

# Sustainability Communication by Patagonia for Green Economic Growth

Rafinita Aditia, Phan Nhan Trung, Nuriah Alfisyahri

Universitas Bengkulu

Jl. WR. Supratman, Kandang Limun, Bengkulu 38371, Indonesia

Email: raditia@unib.ac.id

DOI: 10.24002/jik.v22i2.10642

Submitted: January 2025

Reviewed: July 2025

Accepted: December 2025

**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the 1% for the Planet campaign by Patagonia in encouraging green economic growth through sustainability communication narratives. Through a qualitative method with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework, this study evaluates the visual and textual elements of Patagonia's campaign materials. The results of the analysis show that Patagonia effectively builds a sustainability narrative that influences consumer behavior and strengthens the company's image of responsibility. This finding confirms that sustainable narrative-based communication plays a strategic role in directing consumption towards more responsible practices.

**Keywords:** CSR, green economy, Patagonia, semiotics, sustainability communication

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kampanye 1% untuk planet oleh Patagonia dalam mendorong pertumbuhan ekonomi hijau melalui narasi komunikasi berkelanjutan. Melalui metode kualitatif dan kerangka semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce, studi ini mengevaluasi elemen visual dan tekstual dari materi kampanye Patagonia. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa Patagonia secara efektif membangun narasi keberlanjutan yang memengaruhi perilaku konsumen dan memperkuat citra tanggung jawab perusahaan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa komunikasi berbasis narasi berkelanjutan berperan strategis dalam mengarahkan konsumsi menuju praktik yang lebih bertanggung jawab.

**Kata Kunci:** CSR, ekonomi hijau, komunikasi keberlanjutan, Patagonia, semiotika

The international community has faced an increasingly urgent set of challenges related to climate change in recent decades, including environmental degradation and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. The issue has transcended local boundaries, evolving into a global crisis that profoundly affects the livelihoods of millions of people worldwide (Lamb et al., 2021, p. 4). According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2023), the global average temperature has increased by about 1.1 degrees Celsius since the industrial era

began. This rise signals significant changes in meteorological patterns, including more frequent and severe natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, and wildfires (Arianto & Rani, 2024, p. 447). Likewise, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported that 2022 was among the five warmest years on record, with global economic losses from weather-related disasters totaling 313 billion US dollars (Milanesi, Kyrdoda, & Runfola, 2022, p. 108).

Projections from scientists suggest that if greenhouse gas emissions are not immediately controlled, global average temperatures could rise by up to 2.7 degrees Celsius by the end of the century (Ourahmoune, Binninger, & Robert, 2014, p. 313). Such a rise could accelerate the melting of Arctic ice, raising sea levels by as much as one meter by 2100. Economic sectors are also under threat, especially the agricultural sector, which depends on stable weather patterns (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p. 547). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reports that changing rainfall patterns and increasing temperatures could lead to a drop in crop yields of up to thirty percent in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050, increasing global food insecurity (Suparjo, Darma, Kurniadin, Kasuma, & Priyagus, 2021, p. 396).

Beyond the economy, climate change also poses severe threats to human health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 250,000 additional deaths each year could occur between 2030 and 2050 from diseases associated with extreme weather, such as malaria, diarrhea, malnutrition, and heat waves (Lugten & Hariharan, 2022, p. 435). Increased air pollution from burning fossil fuels contributes to seven million premature deaths each year worldwide (Prodanovska-Poposka, 2024, p. 475). Climate change also weakens social and economic resilience, worsening conditions in vulnerable communities. With such extensive and complex impacts, climate change is becoming a multidimensional

threat that requires serious attention from various parties. Global efforts such as the 2015 Paris Agreement reflect this commitment, aiming to limit global temperature increases to well below two degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius (Friedline, Chen, & Morrow, 2021, p. 40). Even so, the Emissions Gap Report 2023 of the UN Environment Programme shows that the world is still far from the expected path, with global carbon emissions in 2022 reaching 40.6 billion tons, a record high throughout history (Wirba, 2024, p. 7429).

The complexity of this issue resulted in an urgent need to adopt new, more sustainable, and innovative approaches. One solution that is increasingly gaining attention is the implementation of the green economy. The green economy is defined as an economic system that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities (UN Environment Programme, 2025). In simpler terms, it is an economy that grows while protecting the planet. In this model, investment in renewable energy, resource efficiency, and good waste management are top priorities (Illahi & Aditia, 2022, p. 77). By integrating sustainability principles into business practice and public policy, the green economy has the potential to create new jobs, foster innovation, and ensure that natural resources can be used responsibly for future generations. The transition to a sustainable economy is therefore not merely an alternative but an essential

strategy to address global challenges and ensure ecosystem sustainability. The private sector plays a vital role in advancing this agenda (Bilandzic & Kalch, 2021, p. 125). Companies are expected to function not only as economic entities but also as proactive agents of change through sustainable innovation, verifiable social responsibility, and transparent communication regarding their sustainability efforts.

