

Article

Toward a Pro-Environment Marketing Typology: A Visual Interrogation of Eco-Messaging in the Craft Beer Sector

Taylor Ann Foerster ¹, Matthew M. Mars ^{2,*} and John L. Koprowski ³

¹ College of Agricultural Sciences, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331, USA; taylor.foerster@oregonstate.edu

² College of Humanities, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, USA

³ Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY 82071, USA; jkoprows@uwyo.edu

* Correspondence: mmars@arizona.edu

Abstract

Conservation is consistently expressed across the American craft brewery sector, with breweries routinely promoting wildlife protection, public land stewardship, and waste reduction through marketing schemes and materials. However, little attention has been directed at the patterns and themes characterizing such pro-environment marketing. Accordingly, this qualitative multi-case study explores the designs of pro-environment labels (i.e., eco-labels) and adjacent materials (e.g., product descriptions) from six purposively selected breweries across three regions: the Pacific Northwest, the Southwest, and the Mid-Atlantic. We aim to (a) pinpoint design variations in pro-environment marketing and (b) conceptualize a pro-environment marketing device (PEMD) typology to better inform pro-social marketing campaigns. The resulting PEMD typology features two dimensions: (1) indication (hedonism–conservation–environmentalism) and (2) orientation (greenwashing–environmental voyeurism–environmental stewardship). We contextualize these dimensions along an iconological progression (pre-iconography–iconology) to reveal the complexities and risks of pro-environment branding, especially by unintentionally leveraging the environment as an inauthentic sales prop (i.e., greenwashing). This typology helps pro-social marketers design and advance genuine pro-environment messaging. Additionally, it offers sustainability researchers a novel lens to interrogate how marketing design choices affect perceived brand authenticity and subsequent consumer behaviors regarding conservation and environmentalism.

Keywords: conservation marketing; craft beer; eco-branding; iconography; pro-social marketing; typological analysis



Academic Editor: Antonio Caggiano

Received: 14 June 2026

Revised: 3 July 2026

Accepted: 7 July 2026

Published: 8 July 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors.

Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland.

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution \(CC BY\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

1. Introduction

Consumption and environmental sustainability are central to the conservation movement. Conscious consumerism is promoted across a myriad of industry sectors, though businesses are routinely scrutinized for making performative claims of conservation values and practices without taking subsequent action—i.e., “greenwashing” [1]. So-called “green capitalism” has been rightfully subjected to critique, especially when it comes to larger scale businesses and corporations that are known to use environmental messaging to manage their public images more so than to empower consumers with eco-friendly products and services [2]. Small-to-mid-size enterprises, such as local craft breweries, are nonetheless well positioned to promote and foster green consumption authentically and genuinely [3].

While we share the general skepticism over green capitalism in the mainstream market, we proceed with the understanding that local craft breweries are among the enterprises that are most likely to intentionally empower consumers to support environmental causes and conservation efforts meaningfully by way of their beer consumption choices.

Moreover, craft breweries often serve as collective spaces (e.g., taprooms) and provide connective devices (e.g., labels and other branding artifacts) that foster community development, innovation, and wellbeing [4]. Such community contributions include assuming roles in local and regional conservation efforts, especially when it comes to production innovations that reduce water and energy usage and carbon footprints associated with the production and sourcing of grains and hops [5,6]. Here, we focus specifically on (a) pinpointing and articulating variations in the designs and structures of pro-environment marketing pieces and (b) conceptualizing a pro-environment marketing device (PEMD) typology to inform more impactful pro-environment social marketing campaigns.

The visual designs and aesthetic schema of product artifacts, such as labels, packaging materials, and signage, are principal elements of branding designs and marketing strategies [7]. In a community development context, the branding of locally made products can symbolize and showcase the unique environmental, geographical, historical, and socio-cultural characteristics of the locales and communities from which they originate [8]. To date, however, the patterns that characterize visual curation of locally sourced and produced products relative to fostering meaningful and sustained connections between people, place, and the environment have yet to be rigorously examined. The current study addresses this gap through a systematic exploration of the aesthetic designs and messaging structures of the labels for a sample of 35 labels created across six craft breweries (Some labels examined were pulled from a cidery catalogue, referred to throughout as “breweries” in relation to our sample). Craft breweries are widely known to be active contributors or advocates for the health and well-being of local communities and the physical environment that houses them [5,6]. Moreover, craft beer labels are commonly rich in aesthetic design, symbolism, and strategic messaging, hence making for a robust context in which to explore and conceptualize an eco-brand design typology [8].

Embedding community-centric messaging, whether visual, textual, or some combination thereof, into the aesthetic designs of local product brands “empower individuals [consumers] to intimately identify and connect themselves with their consumption choices” [8] (p. 389). Here, we generate insights into how eco-conscious firms, especially those local in scale, can engage consumers in conservation storytelling through label designs. To this end, we systematically charted and interrogated the iconological progressions of a set of label designs from six breweries located in four distinct regions of the United States: Arizona (Southwest region), Oregon (Pacific Northwest region), West Virginia (Appalachian region), and Wyoming (Mountain West region). To clarify, our aim is not to empirically examine the effectiveness of eco-branding (or specific design schema) in changing consumer behavior. Our analysis is instead focused further upstream at the point where aesthetic designs and messaging structures are first created. Building on the understanding that craft breweries commonly attempt to genuinely promote sustainability through their production practices [9], the eco-design typology we conceptualize here offers this locally intensive, environmentally centered industry a first-of-its-kind guideline to more intentional eco-branding and messaging.

Next, we review a set of studies that together depict a conservation–environmental social marketing continuum that spans the craft beer sector. Thereafter, we present iconological progression as our conceptual framework. We then provide a methodological overview of the qualitative design used, which is anchored in methods germane to visual studies.

Finally, we present our findings and a discussion of the implications for both practice and research.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. Conservation and Environmentalism

There is a subtle, yet important distinction between conservation and environmentalism. Conservation prioritizes caring for the environment in ways that center human appreciation, recreation, and the sustainable harvesting of natural resources, whereas environmentalism is more ideologically rooted and aimed at protecting the environment for the sake of the environment [10]. Conservation is often the most accessible and pragmatic form of environmental advocacy, though oftentimes critiqued for being too passive and human-centric [11]. Environmentalism appeals to actors with deeply seated convictions who are willing and able to commit not only their time and energy, but in many cases their core identities to the movement [12,13]. Our typological analysis systematically explores how eco-label designs place craft beer consumers in an environmental stewardship context along the conservation–environmentalism continuum.

