02.02.21, Johannesburg 13h00

**Two Sides global Anti-Greenwash Campaign: 710 Companies Removed Misleading Anti-paper Statements**

***Since 2010, the Two Sides campaign has successfully influenced the change or removal of misleading environmental claims by more than 700 organisations, including many of the world’s largest corporations.***

With huge pressures on economies, banks, telecom providers, utility companies and even governmental organisations are increasingly focused on switching their customers from paper to digital services to cut costs. All too often their customer communications attempt to mask these cost-saving efforts, justifying the switch with unfounded environmental marketing appeals such as “Go Green – Go Paperless” and “Choose e-billing and help save a tree.”

“Not only are these greenwash claims in breach of established environmental marketing rules, but they are hugely damaging to an industry which has a solid and continually improving environmental record,” says Two Sides Country Manager Deon Joubert. “Far from ‘saving trees,’ a healthy market for forest products such as paper encourages the long-term growth of forests through sustainable forest management. Many of the organisations we engage are always surprised to learn that managed forests have actually been growing rather than declining.”

Globally in 2020, Two Sides engaged 320 organisations making misleading statements about paper. So far, 134 of them have removed such statements from their communications and Two Sides continues to engage the remaining organisations. The organisations were throughout Europe, North and South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. This brings the total to 710 companies that have removed misleading greenwashing statements since the campaign began in 2010.

In 2020, in Europe, 106 companies removed unsubstantiated claims about paper, including EDF energy, Eon, Marks and Spencer, Sparkasse, Volksbank-Raiffeisenbank, BHV/Le Marais and SNCF.

Greenwashing is a serious issue for our sector, and we have seen a worrying increase driven by current economic pressures. Because of the huge reach of some of these greenwashing organisations, their unsubstantiated claims have a damaging effect on consumer perceptions of paper and threaten a sector which employs over 165 000 people in many businesses in South Africa. This is why the Anti-greenwash Campaign continues to be a priority for Two Sides, and we will continue to urge companies to reject the use of unsubstantiated and misleading environmental claims about going paperless in all of their communications.

“We are grateful for the cooperation of the hundreds of organisations that have changed or eliminated greenwashing claims from their messaging, and we are also thankful for the many industry stakeholders and members of the public who send Two Sides examples of greenwash,” Jonathan Tame, Managing Director Two Sides concludes.

Two Sides continues to actively challenge major organisations found to be misleading consumers by using environmental claims about the use of paper. Please send any instances of greenwash to greenwash@twosides.info.

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

**About Two Sides**

Two Sides is a not for profit, global initiative promoting the unique sustainable and attractive attributes of print, paper and paper packaging. Two Sides’ members span the entire print, paper and paper packaging value chain including: forestry, pulp, paper, packaging, inks and chemicals, finishing, publishing, printing, envelopes and postal operators.

For more information about the anti-greenwash campaign, or to learn more about Two Sides, please contact us:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Name** | **Email** |
| Australia and New Zealand | Kellie Northwood | kellie@thermc.com.au  |
| Austria | Patrick Mader | pm@twosides.info  |
| Brazil | Fabio Arruda Mortara | fam@twosides.org.br  |
| France | Jan Le Moux | jlm@twosides.info  |
| Germany | Anne-Katrin Kohlmorgen | akk@twosides.info  |
| Italy | Massimo Ramunni | italy@twosides.info  |
| Nordics | Magnus Thorkildsen | nordic@twosides.info  |
| North America | Kathi Rowzie | info@twosidesna.org |
| South Africa | Deon Joubert | dj@za.twosides.info  |
| UK | Jonathan Tame | jpt@twosides.info  |