A notable example of this phenomenon is Patagonia, an outdoor clothing company that emerged in the United States (US) and has gained widespread recognition as a pioneer in sustainable business methodology. Founded in 1973, Patagonia not only emphasizes the creation of high-quality products that meet consumer demands but also demonstrates a deep commitment to ecological conservation. The organization integrates sustainability principles into every aspect of its operations, starting from sourcing environmentally friendly raw materials to maintaining ethical production standards (Milanesi, Kyrdoda, & Runfola, 2022, p. 104). Patagonia is actively involved in promoting various environmental and social initiatives, including campaigns aimed at preserving natural ecosystems and advocacy efforts addressing climate change. By adopting this comprehensive strategy, Patagonia not only enhances the green economy but also motivates other companies to emulate its model, thus illustrating that sustainability and economic success can coexist synergistically (Huang, Lu, & Tang, 2024, h. 200).

Since 1985, Patagonia has demonstrated a strong commitment to environmental sustainability through its participation in the 1% for the Planet campaign. The initiative aims to allocate one percent of its total sales to support efforts for the preservation and restoration of the natural environment around the world. To date, Patagonia has contributed more than 140 million US dollars, both in cash and in donations of goods, to various environmental organizations operating at the grassroots level (Kerschbaum & Peschl, 2023, p. 397). In 2002, Patagonia's founder, Yvon Chouinard, along with Craig Mathews, owner of Blue Ribbon Flies, co-founded the non-profit 1% for the Planet network to encourage other businesses to participate in environmental preservation efforts (Huang, Lu, & Tang, 2024, p. 199). Today, the alliance connects more than 4,800 member companies across 110 countries, collectively contributing over 672 million US dollars to more than 7,000 environmental organizations worldwide. The 1% for the Planet initiative provides a powerful and authentic example of sustainability storytelling that can inspire widespread participation and collective environmental action. Such communication serves not only to inform but also to build trust, foster collaboration, and strengthen brand credibility.

Previous research has peeled the various aspects of sustainability communication in considerable depth. For example, the study conducted by Herrick and Pratt (2013) highlights the effective

narratives that can awaken environmental awareness among young consumers, known as the generation that is highly sensitive to environmental issues. On the other hand, research by Veland et al. (2018) examines the effectiveness of digital campaigns in promoting green economic practices, showing that digital platforms can be a very effective channel for disseminating sustainability messages. Many studies address aspects of sustainability communication in general. Still, those that specifically analyze the sustainability communication narratives from initiatives, such as the 1% for the Planet, and their impact on green economic growth are still very limited. This suggests a gap in the literature that needs to be filled, particularly in understanding the relationship between strong narratives and their impact on more sustainable economic behavior.

The study aims to explore the role of the 1% for the Planet narrative in driving green economic growth. Unlike previous studies that have tended to focus on operational aspects or the direct impact of various sustainability initiatives, this study takes a more holistic approach by examining communication as a strategic tool that has the potential to influence societal behavior. Communication serves not only as a means of information delivery but also as a bridge to build a strong network of collaboration among various stakeholders, including businesses, local communities, and non-governmental organizations. Focusing on the 1% for the Planet program, the study aims to analyze the communication

narrative built by Patagonia through the 1% for the Planet campaign plays a role in promoting sustainability and driving green economic growth in global markets.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a semiotic analysis approach to examine the visual and verbal elements embedded in Patagonia's 1% for the Planet campaign. The semiotic approach is used to uncover deeper meanings expressed through symbols, texts, and images, and to understand how these elements construct Patagonia's sustainability narrative (Palinoan, Suma, Tandiangga, & Dama, 2024, h. 358). The research was conducted in a virtual environment, drawing on campaign materials published across Patagonia's official website, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and other relevant digital platforms that consistently represent the company's sustainability communication.

To ensure analytical clarity, the selection of campaign materials followed explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Materials were included if they explicitly featured the 1% for the Planet campaign, contained identifiable sustainability messages, and were published between January 2024 and December 2024. Conversely, content unrelated to sustainability narratives, third-party user-generated posts, and materials lacking sufficient visual clarity were excluded. Using these criteria, a corpus of thirty-five items consisting of images, website

banners, captions, and segments of official video footage was selected for analysis.

The unit of analysis in this study is individual visual–textual communication items, including still images, screenshot frames from official videos, website visuals, and accompanying written narratives. These items were analyzed as integrated semiotic entities, consisting of a representamen, an interpretant, and an object. Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic sign model guided the analytical process. The representamen refers to the physical form of the signs, such as the 1% for the Planet logo, natural landscape visuals, and short video scenes depicting recycling or repair processes. The interpretant concerns the meanings and emotional responses that audiences construct, including notions of environmental responsibility, admiration for ethical production, and recognition of sustainability values (Afriyanto et al., 2024, p. 936). The object refers to broader concepts signified by the signs, such as corporate responsibility, ecological preservation, and climate action. To visually support the explanation of the triadic model, which introduces representamen, interpretant, and object, ensuring that readers can visually connect the theoretical model with the described analytical framework.