1.1.2. Social Marketing

Social marketing is “the use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify, or abandon a behavior for the benefit of individuals, groups or society as a whole” [14] (p. 5). The causes and concerns that drive social marketing strategies and campaigns vary widely, from health and wellness [15,16] to our current focus—conservation and environmentalism [17]. The effectiveness of social marketing requires consumers to understand, internalize, and ultimately act on the message being delivered in a product or service vessel, such as a craft beer eco-label [18]. Consumers are being compelled to take actions that require acceptance, compromise, and discipline; effectiveness is thus precarious. Consider, for example, a craft beer label that is designed to reduce consumers’ daily carbon footprints. While the message may be well received by individual consumers, effectiveness requires them to make future sacrifices to enhance their contributions to environmental stewardship.

While the success of social marketing ultimately relies on consumer change, our current focus is on the initial phase of the social marketing process by way of pro-environment craft beer label designs, which is hereafter referred to as ‘eco-labeling.’ We are not the first to explore the branding strategies of breweries through a social marketing lens. Jones et al. [19] found the social marketing strategies of corporate breweries often entail messages promoting responsible consumption. These seemingly prosocial messages served as ‘smoke screens’ that distract from less socially appealing elements of the industry (e.g., inflated pricing, public health risks). Local craft breweries are known to be more prosocial than their corporate counterparts; nevertheless, the intentions behind their messaging cannot be assumed to be genuine given they too produce and serve alcoholic (and thereby potentially dangerous) products.

Craft breweries are likely to genuinely pursue their environmental practices and initiatives for primary reasons other than profitmaking [20,21]. For instance, Veleva and colleagues [22] found that of 43 craft brewers in Massachusetts, 81% were driven to engage in sustainable practices by the perceived need for environmental stewardship, whereas just less than half (49%) reported engaging in sustainable practices in part due to appeal to target consumers. Our current interests are positioned further in the social marketing process, looking beyond motivations toward the brand design patterns that characterize the aesthetic designs and messaging structure(s) of prosocial label designs—i.e., systematically exploring and classifying the aesthetic elements of eco-labels into an early stage PEMD typology.

The aim of this typological analysis is to better understand how craft eco-labels develop interpretive spaces that foster (or not) the intellectual consumption of environmental messaging. Intellectual consumption refers to individuals gaining an understanding of, generating insights into, or finding greater meaning in a social (including environmental) phenomenon via direct consumption [23], such as when perusing and contemplating a label while drinking a can of beer.

1.1.3. Craft Beer as a Prosocial Eco-Platform

The popularity of craft beer has surged over the past two-plus decades [24]. Craft breweries and taprooms are now popular gathering spots, or ‘third places,’ where people relax and connect with their neighbors and community in public spaces that are neither home nor work [4,25]. Craft breweries are often located in or adjacent to neighborhoods and everyday thoroughfares, which increases accessibility and convenience that in turn better positions them to foster community identity and connectedness [26]. Beyond local community development, craft breweries often indirectly contribute to regional tourism through place-based branding practices (e.g., showcasing regional environmental icons on branding materials) [27,28]. Craft breweries thus balance connecting locals with each other in meaningful ways while also signaling community identity and place to outside visitors.

Craft brewers commonly identify as conservationists who actively advocate for sustainable policies and practices that foster conservation and biodiversity [21,29]. Such advocacy by craft breweries has been shown to be significantly more influential on pro-environment consumer purchase intentions as compared to large-scale, corporate breweries [30]. Here, we contribute an empirically informed prosocial eco-marketing typology that (a) directly accounts for smaller scale firms that are more likely to be local or regional in operational scope and (b) adds nuance to the social marketing approaches that invoke environmental concern or sentiment by way of product branding.

2. Conceptual Framework

Visual schema can be strategically curated into designs that assert the meaning and value of community, environmental, organizational, political, and socio-cultural activities, initiatives, and issues [31,32]. The impact of visual storytelling relies on objective and subjective elements to guide viewer perceptions in ways that spur enduring impressions and strong emotional associations between product, place, and experience [33]. Impact is equally reliant on how well designers understand the pre-requisite knowledge of the intended message that their target audiences likely have [34]. Such understanding should inform the contextual setup of visual designs in a manner that enhances viewer capacity to engage, navigate, interpret, and make meaning from the stories being conveyed to include making relevant meaning of more abstract images and nuanced designs.

The interpretation process requires viewers to move through three layers of meaning-making that begin with the overt and conclude with the abstract—i.e., iconological progression [8]. The three progressive layers are pre-iconography, iconography, and iconology. Pre-iconographic meaning is transmitted through the overt features of an image or symbol (e.g., color, shape, structure). Iconographic meaning is conveyed through the inclusion of context-specific knowledge and cultural and social constructs that underly the intended meaning of images and symbols [35]. Iconographic meaning making is thus reliant on viewers’ grasp of the underlying intellectual, cultural, and social contexts and associated nuances [34]. One layer deeper is iconological meaning with viewers abstracting and intuiting their individual perspectives and discernments in ways that transcend the control and intentions of the artists/creators.

Mars [8] analyzed the iconological progressions of labels in an exploration of how craft breweries contribute to local placemaking. The compositional pattern of the labels progressed from overt pre-iconographic characteristics that easily mark the brand as one that is local rather than corporate (e.g., unorthodox/quirky v. standardized/sterile) to the iconographical through strategically placed icons and symbols that are readily associated with localized contexts. The inclusion of localized icons and symbols on the labels is particularly meaningful to regular patrons of the brewery, who, through their continued engagement, are more likely to understand the stories and logics that shape the designs and inform the messages they work to convey. Such iconography encourages patrons to associate their product consumption with localized place and people—i.e., third place development devices—rather than with the actual beer itself. Turning to the iconological layer, abstraction and vagueness are strategically designed into the labels to allow consumers to generate meaning for themselves in ways that align “their own experiences, perspectives, values, and worldviews with the messages discerned through the visual and emotional connections made with the beer and brewery” [7] (pp. 374–375).

Here, we adapt Mars’s [8] application of iconological progression to explore the composition and design of eco-labels as PEMD devices. In doing so, we aim to (a) identify the iconological progression patterns that characterize the designs and compositions of craft beer eco-labels and (b) conceptually develop said patterns into an initial PEMD typology. Our guiding research questions are:

RQ₁: What are the iconological progression patterns that characterize the designs and compositions of eco-labels?

RQ₂: How do eco-label design and composition patterns reflect the conservation–environmentalism continuum?

