AI and Sustainable Consumer Decision-Making: A Conceptual Extension of the SEE Model

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an integral part of consumer decision-making. It influences how individuals perceive and take sustainable decisions yet, its role in sustainability-oriented behavior remains underexplored. This paper conceptually extends the SEE model comprising of "Sustainable Packaging, Eco-Labelling, and Emotional Appeals", by incorporating AI-assisted decision support as a moderator. Using a structured questionnaire based on 5-point likert scale, data was collected from 254 respondents. Data was analysed using PLS-SEM (partial least square-structural equation modelling). The model tests the moderating role of AI assistance on the relationship between green purchase intention (GPI) and green purchase behavior (GPB). The study reveals that AI significantly moderates this relationship at +1 SD (high AI use) ($\beta = 0.744$, $p = 0.002$). Suggesting that consumers may perceive AI tools as relevant and useful while making sustainable choices. Moreover, the findings demonstrate a significant positive relationship between green purchase intention (GPI) and green purchase behavior (GPB) (p values < 0.05), confirming that intention strongly predicts green behavior. But the mediating role of green purchase intention (GPI) was found to be statistically insignificant. These insights offer practical guidance and also contribute to emerging literature in this domain.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Green purchase intention (GPI), Eco-friendly products, sustainable behavior, green consumption

1. Introduction

Due to increased awareness of ecological degradation and climate change, sustainable consumption has evolved over the years. Consumers today are exposed to a wide range of sustainability signs such as eco-labels, green packaging elements and environmentally concerned emotional appeals which affects their choices. Despite the desire for eco-friendly consumption, consumers could have diverse perceptions and intentions of eco-friendly products. Their acceptability of green products is based upon various factors and it is yet to know about consumers' attitudes towards green purchase (Nguyen et al., 2020). Green purchasing behavior (GPB), "the purchase of products and services that minimize environmental harm, has been identified as a central mechanism for advancing sustainable consumption" (Shang et al., 2024). Past researches have shown that environmental knowledge and environmental attitude influence eco-friendly behavior (Zhang et al., 2021).

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Parallel to the growth of sustainable consumption, technological advances have transformed the consumer decision-making landscape. Consumers are using artificial intelligence while decision making to make better choices. AI-driven personalization, such as recommendation systems, targeted marketing, and chatbot support, can increase user engagement by adapting information to customer requirements and values (Shrirame et al., 2020; Surbakti et al., 2024). These artificial intelligence systems are expected to enhance the intention–behavior link by reducing cognitive load, providing relevant information and simplifying decision making (Ameen et al., 2021). However, research examining the use of AI in sustainable decision making and consumption is still at a nascent stage. This study proposes a conceptual extension of the SEE model by introducing AI-Assistance as a moderating variable between Green Purchase Intention (GPI) and Green Purchase Behavior (GPB). Following are the research objectives of the study:

1.1 Research Objectives

i. To assess the impact of Sustainable Packaging, Eco-Labelling, and Emotional Appeals (SEE) on Green Purchase Intention.
ii. To determine the effect of Green Purchase Intention on Green Purchase Behavior.
iii. To examine the mediating effect of green purchase intention (GPI) on purchase behavior of consumers.
iv. To analyze the moderating role of AI-assistance on the intention-behavior relationship.

1.1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to extend the previous SEE model of sustainable consumer behavior by integrating artificial intelligence (AI assistance) into the decision-making framework. Specifically, the study aims to analyze how sustainable packaging, eco-labelling, and emotional appeals influence green purchase intention. And whether green purchase intention (GPI) predicts green purchase behavior (GPB). The study also determines whether AI-assisted decision support strengthens the relationship between green purchase intention and actual green purchase behavior. Through this extension, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the role of AI in eco-friendly decisions. It also evaluates whether AI bridges the intention–behavior gap (Carrington et al., 2014) in green consumption. Earlier studies did not incorporate all the variables along with AI in predicting green purchase behavior. To fill the research gap, this study was taken into consideration.