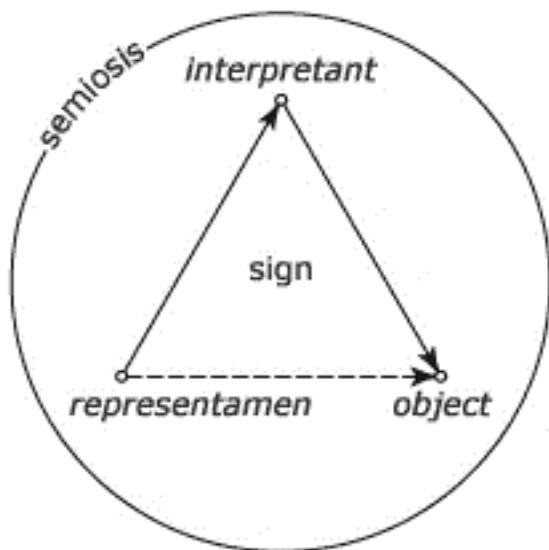


Figure 1 Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory

Source: Palinoan, Suma, Tandiangga, and Dama (2024)

Following Charles Sanders Peirce's classification, the analysis identifies the roles of icons, indexes, and symbols in the selected campaign materials. Icons include visuals resembling natural landscapes, mountains, rivers, and snowy environments that signal Patagonia's ecological orientation. Indexes consist of scenes that demonstrate causal relationships, such as employees repairing worn jackets or video clips showing recycling processes, which serve as evidence of the company's operational practices supporting sustainability. Symbols include the widely recognized the 1% for the Planet slogan and related visual marks, which rely on shared cultural conventions to signify commitment and collective action toward environmental stewardship. All campaign items were analyzed descriptively and interpretatively to reveal how these signs work together to construct Patagonia's sustainability narrative and encourage audiences to adopt green economic values.

To ensure credibility and analytical rigor, this study incorporates triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing materials from multiple platforms, while theoretical triangulation was applied through the integration of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic model with sustainability communication literature. In addition, investigator triangulation was used by involving two independent reviewers in the coding and interpretation process. These triangulation strategies strengthen the reliability of interpretations and ensure that the semiotic reading is not limited by a single perspective (Kilstrup, 2015, p. 570). Video footage included in the dataset is explicitly considered in the findings section, particularly in the discussion of indexical signs that depict action-oriented sustainability practices. Scenes depicting recycling processes, environmental restoration efforts, and symbolic actions, such as raising the 1% for the Planet flag,

are integrated into the analysis to reinforce the way Patagonia operationalizes its sustainability narrative through both static and dynamic visual communication.

## FINDINGS

Patagonia, an American-based company best known for its outdoor clothing products, has elevated the 1% for the Planet campaign into one of its most visible and influential sustainability initiatives. Through its official website and multi-platform digital presence, Patagonia constructs a strategic communication narrative that aims to educate the public, shape environmental values, and inspire collective environmental action. The homepage presentation of the campaign in Figure 2, for example, is not merely a marketing device but a deliberate semiotic act, a visual argument that situates Patagonia as an eco-centric brand committed to global environmental stewardship.



Figure 2 The Homepage of Patagonia's Website Featuring the 1% for the Planet Campaign

Source: Patagonia (2024a)

The photograph of a man standing in a thick snowy polar region wearing bright orange cold-resistant outerwear is especially significant. The stark whiteness of the snow juxtaposed with the visibility of the orange jacket creates a high-contrast visual designed to evoke vulnerability, urgency, and environmental fragility. Numerous scholars have noted that visual contrast enhances cognitive attention and emotional salience in sustainability messaging (Milanesi, Kyrdoda, & Runfola, 2022; Ourahmoune, Binninger, & Robert, 2014). Patagonia uses this technique intentionally as a visual metaphor. The fragility of polar ecosystems is symbolically embodied in the lone figure navigating a harsh, changing environment. The man's stance, the solitary setting, and the unfurled flag bearing the 1% for the Planet logo collectively communicate a narrative of resilience and environmental responsibility.

Patagonia's social media platforms reinforce this narrative. Figure 3 illustrates the 1% for the Planet logo that is consistently displayed alongside the Patagonia brand logo across LinkedIn and other digital interfaces. Research has shown that such repetitive co-branding between corporate and sustainability symbols strengthens perceived authenticity and environmental legitimacy (Loučanová et al., 2021; Lee, Raschke, & Krishen, 2022). By integrating these logos, Patagonia signals that environmental activism is embedded not only in its corporate identity but also in its operational philosophy. This form of symbolic alignment also positions Patagonia as part of a global eco-movement rather than an isolated business actor an important distinction in an era where audiences are increasingly critical of superficial sustainability claims.



Figure 3 Patagonia LinkedIn social media cover view

Source: Patagonia (2024b)

The placement of the logo signifies Patagonia's intentional move to frame itself as a movement brand, a concept described in recent branding literature where corporations adopt socio-environmental missions that extend beyond commercial boundaries (Bilandzic & Kalch, 2021). Patagonia's alignment with the 1% for the Planet is therefore both ideological and communicative, reinforcing the brand's reputation as a pioneer in corporate sustainability and green activism.