The resulting PEMD typology contributes a new understanding of how aesthetic design and visual composition can better position craft beer consumers to independently navigate and make meaning of pro-environment social marketing pieces.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

We used an embedded multiple case study design to conduct the study [36]. The cases were bounded to six American craft breweries (one cidery as noted above), each of which with an espoused commitment to environmental stewardship and thereby a suite of eco-labels (March 2025–February 2026). Each eco-label ($N = 35$) was approached as an embedded unit of analysis (i.e., micro-case) for its home brewery [37]. By analyzing each eco-label as an independent micro-case, cross-unit analysis within and between the cases—i.e., within and between each brewery—was performed, thereby bringing rigor to the process [38] and comparative depth complexity to the findings [39].

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected from the eco-label images and descriptions on the websites of six breweries that span three distinct geographical regions, the Pacific Northwest, the Southwest, and the Mideast of the U.S. Our decision to purposively select breweries from different U.S. regions was informed by research that indicates geographic place influences consumer behaviors and ethics specific to conservation and the environment [40]. Pro-environment messaging can be contextually limited by regional conditions and pressures. For example, local craft breweries in particular region may heavily promote the protection of at-risk species that traverse the area, while others in different regions may focus on pressing climatic disasters, such as the prolonged drought in the US Southwest. By accounting for regional variation during site selection, context-specific limitations were

limited and the likelihood of capturing greater nuance and variation between eco-label types was enhanced. The breweries were purposively selected based on each (1) featuring environmental stewardship as a routine feature of branding practices and (2) having a suite of eco-labels. Preliminary fieldwork provided us with evidence of each of the brewery's authenticity and sincerity specific to environmentalism and conservation.

Consistent with typologies performed elsewhere, purposive sampling was used to compile a set of eco-labels that are relatively homogeneous when it comes to apparent environmental commitment and notably varied in terms of aesthetic design and messaging structure [41–43]. Overarching homogeneity enables the typological analysis of a bounded domain, while cross-phenomenal heterogeneity reveals within-domain nuance and variation. We were liberal in the criteria used to identify an eco-label as one composed and designed using one or more environmental icons, regardless of whether an overt stewardship message accompanied it.

The scope of what we considered to be environmental icons was intentionally left broad to include flora, fauna, and geographical features of the regions in which the breweries are located. Equally important, the inclusion of designs with surface references to the environment enhanced our capacity to capture eco-labels that were more abstract than directly stated stewardship. The purpose of typological analysis is to develop distinct categories that together illustrate the conceptual scope of a phenomenon [44]. The typology we developed here stemmed from two dimensions: (1) indication (hedonism–conservation–environmentalism) and (2) orientation (greenwashing–environmental voyeurism–environmental stewardship), both of which are mapped with the flow of the iconological progression (pre-iconography–iconology). The indication dimension refers to the type of environmental engagement that an icon, symbol, and entire label design appears to signal, whereas orientation points to the type of social marketing approach that is observed through a label design. We remained open to the possibility that some craft brewers may frame the environment as a shallow marketing prop that is readily available as a contrived backdrop on label designs that signal self-indulgence over environmental consumption or stewardship. Accordingly, we coded for environmental hedonism when analyzing the indication dimension. Environmental hedonism is a loosely defined and sporadically applied term across various studies. In the context of eco-label design and composition, we define environmental hedonism as the superficial integration of environmental icons and symbols with eco-label designs, signaling the value of eco-consumption in the narrow confines of consumer pleasure and producer profits. We also coded for environmental voyeurism when analyzing the orientation dimension. We consider environmental voyeurism as a benign alternative to both greenwashing and environmental stewardship. Such voyeurism accounts for more agnostic designs that neither outwardly exploit or corrupt environmental icons and symbols (i.e., greenwashing) nor explicitly foster pro-environmental activities or interventions (i.e., environmental stewardship). By including hedonism and voyeurism in our analytical approach, our capacities to identify common patterns and notable variations in the design and composition of the eco-labels as comprehensively and objectively as possible were enhanced.

The structure of each label was systematically analyzed according to its iconological progression. Pre-iconography was explored by way of easily recognized symbols that convey relatively standard, uniform meaning. Examples include logos from both the breweries and various conservation organizations and environmental agencies. Iconography was explored relative to how images and symbols are (or not) jointly curated in ways that signal shared meaning. At this step in the analysis, we were especially attentive to evidence of intertextuality between images, symbols, and textual assertions. Intertextuality is the arrangement between images, symbols, and texts in ways that convey a common message

(eco-messaging) and identity (branding) [45]. Iconology, the third phase of the progression, was explored relative to how an eco-label positions a consumer to make meaning from the label for themselves. We thus explore the presence of iconological design elements relative to the potential to empower consumers to interpret and internalize the environmental message being conveyed through an eco-label.

Our analysis was conducted sequentially according to the iconological framework. Specifically, we followed the six stages of thematic analysis outlined by Terry et al. [46]: (1) familiarizing with data, (2) generating and applying codes, (3) constructing themes, (4) reviewing potential themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) framing the findings within relevant empirical and theoretical contexts. Open coding was used to identify, organize, and synthesize concepts at each stage in the iconological progression. The organizing concepts were formed into clusters that were thoroughly reviewed by the research team with any discrepant or outlying observations being rigorously discussed until consensus was reached—i.e., researcher triangulation was consistently performed over the duration of analysis.

The above process repeated over multiple rounds of analysis. The first round entailed us exploring each eco-label as a single embedded unit of analysis, recording the insights generated in memo format [37]. In the second round, we compared the memos for each eco-label of each brewery, distilling the collective insights and patterns into a single descriptive memo for each brewery. This process was then replicated in the third round with the memos from each brewery being continually compared and distilled until a final set of findings was reached and agreed upon by the entire research team.

3.3. Trustworthiness and Limitations

Researchers inherently serve as primary instruments in any qualitative study with visual analysis and interpretation being no exception [31,47]. To reduce the inherent risk of bias and contribute to the trustworthiness of our findings, we engaged in researcher triangulation throughout the analytical process [48]. This entailed us independently analyzing the eco-labels and then convening to compare and discuss the insights and patterns being generated until consensus was reached. While we did not have to exercise the option, we were as a research team prepared to eliminate any individual insights or patterns that were unable to be fully agreed upon through open, rigorous discussion. Cross-unit analysis within and between the cases by way of the embedded multiple case study design and the inclusion of organizational artifacts from each brewery's website added further triangulation to the analysis, further enhancing the overall trustworthiness of the analysis [38]. We present the findings using thick rich descriptions to strengthen the transferability of the findings [45]. Lastly, we each practiced reflexivity throughout the study [49], consistently monitoring our individual positionalities toward both conservation and environmentalism, as well as the practice and strategy of social marketing. Doing so further enhanced the confirmability and transferability of the findings and worked to reduce research bias [50].

