

GREENWASHING

New investments in coal, oil and gas are an existential threat. Yet the fossil fuel and the plastics industries (which are derived from fossil fuels) deceive us about how they contribute to the climate crisis and create the global waste emergency. They use a misleading practice known as “greenwashing” to give the illusion of taking responsible actions by obscuring the truth about the environmental and health impacts of their products.



The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment and the Centre for Climate Integrity provide disturbing posts highlighting several greenwashing examples [available on their website](#).

Watch for deceptive practices such as:

- ▷ Telling partial truths (emphasizing one tiny green attribute when everything else is dirty)
- ▷ Promoting carbon-offsets (the climate benefits of off-sets are often ambiguous or overstated)
- ▷ Promoting petro science fiction (using “aspirational” technologies such as carbon capture to secure billions in subsidies from governments for unproven technologies)

For example, [Pathways Alliance](#), an alliance of Canada’s largest oil sands (tar sands) companies, advertise that they are working together to address climate change. The primary technology they are promoting is carbon capture and storage, which is of limited use now and not expected to be scalable until well past 2030. We need to shift much more quickly from fossil fuel use to keep global warming below catastrophic levels within this decade. ([Learn more.](#)) In fact, oil-sands emissions are growing. Over its life-cycle (including extraction, refining and use), oil from tar sands can release three times as much greenhouse gas emissions as conventional oil. In addition, the huge tailings ponds, in which residue from the extraction process is stored, have leaked, raising concerns, in particular, for the health of Indigenous peoples living downstream. ([Learn more.](#))

Other resources:

- Earth.org “[What is greenwashing?](#)”
- More re carbon-offsets: “[The problem with carbon off-sets.](#)”