### **Identifying Signs in the Narrative of the 1% for The Planet by Patagonia**

In an in-depth semiotic analysis of Patagonia's 1% for the Planet initiative, a thorough exploration of the role of three categories of signs: (1) icons, (2) indexes, and (3) symbols, in amplifying communicative messages aimed at the public is conducted. These signs not only serve as simple visual representations but also play a crucial role in building a more complex narrative on issues of sustainability and the green economy (Firmansyah, 2022, h. 147). The icon, as a sign that has visual similarities with the objects it represents, helps create an instant and emotional recognition of the environmental values upheld by Patagonia. Indexes that show causal or contextual relationships with the objects they represent give more weight to sustainability messages by showing the real impact of collective actions. Meanwhile, the symbol, which has socially and culturally established meanings, reinforces Patagonia's brand identity as a pioneer in the environmental movement.

The interaction between the three categories of signs: (1) icons, (2) indexes, and (3) symbols, creates a cohesive semiotic structure that reinforces Patagonia's sustainability message. Through this interaction, the 1% for the Planet campaign not only communicates environmental responsibility but also fosters a sense of collective consciousness, encouraging audiences to act toward a greener future.

#### **Icons**

Icons in this campaign visually represent the interconnection between humans, products, and nature. The image of a man standing in a snowy polar landscape wearing bright orange Patagonia outerwear and holding the 1% for the Planet flag symbolizes both endurance and visibility. The orange color, commonly associated with safety and alertness, implies the urgency of environmental protection. Meanwhile, the harsh snowy background serves as a metaphor for the challenges of sustaining fragile ecosystems, highlighting Patagonia's role in producing durable gear for extreme conditions. Beyond this central image, other visuals on Patagonia's social media, such as climbers scaling icy peaks or hikers crossing remote landscapes, reinforce the same iconic narrative that Patagonia's products function as tools for both adventure and environmental stewardship.

Icons in Patagonia's campaign visually represent the relationship between humans, products, and nature in a manner that is both descriptive and symbolic. The image of a man standing in a snowy polar landscape, wearing bright orange Patagonia outerwear

and holding the 1% for the Planet flag, is an iconic representation of resilience, environmental vigilance, and human connection to fragile ecosystems. The choice of the bright orange jacket acts not only as a product demonstration but as a visual marker of urgency and visibility traits often associated with climate crisis communication (Rindell & Santos, 2021, p. 547).

The snowy terrain symbolically represents environmental precarity. Milanesi, Kyrdoda, and Runfola (2022) argue that images of untouched environments evoke emotional effect, increasing the likelihood of audience engagement with ecological issues. Patagonia strengthens this effect by using remote and extreme landscapes as recurring motifs in its visual communication. Other visuals on Patagonia's social media, such as climbers ascending icy peaks or hikers navigating remote terrains, extend this iconic narrative by suggesting that engagement with nature necessitates both responsibility and stewardship. These images reinforce the idea that Patagonia's products serve a dual purpose: (1) enabling adventure and (2) supporting sustainability. As noted by Ourahmoune, Binninger, and Robert (2014), brands that embed symbolic meanings into product imagery can shift consumer perception from utility to identity formation, particularly among environmentally conscious audiences.

### Indexes

Indexes in Patagonia's campaign establish direct causal relationships between the company's practices and environmental

outcomes. These signs include images and videos that document Patagonia employees cleaning coastlines, repairing damaged jackets, or participating in recycling processes. Such scenes serve as indexical evidence of Patagonia's sustainability commitments, bridging the gap between corporate rhetoric and operational practice. The man holding the 1% for the Planet flag is also indexical, signaling active participation rather than passive endorsement. According to Sohn (2022, p. 88), such symbolic gestures function as evidence of corporate credibility, which is increasingly important for audiences skeptical of greenwashing.

Short video clips of repair workshops and recycling initiatives, frequently shared through Patagonia's digital channels, strengthen the indexical dimension of the campaign. These clips demonstrate Patagonia's adherence to circular economy principles: (1) reduce, (2) repair, (3) reuse, (4) recycle, echoing research showing that consumers respond more positively to sustainability when they see operational transparency. By foregrounding real-world actions, Patagonia differentiates itself from companies whose sustainability efforts remain abstract or unverifiable. As emerging research on environmental authenticity confirms, indexical signs are among the strongest predictors of audience trust.

### Symbols

The 1% for the Planet logo remains the campaign's dominant symbolic sign. Unlike icons or indexes, its meaning is derived culturally and socially; its

significance is not visual resemblance or evidence but shared convention (Lee, Raschke, & Krishen, 2022, p. 7). The logo symbolizes a global commitment to environmental philanthropy, representing collective ecological responsibility and ethical consumption.