4. Finding

Our findings lead us to conceptualize an eco-centric social marketing typology. The eco-label types are characterized by the environmental messaging that is signaled through each design. We emphasize signaled to stress that our interests are in the environmental messages that are conveyed through the eco-labels, not in what the designers intended to convey. By mapping the compositional structure and flow of each design according to its iconological progression, we identify and contextualize four eco-labeling types: (1) eco-clouding, eco-screening, eco-stewarding, and eco-preserving.

4.1. Eco-Clouding

No evidence of explicit greenwashing across the eco-label sample was found, though several designs in the sample do signal a relatively shallow sense of conservation and environmentalism. Such signals are more aesthetic limitations than ingenuine marketing ploys. We conceptualize these more loosely designed eco-label types as eco-clouding. Eco-clouding obscures the intended eco-message by not including clear indicators, whether visual or textual, of the environmental engagement and impact being promoted. Eco-clouding designs are more iconological than iconographical, leaving customers with vast conceptual space for meaning making without adequate markers to guide them toward the intended interpretative context. Loose signaling by way of an inadequate aesthetic design or ingenuine messaging signals a shallow sense of environmental hedonism by not acknowledging, explicitly or implicitly, the concomitant importance of conservation or environmentalism.

The label design of an Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co. (AWBC) India Pale Ale (IPA), “This Beer Saves Water,” is an example of eco-clouding. The label is aesthetically simple with a wrapped photo of the Sonoran Desert with rugged mountains in the background and a verdant stream in the foreground. Imposed on the photo is the beer name with the brewery logo floating in the blue skies above the mountains. Pre-iconographically, the photo is a tangible signal to the connection between the beer, the desert, and the sparse aquatic system that flows through it. There are no facts given pertaining to water scarcity in the desert or how, if at all, the beer lives up to its name. Iconographically, the customer is provided a copious amount of conceptual space to explore and discern the messaging for themselves. Yet there are no guideposts to help lead customers to the intended message. While empowering customers with interpretative freedom, the scanty design and lack of guideposts, whether in the form of text-delivered facts or strategically illustrated and placed icons and symbols, threatens to dilute the impact had on customer perceptions and engagement with the natural environment. Iconologically, customers are left to generate their own assumptions, questions, or opinions about how (or if at all) the beer saves water. Without pre-iconographical and iconographical guideposts, the risk of customers assuming the branding scheme is shallow and inauthentic rises—e.g., how could the production and consumption of beer, a water intensive product, possibly save water? With this logical question in their minds’ eyes, customers could easily conclude the label provides nothing more than a beautiful scene to enjoy while drinking their can of beer.

A more critical perspective is that the “This Beer Saves Water” eco-label is an overt, perhaps even egregious attempt at greenwashing. When triangulated with content on the AWBC website, the meaning behind the product name is made clear. Specifically, the AWBC declares the following on the About link of the company’s website: “The Sinagua malt we use in every one of our beers was created to replace high water-use commodity crops; each pint purchased of Arizona Wilderness beer offsets 50 gallons of water previously drawn from the Verde River” [51]. With this evidence-based website statement in mind, the greenwash signaling ceases and a conservation message becomes clearer—i.e., by drinking a pint of beer made with Sinagua malt over alternatives that use a different malt, you [consumer] are using 50 gallons less of Verde Water—i.e., the beer is saving water!

Returning to the PEMD typology, the more iconological the design, the greater the risk of signaling greenwashing becomes. When there is little to no context provided to accurately interpret the intended meaning of an eco-label, greenwashing seems apparent. The principal quality of the eco-clouding type is the blurring of the intended environmental messages through incomplete, fragmented, or vague designs and passive messaging. Unlike with greenwashing, where strategic intentions are indeed shallow and exploita-

tive, clouding is more a function of misconceived, passive designs than ingenuine social marketing and unabashed environmental hedonism.

4.2. *Eco-Screening*

The eco-screening type modestly frames the intended environmental message without a clear call to action. Eco-screening entails designs that are more iconological than iconographical, though with subtle indications of deeper environmental intent. The need to care for the environment is proclaimed, though without a direct call to action, leaving open for interpretation whether concern lies with the environment as a grand resource worth appreciating and protecting or with increasing sales through a clever, value-laden marketing prop.

The Hopworks Brewery (HB) Ridiculous IPA eco-label design illustrates eco-screening. The prevailing visual feature of the label design is a cartoon image of a fictional curled horned, furry creature with a platypus-like face. Immediately above the cartoon image is a wrap-around banner that repeatedly reads “Protect Our Planet.” Environmental concern is signaled through the banner, albeit in tandem with a playful, somewhat absurd cartoon character. The jovial tone is further amplified by the absence of a call to action, one that seriously directs consumers on how to go about protecting the planet, whether through consumption choices or otherwise. In short, the banner is a pre-iconographic feature that is somewhat easy to interpret, but relatively difficult to act on via hedonistic consumption practices such as craft beer drinking.

Triangulation with the HB website provides ample evidence of the sincerity and strategic robustness driving the vague “Protect Our Planet” proclamation. Specifically, the HB [52] website includes a thorough environmental impact report that describes how the brewery is engaged in conservation via green building, sustainable sourcing, and sustaining low carbon outputs. Conservation is clearly an authentic, actionable value of HB. However, the eco-label design on its own fails to reflect such sincerity with the “Protect our Planet” proclamation serving as a subtle provocation more so than a clear call to action. The eco-screening label type is thus characterized by direct environmental messaging minus discernable steps for consumer action. Eco-screening alludes to conservation as a value more directly and intently than with eco-clouding, albeit somewhat voyeuristically without discernable (or sincere) indication of a call to action. In the case of the HB Ridiculous IPA eco-label, the cartoon creature provides no pre-iconographic leads into the intended message, thus serving as an iconological symbol whose meaning is dependent on consumer interpretation. Importantly, both the eco-cloud and eco-screen types may be grounded in a genuine conservation commitment. Though, neither type involves designs that adequately convey the genuineness of the intended eco-message nor provide consumers with markers to adequately guide them through the interpretative context and toward subsequent action.

4.3. *Eco-Conserving*

The eco-conserving eco-label type aligns closely with conservation, i.e., prioritizing environmental care in ways that center human appreciation, recreation, and the sustainable harvesting of natural resources. The distinguishing characteristic of an eco-conserving design is an iconological progression that builds to a call to action to participate in conservation practices. The iconological progression of The Freefolk Brewery (TFB) Candy Darter sumac sour eco-label illustrates this pattern. The label features a colorful, well-detailed sketch of a Candy Darter fish. Opposite the sketch is the following text that is foregrounded atop of what appears to be bubbles floating in the stream alongside the fish:

The rippling streams in the Gauley, Greenbrier, and New River Watersheds hold a stunningly beautiful treasure, the federally endangered Candy Darter. The opportunity

to witness these brightly colored fish swimming with splashes of teal, scarlet, and yellow is rapidly decreasing. They are known to hybridize with the Variegated Darter, which naturally blocked from swimming upstream by the Kanawha Falls, were likely introduced by the use of live bait. There are several organizations that are working towards protecting the Candy Darter, but you can play your part as well. Please be sure to throw an unused bait in the trash, not in the water [53].