2. Review of Literature

The growing concern over environmental degradation and research on consumer behavior for sustainable products has grown rapidly in the recent years. The previous literature also shows sustainable development concerns and integration of sustainability factors into consumer decision-making (Sorout et al., 2025). From the previous literature, several constructs were identified which contributes to the green purchase intention of consumers. A multidimensional framework of consumer behavior regarding sustainable products is proposed. A conceptual model with Eco-labelling, Sustainable packaging and Emotional appeals affecting green purchase behavior of

consumers with green purchase intention acting as a mediating variable. Along with this, AI assistance is also added as a moderator between green purchase intention and green purchase behavior. The variables taken from the extant literature are defined as:

Sustainable Packaging (S): As per Sustainable Packaging Coalition (SPC) (2011), "Sustainable packaging is beneficial, safe and healthy for individuals and communities throughout its life cycle; meets market criteria for performance and cost; is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable energy; maximizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials; is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices; is made from materials healthy in all probable end of life scenarios; is physically designed to optimize materials and energy; and is effectively recovered and utilised in biological and/or industrial cradle-to-cradle cycles".

Eco-Labelling (E): As per UNEP, "Eco-labels are a means of measuring performance and also communicating and marketing the environmental credentials of a given product".

Emotional Appeals (E): "Emotional appeals represent a psychological, social or symbolic desire that motivates consumers to purchase the product because of the feelings it elicits". (Hall,1963; Albers-Miller & Stafford, 1999; Kotler et al., 2010)

Green Purchase Intention (GPI): "Consumers' willingness to purchase a green product over other non-green products in their purchase consideration is referred as green purchase intention". (Hassan, 2013)

Green Purchase Behavior (GPB): "Green purchasing behavior (GPB) refers to purchasing environmentally friendly products also referred to as sustainable products or green products". (Soomro et al., 2020)

AI- assistance: "AI-Assisted Decision Support refers to intelligent, data-driven systems that use machine learning, predictive analytics, and algorithmic recommendations to support and enhance consumer decision-making by providing personalized, timely, and context-specific information" (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018; Shankar, 2022; Ameen et al., 2021).

The key constructs have been summarized in the form of a table (table 1) below:

Table 1: Key Constructs used

Construct	Description	Primary Function in GPI Formation	Key Psychological Pathway	Reference
Sustainable Packaging (SP)	Packaging designed to minimize environmental impact and appeal to eco-conscious consumers.	Information transfer & Choice Ease	Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	Meena Rani et al., (2025)
Eco-Labelling (EL)	The presence of verified sustainability labels that signal green credibility.	Trust, Credibility, Risk Reduction	Reduction of Green Skepticism	Liu et al., (2025)

Emotional Appeals (EA)	Marketing messages that evoke feelings of responsibility, empathy, or pride in sustainability.	Intrinsic Motivation & Reinforcement	Altruism, Self-expression, Pride/Guilt	Li (2025)
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)	The consumer's willingness or plan to buy environmentally friendly products.			
Green Purchase Behavior (GPB)	The actual act of purchasing eco-friendly products.			
AI-Assisted Decision Support (AIDS)	The extent to which AI technologies (e.g., recommendation systems, product rating algorithms, sustainability chatbots) influence consumer choices.			

Based on the following parameters, a conceptual framework is proposed for the study. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the constructs, where Green Purchase Intention (GPI) is taken as a mediator and AI- assistance is taken as a moderator.

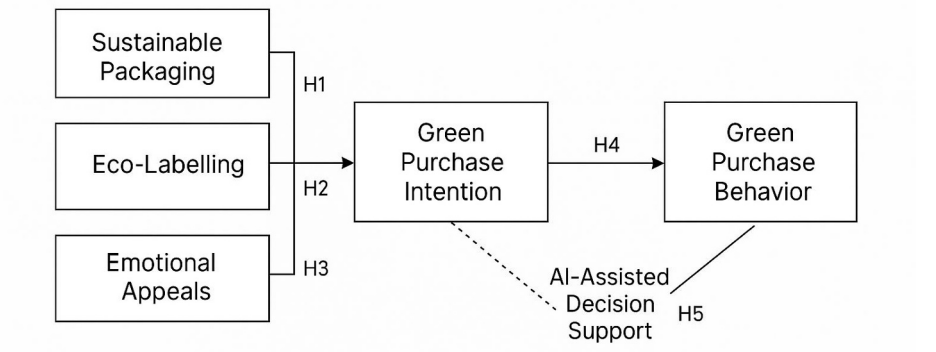

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study

2.1 Hypothesis development

Based on the reviewed studies and above framework, the following hypothesis were framed:

H_1: Sustainable Packaging positively influences Green Purchase Intention.
H_2: Eco-Labelling positively influences Green Purchase Intention.
H_3: Emotional Appeals positively influence Green Purchase Intention.
H_4: Green Purchase Intention positively influences Green Purchase Behavior.
H_5: AI-Assisted Decision Support moderates the relationship between Green Purchase Intention and Green Purchase Behavior

Three additional hypotheses were also proposed to test the mediating relationship:
H_6: Green Purchase Intention (GPI) mediates the relationship between eco-labelling and eco-friendly purchase behavior.
H_7: Green Purchase Intention (GPI) mediates the relationship between eco-friendly packaging of products and sustainable purchase behavior.
H_8: Green Purchase Intention (GPI) mediates the relationship between emotional appeal of a product and sustainable purchase behavior.

3. Research Methodology

The study analyses the relationship between factors affecting sustainable consumption and the intention to buy green products. Through a literature derived framework and using a quantitative approach, the research focusses on delving into the interplay of sustainable consumption behavior patterns. For collecting data, consumers ranging from 18-60 years of age were approached and due to paucity of time 205 responses were collected. Consumers were approached in-person as well as in online mode using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed on a 5-point Likert scale. It was taken into consideration that no negatively worded questions, socially charged questions or double-barreled questions were included in the questionnaire. The analysis was done using PLS-SEM along with bootstrapping method and the results of the analysis were presented in tabular form in the paper.

4. Research Findings

The analysis was done using PLS SEM through a two-step method. Both measurement model and structural model was developed. The measurement model developed through ‘confirmatory factor analysis’ (CFA) included both Convergent and Discriminant validity. While the structural model included path analysis and mediation analysis.

4.1 Measurement model evaluation (Convergent Validity)

In the measurement model, both convergent validity and discriminant validity approaches were used in order to assess the reliability of the data as well as the validity and the constructs (F. Hair Jr et al., 2014; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The convergent validity was assessed using factor(item) loadings, composite reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha, and Average variance Extracted (AVE). Statements with values lower than the benchmark values were deleted from the questionnaire and not considered in the analysis. The VIF values were also calculated in order to check multi-collinearity issues. In order to validate the measurement model, the convergent validity was assessed and the results are presented in table1.

Table 2: Convergent validity

Constructs	Items	Factor loading	Cronbach alpha	CR	AVE	VIF values
Sustainable Packaging	SP1	0.631	0.567	0.778	0.544	1.682
	SP2	0.885				1.975
	SP3	0.672				1.339
Eco-Labelling	EL1	0.957	0.842	0.883	0.716	1.790
	EL2	0.782				2.176
	EL3	0.789				2.169
Emotional Appeals	EA1	0.931	0.675	0.829	0.629	2.825
	EA2	0.861				2.637
	EA3	0.528				1.117
Green Purchase Intention	GPI1	0.924	0.742	0.841	0.653	2.267
	GPI2	0.933				2.585
	GPI3	0.485				1.246
AI Assistance	AI1	0.937	0.713	0.868	0.767	1.443
	AI2	0.811				1.443
Green Purchase Behavior	GPB1	0.788	0.876	0.909	0.668	1.978
	GPB2	0.857				2.960
	GPB3	0.893				2.808
	GPB4	0.824				2.145
	GPB5	0.713				1.871