The power of this symbol lies in its ubiquity. By placing the logo across social media, website banners, promotional materials, and branded merchandise, Patagonia ensures that the symbol becomes inseparable from the company's identity. This aligns with Lee, Raschke, and Krishen (2022, p. 8), who note that ESG-aligned symbols significantly enhance brand valuation in environmentally conscious markets (Loučanová et al., 2021, p. 732). The logo functions not only as a symbol of one percent of the revenue Patagonia contributes, but also as a symbol of what consumers contribute by purchasing Patagonia products. This symbolic reciprocity, where company and consumer jointly participate in environmental activism, is central to Patagonia's identity as a sustainability leader. As Loučanová et al. (2021) explain, symbols in sustainability contexts often function as shorthand for complex values, allowing audiences to internalize environmental commitments through recognizable visual cues. Patagonia's effective use of symbolic signs therefore strengthens the cultural and moral dimensions of its campaign.

### Object Mapping

The object mapping in the 1% for the Planet campaign by Patagonia focuses

heavily on the close relationship between visual, verbal, and contextual signs composed to communicate the company's commitment to sustainability. The main object of the campaign is Patagonia's commitment to set aside one percent of its total sales in favor of various organizations focused on environmental preservation. In this context, the object that became the first visual focus was an image of a man standing in the middle of a thick snowy pole, dressed in orange outerwear resistant to extreme cold. The picture illustrates the reliability of Patagonia products that can withstand harsh natural conditions. The clothing became a physical representation of the quality and sustainability values upheld by Patagonia.

A very important object in this mapping is the flag held by the man, which has the 1% for the Planet logo. The logo serves as a symbolic object linking Patagonia's commitment to nature preservation with a broader movement on a global level. These flags reinforce the narrative that contributing to the planet is more than setting aside some of the profits. Through the object of the flag, Patagonia seeks to instill the idea that every product sold is part of the solution in the effort of environmental preservation. Another equally important object is the 1% for the Planet logo that appears on various social media platforms and Patagonia websites. The logo not only serves as a visual identity but also becomes a tool to introduce and promote sustainability-based business models to a global audience.

This mapping of objects illustrates the close interrelationship between products, symbols of sustainability, and the company's efforts in creating and introducing a green economic culture (Aditia & Hektanti, 2023, p. 98). Patagonia links a commitment to environmental preservation with concrete action, that is, the allocation of one percent of their revenue that supports organizations that share a similar vision. The campaign introduces the audience to a business model focused on sustainability through these objects that complement and reinforce each other.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of Patagonia's 1% for the Planet campaign reveals that the initiative functions far beyond the realm of commercial advertising. Rather than merely promoting outdoor wear, the campaign constructs a multi-layered environmental communication narrative that strategically employs visual, symbolic, and indexical signs to articulate values of resilience, ecological responsibility, and collective action. Through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework, it becomes clear that Patagonia not only narrates sustainability but also performs its sustainability positioning as both a communicator and an active agent of environmental stewardship. This section critically elaborates how the three semiotic sign categories: (1) icons, (2) indexes, and (3) symbols interact to create a sophisticated narrative that reflects Patagonia's environmental ethos and contributes to broader sustainability discourse.

## Iconic Interpretation

The iconic dimension of the campaign is strongly manifested through imagery that closely resembles real ecological and outdoor exploration scenarios. The visual of a man clad in bright orange Patagonia outerwear, standing on a snowy polar landscape, operates as an iconic sign by presenting a realistic portrayal of rugged environmental conditions. The authenticity of this imagery aligns with the concept of eco-aesthetic authenticity (Milanesi, Kyrdoda, and Runfola (2022), where brands use realistic natural representations to foster audience emotional engagement with nature.

The choice of a solitary human figure in a vast, icy wilderness signifies not only endurance but also humility in the face of nature's enormity. The orange outerwear enhances visibility, functioning iconically as a marker of safety, alertness, and human vulnerability. As noted by Ourahmoune, Binninger, and Robert (2014), color symbolism in sustainability campaigns often serves to anchor emotional cues that guide viewers toward moral interpretations. In this context, the orange jacket suggests urgency and the need for proactive environmental protection. This iconic representation subtly critiques anthropocentric attitudes. The human appears small, almost insignificant, compared to the overpowering natural environment, a composition technique that evokes ecological humility, consistent with contemporary environmental communication literature (Veland et

al., 2018, p. 41). Patagonia's visual storytelling thereby encourages audiences to reconsider their role within ecosystems, not as conquerors of nature but as responsible caretakers.

The visual scenes of climbers, hikers, and explorers featured across Patagonia's digital platforms extend this iconic narrative. These images reinforce notions of coexistence, illustrating that engagement with nature necessitates responsibility, preparedness, and ethical awareness. The recurrence of harsh natural settings in Patagonia's campaign imagery aligns with Herrick and Pratt's (2013) argument that sustainability narratives, rooted in place-based iconography, strengthen environmental consciousness by allowing audiences to enter ecological spaces through symbolic visualization emotionally.

### **Indexical Interpretation**

Indexical signs serve as tangible evidence of Patagonia's environmental engagement. Beyond visual resemblance, indexical signs provide causal links between Patagonia's actions and environmental outcomes. The man's outerwear, for example, is not merely a piece of clothing but an index of Patagonia's commitment to producing durable and environmentally responsible products. According to Sohn (2022, p. 82), indexicality in place branding and sustainability communication operates as proof of authenticity, anchoring abstract environmental claims in observable real-world practices. The presence of the 1% for the Planet flag further serves as an indexical marker of Patagonia's

financial commitment to environmental organizations. Its appearance in the image signifies active participation in a global ecological movement. This aligns with Bilandzic and Kalch's (2021) findings that sustainability campaigns that demonstrate concrete action, rather than symbolic rhetoric alone, are more likely to foster public trust and engagement.