Superimposed above the statement in a lighthearted, handwritten font that reads “Wild & Free Experimental Series.” This series includes seven different beers, each of which features an endangered species or species of concern from the Appalachian region where TFB is located. Each of the seven eco-labels centers its species in a similar sketch design and includes facts about the species and information on its endangered status (see Table 1). In short, the entire series collectively illustrates the eco-conserving type.

Table 1. The Freefolk Brewery Wild & Free Eco-conserving eco-label-types.

Free & Wild Series Featured Species/Beer-Type	Conservation Messages and Description Links
Alleghany-alligator/Chocolate Cherry Chili Stout	“Part of the proceeds are donated to Friends of the Cheat to assist preserving this unique species.” https://freefolkbrew.com/alleghany-alligator/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
Hickory Horned Devil Caterpillar/Maple Cream Ale	“This Ale is made to highlight the Hickory Horned Devil Caterpillar, a regionally endangered species in Appalachia.” https://freefolkbrew.com/hickory-horned-devil/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
Guyandotte Blue Crayfish/Berliner Weisse	“This Crayfish was added as a federally endangered species in 2016. Parts of the proceeds donated to WV Rivers.” https://freefolkbrew.com/blue-crawdad/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
WV Northern Flying Squirrel/Pale Ale	“A portion of the proceeds donated to Central Appalachian Spruce Restoration Initiative (CASRI).” https://freefolkbrew.com/flying-squirrel/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
Cerulean Warbler/Saison	“Highlighting the Cerulean warbler, a migratory songbird that is listed as a species of concern.” https://freefolkbrew.com/cerulean-warbler/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
Candy Darter/Kettle Sour	“Found in WV streams and rivers these brightly colored fish are on the Federally Endangered list.” https://freefolkbrew.com/candy-darter/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)
VA Big Eared Bat/Brown Ale	“This brew features the federally endangered VA Big Eared Bat.” https://freefolkbrew.com/big-eared-bat/ (accessed on 6 July 2026)

Eco-conserving labels intentionally guide consumers toward the intended message without fully displacing their individual interpretative autonomy. The Wild & Free eco-labels connect consumers with the species through beautifully detailed sketches and natural-looking, text-informed images, such as a tree bark scroll on the TFB pale ale label that describes for the consumer the importance of spruce trees to the health of WV northern flying squirrel population. The calls to action across the seven Freefolk Wild & Free eco-labels are more subtle than direct, setting consumers up to autonomously infer the intended message. The messages are not prescriptive—i.e., there are no firm directives telling consumers how to change their conservation views and practices. By intimating the message rather than asserting it, the consumers are positioned to come to the desired conclusion for themselves, thereby internalizing the information and associated meaning they ultimately concluded for themselves.

Portions of the profits earned from the TFB Wild & Free series beer go to conservation agencies or initiatives. Consumers are gently encouraged to contribute to specific conservation challenges by way of beer consumption. The market orientation of this indirect messaging could be conceived as greenwashing, though far more label space is dedicated to the species and their plights than to the beer or brewery, signaling sincere environmental concern. There is a second, more nuanced call to action in each of the Wild & Free eco-

labels, which is made through the exposition of the species. TFB exposes consumers to the species in relatively agnostic ways, seeding the call to know more and care more about the regional environment and the species it supports. The sketches and accompanying text about the species and their protective status are pre-iconographic—i.e., overt, easily interpreted cues. The texts that describe the species and their plights are iconographic in that understanding and internalizing the brevity of the message by consumers relies on their recognition and appreciation of the relative contexts. For instance, the impact of the eco-conserving calls to action requires TFB consumers to contextualize the message specific to their local and regional environment and its importance to their own life and connection to surrounding nature. The iconological elements of each of the TFB Wild & Free eco-labels shape gentle, unspecific calls to action. Without specific directives, consumers must contemplate if and how they may engage in conservation in new or different ways. This requires self-interpretation, which in turn enhances the likelihood that any new pro-environmental practices will be sustained and scaled. The iconological progression of the TFB Wild & Free series thus positions consumers to make sense of and act on the eco-messages being conveyed in self-determined ways.

The iconological progression observed across the TFB Wild & Free series was also observed in eco-labels of other breweries, including a suite of label designs co-created by Wind River Brewery and the University of Wyoming Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources as part of their Wyld Life series [54]. Overall, the distinctive feature of the eco-conserving label-type is an iconological progression that leads to calls to action to practice responsible and sustainable environmental consumption. Importantly, iconological progression influences the eco-conserving label-types by not only signaling calls to action, but also by creating interpretative spaces in which consumers can ruminate and respond to the environmental messaging in self-directed ways.

4.4. *Eco-Preserving*

We found no evidence of eco-labels that distinctly align with environmentalism—i.e., designs that are ideologically oriented at protecting the environment for the sake of the environment. Nonetheless, we build off the eco-conserving label-type to tentatively conceptualize the likely design elements of an eco-preserving label-type. Calls to action associated with the eco-preserving label-type extend from the integration of conservation messaging with notions of environmental hedonism. We imagine the eco-preserving label-type would convey more stringent, if not extreme environmental messaging, perhaps even encouraging consumers to drink less beer (or none altogether) to further reduce (or eliminate) the water used, carbon emitted, and so on, from the start of production to the point of consumption.

For instance, the hedonistic messaging of the AWBC eco-clouding label for the AWBC “This Beer Saves Water” IPA could be transformed into an eco-preserving label if the hedonistic signals were revised to align with environmentalism as a form of environmental engagement. Specifically, we imagine the name of the beer being changed to “Drinking Less of This Beer Saves Water.” Encouraging consumers to consume less product is counter-productive from a conventional marketing perspective, but potentially fruitful from the environmental perspective. From a social marketing perspective, the audacious proclamation encouraging less beer consumption and more environmental stewardship would genuinely bolster AWBC’s “green brand” identity, albeit at the risk of reducing profit margins.