The measurement model was assessed using factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and variance inflation factor (VIF) values to ensure construct reliability and validity. The constructs or variables being studied are shown in the first column and items used to measure these constructs are shown in the second column. All the values are above the benchmark values, showing the accuracy of the model. Factor loadings, which reflects the association between each item and its corresponding construct are shown in the third column of the table. The values of Cronbach alpha reflecting the internal consistency or dependability of the items within each construct are over the acceptable value of 0.5. The values of composite reliability (CR) which shows the correlation between different items of the construct and Average variance extracted (AVE) reflecting the proportion of the construct's variance based on all the items of the construct are also above the acceptable value of 0.5. This shows strong convergent validity within the constructs. Moreover, the values of VIF of all the items are also within the acceptable limit i.e. less than 5 showing no issues of multi-collinearity. After thorough consideration, some statements with lower factor loadings and higher VIF values were removed from the questionnaire (hair et al., 2014).

4.2 Measurement model evaluation (Discriminant Validity)

Discriminant validity measures the degree of independence between measures of distinct qualities. In order to measure it, two approaches are used, one is "heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations"

(HTMT) proposed by Henseler et al., (2015). The correlations between constructs (Heterotrait) must be lower than the correlations within constructs (Monotrait). As a primary criterion, the HTMT ratio should be below an established threshold value of 0.85 or 0.9 (Ermawati, 2018; Clark and Watson, 2019; Roemer et al., 2021). To verify the discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion is also used and the results of both the approaches are shown in the table 3 and 4.

Table 3: HTMT Ratio

	AI assistance	**Eco-Labelling**	**Emotional Appeal**	**Green Purchase Behavior**	**Green Purchase Intention**	**Sustainable Packaging**	**AI assistance x Green Purchase Intention**
AI assistance							
Eco-Labelling	0.254						
Emotional Appeal	0.786	0.235					
Green Purchase Behavior	0.695	0.194	0.71				
Green Purchase Intention	0.568	0.336	0.67	0.771			
Sustainable Packaging	0.461	0.255	0.7	0.693	0.728		
AI assistance x Green Purchase Intention	0.26	0.269	0.252	0.142	0.231	0.41	

Table 4: Farnell Larcker Criteria

	AI assistance	Eco-Labelling	Emotional Appeal	Green Purchase Behavior	Green Purchase Intention	Sustainable Packaging
AI assistance	0.876					
Eco-Labelling	0.008	0.846				
Emotional Appeal	0.595	0.136	0.793			
Green Purchase Behavior	0.584	0.129	0.545	0.817		
Green Purchase Intention	0.478	0.289	0.366	0.682	0.808	
Sustainable Packaging	0.185	0.159	0.438	0.558	0.533	0.738

According to Farnell Larcker criteria, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct (shown on the diagonal in bold) should be greater than its correlations with all other constructs (off-diagonal values) (Hair et al., 2019). In the table shown above (table 4), each construct shows a diagonal value higher than all correlations in its respective row and column, indicating that discriminant validity is well established across the model. Each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, confirming that the latent variables in the SEE–AI model (Sustainable Packaging, Eco-Labelling, Emotional Appeals, Green Purchase Intention, Green Purchase Behavior, and AI Assistance) are empirically distinct from one another. Therefore, the measurement model satisfies the recommended threshold for discriminant validity.

4.3 Structural model assessment

The Structural model assessment shows the results of path analysis and mediation analysis using the analysis of Coefficients (β), P-values, T-values, Standard errors, and confidence interval bounds (upper & lower limits), derived via 5000-bootstrap resampling method in PLS- SEM. The proposed hypotheses were tested with a p-value threshold of 0.05. Figure 2 shows the structural relationship between the constructs and p-values determining the acceptance or rejection of a hypothesis.