Videos and images depicting jacket repair workshops, recycling processes, and employees participating in environmental restoration offer compelling indexical evidence of Patagonia's operational sustainability. These scenes visually demonstrate Patagonia's adherence to circular economy principles (repair, reuse, and recycle), which research has widely acknowledged as key drivers in sustainable consumption practices (Suparjo, Darma, Kurniadin, Kasuma, & Priyagus, 2021, p. 395). The indexical nature of these scenes strengthens Patagonia's credibility, showing that sustainability is embedded in the company's production, consumption, and post-consumption systems.

Patagonia's portrayal of repair activities reflects circular economic thinking, where product longevity is valued over disposable consumption. This supports the arguments of Pangarso, Sisilia, Setyorini, Peranganin, and Awirya (2022, p. 1), who emphasize that green economic performance improves when companies integrate waste reduction into operational processes. Through indexical representation, Patagonia communicates sustainability not as a marketing slogan

but as an everyday practice. It is in line with Rindell and Santos (2021), who highlight that genuine sustainability branding requires visible alignment between corporate identity and corporate behavior. Patagonia's indexical messaging also reinforces its authenticity. Patagonia's operational transparency is represented visually through indexical signs. Thus, it becomes central to its environmental communication strategy.

### **Symbolic Interpretation**

Symbols represent the most abstract yet powerful semiotic category in Patagonia's sustainability narrative. The 1% for the Planet logo is the campaign's dominant symbolic sign, representing a shared cultural understanding of environmental responsibility and ethical consumption. Its meaning is not derived from visual resemblance but from social agreement and collective recognition. The consistent placement of the 1% for the Planet logo across Patagonia's website, product labels, and social media platforms, reinforces symbolic reinforcement (Loučanová et al., 2021), where repeated exposure strengthens associative meaning. With each appearance, the logo conveys the message that every purchase supports environmental preservation, thus transforming consumer behavior into environmental activism.

Symbols are powerful because they can unify diverse audiences around shared values. Patagonia leverages this symbolic power to cultivate an environmental identity among its consumers. It shows that ESG-related symbols enhance trust, brand

loyalty, and perceived ethical value (Lee, Raschke, and Krishen, 2022, p. 8). The 1% for the Planet logo acts as a unifying symbol of collective ecological commitment and makes consumers feel part of a global environmental movement.

The logo's symbolic value extends beyond corporate branding. It fosters narrative-based collective action, where shared stories and symbols mobilize communities toward environmental goals (Veland et al., 2018, p. 41). By repeating the logo across platforms, Patagonia embeds environmental values into the identities of both the company and its consumers, influencing not only purchasing choices but also broader lifestyle orientations (Samantha, Saragih, & Suraya, 2023, p. 209). The symbolism also reflects Patagonia's critique of traditional corporate philanthropy. Rather than presenting sustainability as an occasional initiative, the 1% for the Planet logo symbolizes a long-term, institutionalized commitment. This approach aligns with Wirba's research (2024), which argues that structural integration of CSR within business models produces more meaningful societal impact than episodic environmental campaigns.

### **The Sustainability Communication Narrative in Driving Green Economic Growth**

The sustainable communication narrative built by Patagonia through the 1% for the Planet campaign not only conveys a message of nature preservation but also serves as a driver of collective behavioral change among individuals, organizations,

and companies. Using a structured narrative and powerful visuals, Patagonia manages to create a deep connection between its audience and the sustainability values it seeks to uphold. The image of men standing in the middle of snowy poles and dressed in Patagonia clothing depicts a commitment to nature in extreme conditions. It firmly communicates that sustainability is not an additional option, but rather an obligation that can be applied in all aspects of life.

Through evocative visual elements, such as the use of bright orange in the clothes worn by the man, Patagonia not only displays the resilience of their products to harsh natural conditions, but also instills the understanding that sustainability is closely related to awareness of safety and protection of the environment (Yudarwati, 2015, p. 112). This image invites the audience to see sustainability as part of an integrated daily life, albeit in a more extreme and challenging context. Thus, Patagonia creates a narrative that makes sustainability an integral part of outdoor activity and human interaction with nature.

The 1% for the Planet logo became central to this narrative, serving as a symbol of the collective effort to preserve the earth. Through the repetition of this logo on various platforms, including social media and websites, Patagonia continues to remind its audience that every product purchased is a direct contribution to nature preservation efforts. The consistent use of this logo gives the impression that sustainability is not just a temporary initiative, but is part of Patagonia's long-term commitment to

the preservation of the earth. More than that, the logo serves as a call for other companies to join the movement, creating a multiplier effect that invites more parties to get involved in driving the green economy.