We imagine the iconological progression patterns of the eco-preserving label-type generally matching that of the eco-conserving type—i.e., progression design patterns that through interpretative markers lead consumers to calls to action that provoke self-directed

action. The distinction between eco-preserving and eco-conserving label-types is not with the iconological progression and how the design signals a message, but rather with the message itself. The difference between conservation and environmentalism, recall, is that the former advocates for environmental engagement for the sake of conserving the environment for future human use and enjoyment, whereas the latter advocates for environmental engagement for the sake of the environment. In the most straightforward sense, beer production and consumption are not human necessities. Thus, an eco-preserving label would in the strictest sense discourage beer production and consumption altogether. Environmental hedonism would be discouraged in an eco-preserving label, perhaps even shunned. Environmental stewardship would be urged, even if that translates to foregoing the product being socially marketed altogether.

The absence of compelling examples of the eco-preserving label-type as we imagine it here is not surprising. Few, if any businesses should be expected to discourage the consumption of their own products. The intensity, rigidity, and sometimes militancy of environmentalism complicates eco-oriented marketing strategies. Any eco-label design or messaging that falls short of genuinely prioritizing the protection of the environment risks signaling hedonism or even greenwashing.

5. Discussion and Implications

The preceding findings lead us to propose the PEMD typology shown in Table 2. The typology illustrates subtle variations in the structure and flow of pro-environment marketing devices and forecasts how said variations influence consumer engagement with the environmental messaging being conveyed. By accounting for such variations, the practice and study of pro-environment marketing strategies can move beyond the genuine eco-messaging-greenwashing binary by accounting for such variations. The typology guides the development of compelling, actionable pro-environment messaging that fosters brand identity in rich and genuine ways. It is important to note that the value of embedding environmentalism and conservation in a brand identity is dependent on the authenticity of the enterprise as demonstrated through its consistent and observable engagement in sustainable practices [55]. Consumer trust in and loyalty to brands is heavily influenced by perceptions of authenticity [56]. A local craft brewery that claims environmental values and promotes pro-environment behaviors through messaging and marketing but in practice provide no tangible evidence of a commitment to sustainable practices are more likely to be seen as inauthentic and thus unlikely to productively influence the environmental behaviors and perceptions of consumers. In short, telling stories about environmentalism and conservation through branding devices (e.g., eco-labels) will not quench consumers' thirst for authenticity; sustained and transparent sustainable practices are necessary to enhance the likelihood that branding strategies shape consumer behaviors and perceptions beyond the product or service being sold [57]. Noting our current aim has not been to interrogate the authenticity of the brands behind the eco-labels, strongly encourage future research that empirically tracks and analyzes the implications of brewery authenticity on the effectiveness of eco-labels as pro-environment devices.

The PEMD typology provides pro-environment marketers with a novel resource to shape their design strategies in ways that push messaging beyond clouding and screening toward more compelling and effective calls to action by way of conversing and preserving. Recalling craft beer is a known pro-environment industry [5,6], two operating assumptions of the typology are: (1) greenwashing is not an intended practice across the sector and (2) eco-clouding and eco-screening devices stem from an over-abundant effort to avoid any potential indication of greenwashing. The typology directly addresses these assumptions by informing designs that firmly assert genuine pro-environment messaging while mitigating

the risk of greenwashing. As with all qualitative research, our findings are specific to the breweries included in the sample. While we took steps to enhance the confirmability and transferability of the insights generated by our cases (e.g., researcher triangulation, audit trail, thick descriptions) [46,47], future research that refines the typology through its application to other breweries is encouraged.

Table 2. Pro-environment marketing device typology.

Device	Environmental Engagement	Iconological Progression Elements	Iconological Progression Pattern (IPP)
Eco-clouding	Environmental hedonism	Iconological-dominate, little to no pre-iconographic or iconographic markers	IPP fails to signal intended environmental engagement
Eco-screening	Environmental hedonism/ Conservation-light	Iconological-dominate, passive to shallow iconography, no pre-iconographic markers	IPP highlights environmental feature(s) without conservationist or environmentalist call to action
Eco-conserving	Conservation	Pre-iconography/iconography flow to interpretative iconological call to action	IPP leads to a conservationist call to action
Eco-preserving	Environmentalism	Pre-iconography/iconography flow to interpretative iconological call to action	IPP leads to an environmentalist call to action

In addition to countering greenwashing, the typology stands to mitigate the risks of greenhushing. Greenhushing entails businesses avoiding talking about the environment altogether so as not to bring attention to deficiencies in or the altogether absence of sustainability practices [52]. Greenhushing typically aims to hide sustainability shortfalls by ignoring the conversation/topic altogether, thereby signaling environmental apathy. Craft breweries risk signaling greenwashing through vague claims of conservation and environmentalism and greenhushing through overly modest (or no) pro-environmental messaging on the other. The typology supports eco-label designs that (a) tell the story and project and affirm a brewery's brand and (b) call consumers to action when it comes to conservation and environmentalism. Such designs capture authentic concern for the physical environment and assert calls to action, thus signaling genuine conservation and environmental intent.

The current study is conceptual in aim, thereby preventing us from asserting any claims regarding eco-label types and efficacy pertaining changes in consumer behaviors and perceptions relative to the nature environment. Accordingly, future research that empirically probes and tests the efficacy of each eco-label type to productively influence the environmental behaviors and perceptions of consumers is warranted. Studies that explore the firm-level orientation of eco-labeling (and eco-branding more generally) are also called for. Here, we selected breweries that through preliminary fieldwork were determined to have genuine concern for and commitment to the natural environment. Future interrogations of the multiple orientations and incentives, to include those that are economic and organizational in nature, that converge (or compete) with pro-environment orientations would fruitfully expand the current line of inquiry. Such future work should explore the perspectives and incentives of brewery owners, marketers, and designers and examine the organizational logics that guide firm-level eco-branding practices. Indeed, the eco-label typology we have constructed here represents a strong conceptual foundation from which to empirically advance and diversify the understanding and efficacy of pro-environment branding.

Implications for Social Marketing Theory and Practice

The influence and engagement each eco-label type has on the consumer, and the intention of the designer remains up for discernment. To illustrate, the eco-clouding type appeared more iconological rather than iconographical, with passive environmental themes that leave the consumer ample room to discern the message. Theoretically, we can infer that labels that appear more iconological—i.e., abstract in nature with ample conceptual space for individual interpretation, may lead to genuine environmental intent when not seen at first glance as a shallow greenwashing attempt. Carrying our example from the findings, the “This Beer Saves Water” labeling simply makes a statement without apparent intent and a clear call to action. This messaging risks leaving readers wondering *how* and *if* the beer saves water. Yet, consumers who are familiar with the environmental passion and action behind the AWBC brand may be compelled to independently engage in conservation or environmentalism on their own terms without any direct or indirect cues or directions. Future research should examine the efficacy of eco-clouding approaches in both elevating the brand recognition of breweries and advancing conservation and environmental goals. Such research should remain especially attentive to how consumer engagement in eco-branding influences consumer perceptions of the authenticity of a brand’s environmental values and how such perceptions influence their individual views and actions that pertain to the natural environment.