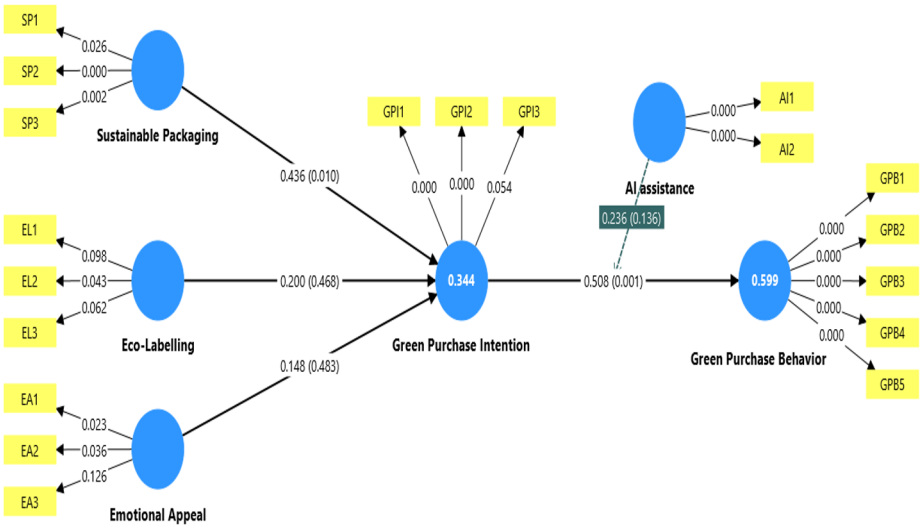

Fig. 2: Structural model assessment [source: authors' creation using Smart PLS 4]

The structural model results provide insight into how the SEE variables (Sustainable Packaging, Eco-Labelling, Emotional Appeal) influence Green Purchase Intention (GPI), and how GPI subsequently affects Green Purchase Behavior (GPB), along with the moderating effect of AI-assisted decision support. The model reveals that sustainable packaging predicts green purchase intention, while eco-labelling and emotional appeal were statistically non-significant. This suggests that although eco-labels and emotional messages are often effective in sustainability marketing, their influence depends heavily on consumers' trust, familiarity, and perceived credibility of the information (Delmas & Grant, 2014; Thøgersen, 2000).

Table 5: Path analysis

Path analysis	Beta Coefficient	Standard deviation	T statistics	P values	L L	U L	Remarks
AI assistance -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.389	0.162	2.400	0.016	0.098	0.729	significant
AI assistance x Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.236	0.158	1.489	0.136	-0.13	0.537	Insignificant
Eco-Labelling -> Green	0.200	0.275	0.725	0.468	-0.418	0.492	Insignificant

Purchase Intention							
Emotional Appeal -> Green Purchase Intention	0.148	0.211	0.701	0.483	-0.391	0.499	Insignificant
Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.508	0.154	3.293	0.001	0.095	0.736	significant
Sustainable Packaging -> Green Purchase Intention	0.436	0.169	2.583	0.010	0.067	0.724	significant

The findings of path analysis (table 6) include regression-coefficients (beta), standard deviation (SD), t-statistics, p-values (P), confidence interval limits (LL & UL), and observations on the association between the independent variables (Sustainable Packaging, Eco-labelling, Emotional Appeal) and Green Purchase Intention as a mediator and AI assistance as moderator) and the dependent variable (Green Purchase Behavior). Sustainable packaging shows a positive and statistically significant relationship with green purchase intention (H_1) ($\beta = 0.436$, $p = 0.010$). But eco-labels and emotional appeal did not significantly influence green purchase intention (H_2, H_3). AI-assisted decision tools have a direct positive effect on green purchasing behavior ($\beta = 0.389$, $p = 0.016$) and green purchase intention also positively influences green purchase behavior (H_4) ($\beta = 0.508$, $p = 0.001$).

The results of mediation analysis (table 7) (H_6, H_7, H_8) were non-significant, indicating that green purchase intention did not mediate the relationships between the SEE variables and green purchase behavior. This supports the findings of Carrington et al., (2014) regarding the intention–behavior gap. In addition to this, AI assistance moderates the relationship between green purchase intention and green purchase behavior at +1 SD (high AI use) ($\beta = 0.744$, $p = 0.002$, significant) and at the mean level ($\beta = 0.508$, $p = 0.001$). The results are shown in table 6.