Patagonian-built narratives also emphasize the importance of individual contributions in shaping the broader green economy. Every consumption choice consumers make is considered an important step in the collective effort to maintain the sustainability of the planet. Through this campaign, Patagonia managed to transform the paradigm of consumption previously seen as a mere economic transaction into a contribution to sustainability. By associating its products with concrete actions in protecting the environment, Patagonia is stirring audiences to realize that buying products is not just about getting the goods, but also about providing support for greater action to save the earth.

This narrative builds awareness that the green economy depends not only on individual action but also on the active participation of companies in designing business models based on sustainability. Patagonia strongly encourages other companies to follow in its footsteps in integrating sustainability principles into their business operations. This campaign, through the mapping of powerful visual and verbal signs, not only introduces the concept of sustainability to the audience but also provides a call to action to create greater social and economic change, whereby sustainability becomes the new norm in the business world.

The sustainable communication narrative built by Patagonia through the 1% for the Planet aims to create a deep awareness of the importance of sustainability, both in individual and collective contexts. The campaign not only invites individuals to participate in nature conservation efforts through wise consumption choices but also challenges companies and organizations to apply sustainability principles in every aspect of their business (Agu, Iyelolu, Idemudia, & Ijomah, 2024, p. 2466). Patagonia not only talks about sustainability, but actively invites all parties to engage in a collective movement to create a greener economy that is more sustainable and has a positive impact on the planet.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the analysis of Patagonia's 1% for the Planet campaign shows that the company has used a strong visual communication approach to build a deep narrative about sustainability and social responsibility. Through the use of icons, indexes, and symbols, Patagonia is able to communicate its commitment to environmental preservation in a way that is not only informative but also inspiring. The image of a man wearing Patagonia outerwear in extreme natural conditions, for example, becomes an icon that conveys the durability of the product as well as a symbol of responsibility towards nature. In this case, the clothing is not only seen as a commercial product but as part of a larger effort to preserve the earth. In addition, the 1% for the Planet logo is

consistently displayed on various media platforms, both on the website and social media, reinforcing the message that every purchase of Patagonia products contributes directly to nature conservation.

Through integrated visual communication and clear symbols, Patagonia invites consumers to participate in the global sustainability movement. The company not only sells products but also invites the public to get involved in real action to protect the planet. This campaign connects individual actions, such as buying products, with a greater contribution to environmental conservation efforts. In doing so, Patagonia has succeeded in creating a communication ecosystem that invites various parties to work together, from companies to consumers, in building a greener and more sustainable future.

## REFERENCES

- Aditia, R., & Hektanti, N. L. (2023). Analysis of structures and levels in communication networks. *Social Science Studies*, 3(2), 92–104. <<https://doi.org/10.47153/sss32.6152023>>
- Afriyanto, N. F., Oktavia, A. R., Cahyaningtyas, C. D., Munawaroh, L. L., Hidayat, M. T., & Veron, S. (2024). Analisis semiotik dalam konteks ekonomi pada iklan Aqua 100% murni, 100% Indonesia (2024) di televisi. *Journal of Social and Economics Research*, 6(1), 933–943. <<https://doi.org/10.54783/jser.v6i1.473>>
- Agu, E. E., Iyelolu, T. V., Idemudia, C., & Ijomah, T. I. (2024). Exploring the relationship between sustainable business practices and increased brand loyalty. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 6(8), 2463–2475. <<https://doi.org/10.51594/ijmer.v6i8.1365>>