Eco-screening advances in iconographic signaling, providing a clearer direction to the environmental message *without* a direct call to action. As such, eco-screening labels may enhance engagement with the intended environmental storyline through specificity. This strategy positions the label at the intersection of direct messaging and autonomy, potentially striking the balance between persuasive intent and co-creation. In comparison, the eco-conserving type features the most pre-iconography/iconography cues ending in a call-to-action that motivates conservation behaviors. The benefits and tradeoffs of the inclusion of calls to action, direct and implied, warrant empirical attention. Research has demonstrated how social labeling may convey environmental values that prime pro-environmental self-identity and subsequent environmental actions [58,59]. Coupled with studies linking brewery environmental practice with purchase intentions [30,60], this scholarly avenue is likely to advance more robust, data informed sustainable practices among craft breweries.

Authenticity, intent, and strategic creativity are required when designing and advancing powerful pro-social messages with the promise of being translated into intended practices and behaviors. We have generated new insights into how iconological progression can elevate the messaging and performance of brand labels and other social marketing devices. These insights are both nascent and preliminary. Ongoing research that continues to qualitatively explore the intersection of aesthetics and designs with pro-social impact and quantitatively examines the efficacy and shortfalls of the typology across and between firms in various industries.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, T.A.F., J.L.K. and M.M.M.; methodology, T.A.F. and M.M.M.; formal analysis, T.A.F. and M.M.M.; writing—original draft preparation, T.A.F. and M.M.M.; writing—review and editing, M.M.M. and J.L.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Data are fully available through the websites of each of the breweries featured in the article.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

AWBC	Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co.
HB	Hopworks Brewery
IPA	India Pale Ale
PEMD	Pro-environment marketing device
TFB	The Freefolk Brewery

References

- de Freitas Netto, S.V.; Sobral, M.F.F.; Ribeiro, A.R.B.; Soares, G.R.D.L. Concepts and forms of greenwashing: A systematic review. *Environ. Sci. Eur.* **2020**, *32*, 19. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Scales, I.R. Green consumption, ecolabelling and capitalism's environmental limits. *Geogr. Compass* **2014**, *8*, 477–489. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Wright, A.J.; Veríssimo, D.; Pilfold, K.; Parsons, E.C.M.; Ventre, K.; Cousins, J.; Jefferson, R.; Koldewey, H.; Llewellyn, F.; McKinley, E. Competitive outreach in the 21st century: Why we need conservation marketing. *Ocean Coast. Manag.* **2015**, *115*, 41–48. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mars, M.M.; Talmage, C. From place to space: Toward a more inclusive view of the neo-local brewery. In *The Geography of Beer: Policies, Perceptions and Place*; Patterson, M., Hoalst-Pullen, N., Eds.; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2023; pp. 189–204.
- Carr, G.; Brown, N.; Clark, K.; McBarnes, C.; Phillips, T.; Shreve, T.; Willis, I.; Hochard, J. Emerging approaches to conservation fundraising and the case of "WYldlife for Tomorrow". In *From Local to Global: Eco-Entrepreneurship and Global Engagement with the Environment*; Foerster, T., Koprowski, J., Mars, M., Eds.; Emerald: Leeds, UK, 2024; pp. 39–50.
- Foerster, T.A.; Koprowski, J.L.; Mars, M.M. Where everybody knows your cause: Local eco-consumption spaces and local eco-branding. In *From Local to Global: Eco-Entrepreneurship and Global Engagement with the Environment*; Foerster, T., Koprowski, J.L., Mars, M.M., Eds.; Emerald: Leeds, UK, 2024; pp. 21–38.
- Phillips, B.J.; McQuarrie, E.F.; Griffin, W.G. How visual brand identity shapes consumer response. *Psychol. Mark.* **2014**, *31*, 225–236. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mars, M.M. Looking behind the label: Firm-centric brand storytelling and the development of local consumption spaces. *Local Dev. Soc.* **2023**, *4*, 370–392. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Ness, B. Beyond the pale (ale): An exploration of the sustainability priorities and innovative measures in the craft beer sector. *Sustainability* **2018**, *10*, 4108. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mertig, A.G.; Dunlap, R.E. Environmentalism, new social movements, and the new class: A cross-national investigation. *Rural Sociol.* **2001**, *66*, 113–136. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Fletcher, R. Neoliberal environmentalism: Towards a poststructuralist political ecology of the conservation debate. *Conserv. Soc.* **2010**, *8*, 171–181. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Saunders, C. Double-edged swords? Collective identity and solidarity in the environment movement. *Br. J. Sociol.* **2008**, *59*, 227–253. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
- Zachariah, G. Unsettling environmentalism. *Int. Rev. Mission* **2024**, *113*, 23–38. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Kotler, P.; Roberto, N.; Lee, N. *Social Marketing—Improving the Quality of Life*; Sage: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2002.
- Lefebvre, R.C. Transformative social marketing: Co-creating the social marketing discipline and brand. *J. Soc. Mark.* **2012**, *2*, 118–129. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Wood, M. Social Marketing for Social Change. *Soc. Mark. Q.* **2016**, *22*, 107–118. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Green, K.M.; Crawford, B.A.; Williamson, K.A.; DeWan, A.A. A Meta-analysis of social Marketing campaigns to improve global conservation outcomes. *Soc. Mark. Q.* **2019**, *25*, 69–87. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- McDermott, L.; Stead, M.; Hastings, G. What is and what is not social marketing: The challenge of reviewing the evidence. *J. Mark. Manag.* **2005**, *21*, 545–553. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Jones, S.C.; Wyatt, A.; Daube, M. Smokescreens and beer Goggles: How alcohol industry CSM protects the industry. *Soc. Mark. Q.* **2016**, *22*, 264–279. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Jones, E. Brewing green: Sustainability in the craft beer movement. In *Craft Beverages and Tourism, Volume 2*; Slocum, S., Kline, C., Cavaliere, C., Eds.; Palgrave Macmillan: London, UK, 2018; pp. 9–26.

