems (Mustapha, Manan, & Alwi, 2017: 160). Many businesses emphasize green marketing interactions through environmentally friendly production and social issues (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020: 2). The development of green production and systems depends on consumers' interest in environmentally friendly products or green consumer behavior (Samarasinghe, 2015: 1461). More and more organizations are involved in corporate social responsibility activities around the world, and as a result, more social and environmental information is being communicated (Tilt, 2016: 1). Promoting green sustainability allows for the recognition of ecological consequences such as damage to the ozone layer, loss of biodiversity, global warming, deforestation and erosion (Rusyani, Lavuri, & Gunardi, 2021: 1).

In this study, qualitative research method was applied and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the Turkish representative of a Danish environmentally friendly cleaning company. The voice recording program of the phone was used for the interview and the participant's consent was obtained before the interview started. The interviews were linked to codes after the transcription process and themes were created by combining the codes. In the context of the analysis, it was concluded that the cultural structure of Denmark, the country of origin of the relevant brand, directly affects the production process. In Scandinavian countries, respect for the environment is reflected in production processes with state support. Scandinavian morality has shaped the production process and ensured that environmental sustainability is addressed in the context of ethical production. In the context of both animal rights and environmental rights, the vegan lifestyle has started to shape the production processes of businesses. Apart from animal rights, the environmental damage of animal output production has started to lead to the veganization of production processes. The rise of green sustainability in organizations directly affects the market structure. The importance of green marketing has gained visibility as a result of the damage to natural resources caused by consumption, climate change, air pollution and increased waste (Gustiani et al., 2022: 3501). The use of clean energy sources and the importance given to recycling the plastic used in the production of products can create value in terms of the applicability of green sustainable policies. The evaluation of organic production as ecological may allow brands to open organic product lines. The fact that organic production is audited by certification organizations and that brands receive these certificates may be linked to corporate image.

Governments, non-profit organizations and businesses must work together and address these environmental issues, as the social and environmental challenges are huge and complex (Halkos and Nomikos, 2021: 115). Organizations around the world need to be brought to sustainable maturity at both micro and macro levels as they strive to promote environmentally friendly systems and practices (Opatha and Kottawatta, 2020: 1). An important goal is how politicians and marketers can better motivate consumers towards responsible and sustainable development (Buerke et al., 2017: 965). Adopting environmentally sustainable policies and shaping production processes in this direction can support brands' differentiation processes as well as their image. The fact that consumers who are sensitive about the environment follow the production processes of brands can also shape the business policies of brands. Supporting the green status in production processes by the necessary certification organizations can eliminate contradictory situations in terms of the image of brands in the marketplace. The fact that businesses are audited by certification organizations that have the authority to audit the relevant production processes such as vegan production or organic products can also have an impact on trust in the brand or company. The realization of green marketing practices in accordance with environmental sustainability policies can also stand out in the value of the brand for the consumer.

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