- Arianto, B., & Rani. (2024). Penguatan bisnis digital berbasis ekonomi hijau bagi pengembangan UMKM Desa Suka Indah Kabupaten Serang. *Welfare: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 2(3), 442-449. <<https://doi.org/10.30762/welfare.v2i3.1622>>
- Bilandzic, H., & Kalch, A. (2021). Fictional narratives for environmental sustainability communication. In F. Weder, L. Krainer, & M. Karmasin (Eds.), *The sustainability communication reader* (pp. 123–142). Wiesbaden, Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH. <[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-31883-3\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-31883-3_8)>
- Firmansyah, M. (2022). Konsep turunan green economy dan penerapannya: Sebuah analisis literatur. *Ecoplan*, 5(2), 141–149. <<https://doi.org/10.20527/ecoplan.v5i2.543>>
- Friedline, T., Chen, Z., & Morrow, S. (2021). Families' financial stress & well-being: The importance of the economy and economic environments. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 42(1), 34–51. <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-020-09694-9>>
- Herrick, C., & Pratt, J. (2013). Communication and the narrative basis of sustainability: Observations from the municipal water sector. *Sustainability*, 5(10), 4428–4443. <<https://doi.org/10.3390/su5104428>>
- Huang, Y., Lu, C. H., & Tang, P. C. C. (2024). Patagonia's substandard brand awareness in China. *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 27, 197–203. <<https://doi.org/10.54097/kmj8dq54>>
- Illahi, N. K., & Aditia, R. (2022). Analisis sosiologis fenomena dan realitas pada masyarakat siber. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Dehasen (MUDE)*, 1(2). <<https://doi.org/10.37676/mude.v1i2.2217>>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2023). *AR6 synthesis report: Climate change 2023*. <<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/>>
- Kerschbaum, C., & Peschl, M. F. (2023). The power of aesthetic alignment in future-oriented organisations: The case of Patagonia. *ENTRENOVA - ENTerprise REsearch InNOVAtion*, 9(1), 387–399. <<https://doi.org/10.54820/entrenova-2023-0035>>
- Kilstrup, M. (2015). Naturalizing semiotics: The triadic sign of Charles Sanders Peirce as a systems property. *Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology*, 119(3), 563–575. <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pbiomolbio.2015.08.013>>
- Lamb, W. F., Wiedmann, T., Pongratz, J., Andrew, R., Crippa, M., Olivier, J. G. J., ... Minx, J. (2021). A review of trends and drivers of greenhouse gas emissions by sector from 1990 to 2018. *Environmental Research Letters*, 16(7), 073005, 1-31. <<https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/abee4e>>
- Lee, M. T., Raschke, R. L., & Krishen, A. S. (2022). Signaling green! Firm ESG signals in an interconnected environment that promote brand valuation. *Journal of Business Research*, 138, 1–11. <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.08.061>>
- Loučanová, E., Šupín, M., Čorejová, T., Repková-Štofková, K., Šupínová, M., Štofková, Z., & Olšiaková, M. (2021). Sustainability and branding: An integrated perspective of eco-innovation and brand. *Sustainability*, 13(2), 732, 1-10. <<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13020732>>
- Lugten, E., & Hariharan, N. (2022). Strengthening health systems for climate adaptation and health security: Key considerations for policy and programming. *Health security*, 20(5), 435–439. <<https://doi.org/10.1089/hs.2022.0050>>
- Milanesi, M., Kyrdoda, Y., & Runfola, A. (2022). How do you depict sustainability? An analysis of images posted on Instagram by sustainable fashion companies. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 13(2), 101–115. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2021.1998789>>
- Ourahmoune, N., Binninger, A.-S., & Robert, I. (2014). Brand narratives, sustainability, and gender: A socio-semiotic approach. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 34(3), 313–331. <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714528335>>
- Palinoan, F. F., Suma, I. M. M., Tandiangga, P., & Dama, A. (2024). Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis of human values in the film sound of freedom. *JPPI (Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Indonesia)*, 10(3), 358-365. <<https://doi.org/10.29210/020243918>>

- Pangarso, A., Sisilia, K., Setyorini, R., Peranganin, Y., & Awirya, A. A. (2022). The long path to achieving green economy performance for micro small medium enterprise. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 11(1), 16, 1-19. <<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-022-00209-4>>
- Patagonia. (2024a). *The homepage of Patagonia's website featuring the 1% for the Planet campaign* [Screenshot]. <<https://www.patagonia.com/one-percent-for-the-planet.html>>
- (2024b) *Patagonia LinkedIn social media cover view* [Social media profile image]. <<https://www.linkedin.com/company/patagonia/>>
- Prodanovska-Poposka, V. (2024). Exploring the intersection of ecological language awareness and sustainability: Implications for environmental discourse. *International Journal of Advanced Natural Sciences and Engineering Researches*, 8(4), 454–459.
- Rindell, A., & Santos, F. P. (2021). What makes a corporate heritage brand authentic for consumers? A semiotic approach. *Journal of Brand Management*, 28(5), 545–558. <<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-021-00243-9>>
- Samantha, A. D., Saragih, N., & Suraya. (2023). Reception of Instagram followers @ komnasperempuan regarding campaign contents #sahkanRUUPKS. *Jurnal ILMU KOMUNIKASI*, 20(2), 207–232. <<https://doi.org/10.24002/jik.v20i2.5869>>
- Sohn, C. (2022). How to brand a border despite its wall? A social semiotics approach to cross-border place branding. *Geoforum*, 135, 82–92. <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2022.07.016>>
- Suparjo, S., Darma, S., Kurniadin, N., Kasuma, J., Priyagus, P., Darma, D. C., & Haryadi. (2021). Indonesia's new SDGS agenda for green growth – emphasis in the energy sector. *International Journal of Energy Economics and Policy*, 11(3), 395–402. <<https://doi.org/10.32479/ijep.11091>>
- UN Environment Programme. (2025). *What is an “inclusive green economy”?*. <<https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/green-economy/why-does-green-economy-matter/what-inclusive-green-economy>>
- Veland, S., Scoville-Simonds, M., Gram-Hanssen, I., Schorre, A., El Khoury, A., Nordbø, M., ... Bjørkan, M. (2018). Narrative matters for sustainability: The transformative role of storytelling in realizing 1.5°C futures. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 31, 41–47. <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2017.12.005>>
- Wirba, A. V. (2024). Corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of government in promoting CSR. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 15, 7428–7454. <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01185-0>>
- Yudarwati, G. A. (2015). The Indonesian bank websites' interactivity for corporate social responsibility communication. *Jurnal ILMU KOMUNIKASI*, 12(2). <<https://doi.org/10.24002/jik.v12i2.472>>