21. Sozen, E.; O'Neill, M.; Rahman, I. An exploratory study of US craft brewery owners' motivations for adopting environmental practices. *Int. J. Contemp. Hosp. Manag.* **2022**, *34*, 713–736. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
22. Veleva, V.; Todorova, S.; Bleau, K.; Mohr, J.; Vandenabeele, R. Environmental priorities, drivers and barriers in the craft beer sector: Insights from Massachusetts breweries. *Highlights Sustain.* **2024**, *3*, 275–293. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
23. Chan, E.K. The role of personal relevance in the value creation process of edutainment consumption. *J. Consum. Behav.* **2019**, *18*, 190–204. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
24. Donadini, G.; Porretta, S. Uncovering patterns of consumers' interest for beer: A case study with craft beers. *Food Res. Int.* **2017**, *91*, 183–198. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
25. Oldenburg, R.; Brissett, D. The third place. *Qual. Sociol.* **1982**, *5*, 265–284. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
26. Mathews, V. The place of the public under COVID-19. *Can. Geogr./Géogr. Can.* **2022**, *66*, 632–638. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
27. Carrillo, B.; Barbieri, C. Thriving in a world of giants: Craft breweries' workings in a major tourism destination. *J. Travel Res.* **2024**, *64*, 1001–1015. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
28. Ikäheimo, J.P. Artic narratives: Brewing a brand with neolocalism. *J. Brand Manag.* **2021**, *28*, 374–387. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
29. Serviss, M.T.; Van Hout, D.; Britton, S.J.; MacIntosh, A.J. Brewing for the future: Balancing tradition and sustainability. *J. Am. Soc. Brew. Chem.* **2025**, *84*, 121–139. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
30. Lee, N.M.; Callison, C.; Seltzer, T. Sustainable beer: Testing the effects of water conservation messages and brewery type on consumer perceptions. *J. Food Prod. Mark.* **2020**, *26*, 619–638. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
31. Müller, M.G. Iconography and Iconology as a Visual Method and Approach. In *The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods*; Margolis, E.M., Pauwels, L., Eds.; SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2011; p. 283.
32. Seifert, C.; Chattaraman, V. A picture is worth a thousand words! How visual storytelling transforms the aesthetic experience of novel designs. *J. Prod. Brand Manag.* **2020**, *29*, 913–926. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
33. Crilly, N.; Moultrie, J.; Clarkson, P.J. Seeing things: Consumer response to the visual domain in product design. *Des. Stud.* **2004**, *25*, 547–577. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
34. Da Silva, O.; Crilly, N.; Hekkert, P. How people's appreciation of products is affected by their knowledge of the designers' intentions. *Int. J. Des.* **2015**, *9*, 21–33.
35. Panofsky, E. *Perspective as Symbolic Form*; Zone Books: Brooklyn, NY, USA, 1991.
36. Stake, R.E. *Multiple Case Study Analysis*; Guilford: New York, NY, USA, 2006.
37. Gerring, J. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2007.
38. Baškarada, S. Qualitative case study guidelines. *Qual. Rep.* **2014**, *19*, 1–18. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
39. Swanborn, P. *Case Study Research: What, Why, and How?* Sage: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2010.
40. Chatzidakis, A.; Maclaran, P.; Bradshaw, A. Heterotopian space and the utopics of ethical and green consumption. *J. Mark. Manag.* **2012**, *28*, 494–515. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
41. Bechter, B.; Brandl, B.; Meardi, G. Sectors or countries? Typologies and levels of analysis in comparative industrial relations. *Eur. J. Ind. Relat.* **2012**, *18*, 185–202. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
42. Alvarez, S.; Timler, C.J.; Michalscheck, M.; Paas, W.; Descheemaeker, K.; Tittone, P.; Andersson, J.A.; Groot, J.C. Capturing farm diversity with hypothesis-based typologies: An innovative methodological framework for farming system typology development. *PLoS ONE* **2018**, *13*, e0194757. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
43. Niknazar, P.; Bourgault, M. Theories for classification vs. classification as theory: Implications of classification and typology for the development of project management theories. *Int. J. Proj. Manag.* **2017**, *35*, 191–203. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
44. Ayres, L.; Knafl, K.; Fisher, L.; Ransom, D. Typological analysis. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*; Sage: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2008. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
45. Rose, G. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2nd ed.; Sage: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2007.
46. Terry, G.; Hayfield, N.; Braun, V.; Clarke, V. Thematic analysis. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology*; Willig, C., Rogers, W.S., Eds.; Sage: Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2017; pp. 17–37.
47. Lofland, J.; Snow, D.; Anderson, L.; Lofland, L.H. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4th ed.; Wadsworth: Belmont, CA, USA, 2006.
48. Archibald, M.M. Investigator triangulation: A collaborative strategy with potential for mixed methods research. *J. Mix. Methods* **2016**, *10*, 228–250. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
49. Lincoln, Y.S.; Guba, E.G. *Naturalistic Inquiry*; Sage: Newbury Park, CA, USA, 1985.
50. Malterud, K. Qualitative research: Standards, challenges, and guidelines. *Lancet* **2001**, *358*, 483–488. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
51. Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co. About. Available online: <https://azwbeer.com/about> (accessed on 6 July 2026).
52. Hopworks Brewery. Planet. Available online: <https://www.hopworksbeer.com/planet> (accessed on 6 July 2026).
53. The Freefolk Brewery. Candy Darter. Available online: <https://freefolkbrew.com/candy-darter/> (accessed on 6 July 2026).
54. The WYldlife Fund. Introducing the Pronghorn Pilsner: A Brew for Wildlife Conservation. Available online: <https://thewyldlifefund.org/pronghorn-pilsner/> (accessed on 6 July 2026).

55. Bulmer, S.; Palakshappa, N.; Dodds, S.; Harper, S. Sustainability, brand authenticity and Instagram messaging. *J. Bus. Res.* **2024**, *175*, 114547. [[CrossRef](#)]
56. Safeer, A.A.; Liu, H. Role of corporate social responsibility authenticity in developing perceived brand loyalty: A consumer perceptions paradigm. *J. Prod. Brand Manag.* **2023**, *32*, 330–342. [[CrossRef](#)]
57. Thurnell-Read, T. A thirst for the authentic: Craft drinks producers and the narration of authenticity. *Br. J. Sociol.* **2019**, *70*, 1448–1468. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
58. Khan, N.; Nieto-Garcia, M.; Acuti, D.; Viglia, G. An investigation of how and why organizations enact greenhushing. *J. Advert. Res.* **2026**, *66*, 150–173. [[CrossRef](#)]
59. Jin, H.; Oh, J. How Social Labeling Enhances Pro-Environmental Intentions: Identity and Anticipated Guilt as Mediators. *Soc. Mark. Q.* **2025**, *31*, 123–142. [[CrossRef](#)]
60. Staples, A.J.; Reeling, C.J.; Widmar, N.J.O.; Lusk, J.L. Consumer willingness to pay for sustainability attributes in beer: A choice experiment using eco-labels. *Agribusiness* **2020**, *36*, 591–612.

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.