Table 7: Mediation Path analysis

Mediation path	Beta Coefficient	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p values	L L	U L	Remarks
Emotional Appeal -> Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.075	0.116	0.649	0.516	-0.184	0.284	No mediation

Sustainable Packaging -> Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.222	0.120	1.845	0.065	0.012	0.461	No mediation
Eco-Labelling -> Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior	0.101	0.138	0.735	0.463	-0.191	0.306	No mediation

Table 8: Moderation Path analysis

Moderation path	Beta Coefficient	Standard deviation	t-statistics	p values	L L	U L	Remarks
Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior AI assistance at +1 SD	0.744	0.240	3.094	0.002	0.208	1.132	Moderation
Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior AI assistance at -1 SD	0.272	0.200	1.364	0.173	-0.132	0.663	No moderation
Green Purchase Intention -> Green Purchase Behavior AI assistance at Mean	0.508	0.154	3.293	0.001	0.095	0.736	Moderation

Based on the findings of the study, a summary of hypothesis testing is presented in the form of a table (table 8).

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	SP → GPI	Supported
H2	EL → GPI	Not Supported
H3	EA → GPI	Not Supported
H4	GPI → GPB	Supported

H5	AI-assistance moderates GPI → GPB	Partially Supported (significant at mean and +1SD; not significant at –1SD)
H6	Mediation: EL → GPI → GPB	Not Supported
H7	Mediation: SP → GPI → GPB	Not Supported
H8	Mediation: EA → GPI → GPB	Not Supported

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide important insights about influence of sustainability factors and AI assistance on green purchase behavior. Among the SEE variables, sustainable packaging emerged as a significant antecedent of green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.436$, $p = 0.010$). This reinforces prior evidence suggesting that consumers rely heavily on packaging-based sustainability (Magnier & Schoormans, 2015). Consumers are more attracted towards green products through the packaging of the product in a sustainable way. On the other hand, eco-labelling and emotional appeals did not significantly influence green purchase intention. Their p-values are more than 0.05, suggesting less influence on consumers. In markets where eco-label knowledge is limited, consumers may disregard these labels or fail to understand their meaning, which makes them less effective. Lack of awareness among consumers act as a hinderance in the purchase intention. Similarly, emotional appeals often require alignment with personal values to be effective (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). Hypothesis 1 is supported while hypothesis 2 and 3 are rejected based on the results. In consistency with the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), green purchase intention significantly predicted green purchase behavior. This supports earlier findings that consumers are more likely to behave sustainably when intentions are grounded in personal norms and perceived behavioral control (Carrington et al., 2014). Thereby, supporting hypothesis 4 of the study.

Moreover, the moderating effect of AI-assistance on GPI and GPB depends on user engagement. AI-assistance partially moderates the relationship between purchase intention and green behavior. Although the overall interaction term was not significant, AI significantly strengthened the intention–behavior link at mean and high levels (+1 SD) of AI usage. The beta values ($\beta = 0.744$, $p = 0.002$) suggests that AI enhances green behavior only when consumers actively engage with AI tools. The assistance in the form of recommendations and sustainable information filters may influence consumers intention towards green purchase behavior. The finding aligns with studies showing that AI can improve decision clarity, reduce information overload (Sorout & Singh, 2025) and support more sustainable choices (Ameen et al., 2021; Shankar, 2022). However, at low levels of AI usage (–1 SD) moderation was not significant ($\beta = 0.272$, $p = 0.173$, >0.05). Reasons could

be lack of AI awareness among consumers or low trust in AI-generated suggestions. The results are consistent with Longoni et al., (2019), who argue that some users might reject algorithmic recommendations, where moral issues are involved. As far as mediating effect is concerned, it is insignificant in all the cases. Green purchase intention (GPI) did not significantly mediate any of the SEE factors (p values > 0.05). Despite of its major impact on behavior, it does not fully explain how sustainability factors translate into action. This aligns with the study of intention–behavior gap (Carrington et al., 2014). The results of hypothesis testing are presented above in the form of a table along with supporting or rejecting reasons. The overall findings of the study suggest that AI tools are helpful but not yet fully integrated into sustainability decision-making. Consumers use these tools selectively and cautiously while making decisions.

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