

Green Legitimacy Strategies: Symbolic Convergence in The Sustainability Reports of Sido Muncul and BioFarma

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Abstract

The increasing demands on sustainable business practices encourage companies to not only demonstrate good environmental performance, but also communicate them effectively to stakeholders. However, there is still a gap between sustainability implementation and the company's ability to build legitimacy through persuasive communication. This study aims to analyze the green legitimacy strategy and the construction of the rhetorical vision built in the sustainability report of pharmaceutical companies that receive PROPER Gold in Indonesia. The research used a qualitative approach with a narrative analysis method based on Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) and Aristotle's rhetoric which includes ethos, logos, and pathos. Data was obtained from the sustainability reports of PT Bio Farma and PT Sido Muncul in 2024 which were analyzed through the identification of fantasy themes, structural themes, dynamic themes, and persuasion strategies. The results of the study show that PT Bio Farma builds legitimacy through the dominance of logos that emphasizes technological transformation, energy efficiency, and compliance with global ESG and SDGs standards. In contrast, PT Sido Muncul develops legitimacy through a balanced combination of logos, ethos, and pathos rooted in local cultural values, social harmony, and community empowerment. The findings of the study revealed that the rhetorical vision built by the two companies differed according to the characteristics of the intended stakeholders. This research enriches the study of sustainability communication by integrating the context of PROPER and Symbolic Convergence Theory in the analysis of the green legitimacy of pharmaceutical companies in Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has become a global agenda that has gained increasing attention in the last two decades. Through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed by the United Nations in 2015, governments, the private sector, and communities are encouraged to realize development that is not only oriented towards economic growth, but also pays attention to social and environmental sustainability (Assoratgoon & Kantabutra, 2023). However, the implementation of sustainable development still faces various challenges, such as capacity inequality between countries, weak sustainability governance, and suboptimal involvement of the business community in supporting the achievement of SDGs targets (Fietz & Günther, 2021). These conditions show that the success of sustainable development is not only determined by government policies, but also by a company's commitment to integrating sustainability principles into its business strategy and operational practices (Perramon et al., 2024).

One of the main factors influencing the emergence of sustainability problems is industrial activities that produce large-scale environmental impacts. The manufacturing, energy, and pharmaceutical sectors are some of the sectors that are often associated with high greenhouse gas emissions, intensive use of natural resources, and waste production that has the potential to pollute the environment (Al-Hakimi et al., 2022). On the other hand, the increasing demands of regulators, investors, consumers, and society for responsible business practices have prompted companies to implement Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles as part of their corporate strategy (Dennison et al., 2024). These changes in stakeholder expectations cause companies to no longer only show good economic performance, but must also be able to prove their contribution to environmental and social sustainability through transparent and accountable communication (Asif et al., 2024).

These factors produce various strategic consequences for the company. Organizations that fail to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability risk losing public trust, facing regulatory pressure, and experiencing a decline in reputation in the eyes of investors and consumers. On the other hand, companies that are able to integrate sustainability into organizational culture and business strategy have the opportunity to gain stronger social legitimacy, improve the company's reputation, and strengthen long-term competitiveness (N. Kadek Jayanti et al., 2024). In the Indonesian context, the government has developed the Corporate Performance Rating Assessment Program in Environmental Management (PROPER) as an instrument for evaluating and monitoring the company's environmental performance. The program not only serves as an environmental control tool, but also serves as an indicator that companies can use to build a green image and increase stakeholder trust (Jannah et al., 2020).

The main variables in this study are the green legitimacy strategy and the construction of a rhetorical vision in the company's sustainability report. The green legitimacy strategy refers to the company's efforts to gain public recognition and acceptance through the delivery of commitments, policies, and sustainability achievements that are in line with environmental values. Meanwhile, the construction of a rhetorical vision is the process of forming a collective meaning through the narrative conveyed in organizational communication. In the context of sustainability reporting, companies not only present data and information about environmental activities, but also build stories that aim to influence stakeholder perceptions, beliefs, and support. According to Bormann (2009), this process can be explained through Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT), which is a theory that explains how narratives and symbols are able to form a common understanding in a group through fantasy themes, rhetorical visions, and various other symbolic elements. In practice, green legitimacy strategies and rhetorical visions are important instruments for companies to build stronger relationships with the public as well as strengthen the sustainability identity they want to display (Hossain et al., 2019).

This research has an element of novelty that distinguishes it from previous research. Most previous studies on PROPER have focused more on environmental compliance aspects, the influence of PROPER on company performance, or its impact on organizational reputation. On the other hand, research on sustainability communication generally focuses on the quality of reporting and disclosure of sustainability information without examining in depth how companies construct symbolic reality through the narratives used in sustainability reports. Therefore, this study offers a new perspective by integrating the PROPER Program as a national regulatory context and Symbolic Convergence Theory as a framework for communication

analysis to explain how pharmaceutical companies build green legitimacy through the construction of a rhetorical vision in their sustainability reports. This approach is still relatively rarely used in the study of corporate communication and sustainability in Indonesia.

This research has an element of novelty that distinguishes it from previous research. Most previous studies on PROPER have focused more on environmental compliance aspects, the influence of PROPER on company performance, or its impact on organizational reputation (V. Winardi Kusumo, 2017). On the other hand, research on sustainability communication generally focuses on the quality of reporting and disclosure of sustainability information without examining in depth how companies construct symbolic reality through the narratives used in sustainability reports (Wang, 2016). Therefore, this study offers a new perspective by integrating the PROPER Program as a national regulatory context and Symbolic Convergence Theory as a framework for communication analysis to explain how pharmaceutical companies build green legitimacy through the construction of a rhetorical vision in their sustainability reports. This approach is still relatively rarely used in the study of corporate communication and sustainability in Indonesia.

The urgency of this research is even more important considering that there is still a gap between the company's environmental performance achievements and the company's ability to communicate sustainability effectively. PROPER data for the 2023–2024 period shows that of the 4,495 companies assessed, only a small percentage obtained Gold and Green ratings, while the majority of companies are still in the minimum compliance category (Life, 2025). This condition shows that sustainability practices have not fully become an organizational culture and are often still seen as a mere administrative obligation. In addition, sustainability reports that are technical and data-oriented are often less able to build emotional engagement with stakeholders, so the effectiveness of sustainability communication is limited (Hadiyah Fitriyah et al., 2020). Therefore, a deeper understanding of communication strategies is needed that is able to connect rational, moral, and emotional aspects in building company legitimacy.

Based on these problems, this study aims to analyze the green legitimacy strategy constructed in the sustainability reports of pharmaceutical companies that receive Gold PROPER in Indonesia. In particular, this study aims to identify symbolic themes used in corporate sustainability narratives, analyze the formation of rhetorical visions through elements of Symbolic Convergence Theory, and explain how Aristotle's rhetorical elements consisting of ethos, logos, and pathos are used to gain legitimacy from stakeholders. Through the analysis of the sustainability reports of PT Bio Farma and PT Sido Muncul, this study seeks to explain the sustainability communication patterns used by companies in building a green image and obtaining social support.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with an interpretive descriptive method to understand how pharmaceutical companies build green legitimacy through narratives in sustainability reports. This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal the meaning, symbols, and communication strategies used by the company in shaping stakeholder perception of the sustainability commitments carried out. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research focuses on understanding the meanings constructed by individuals and organizations in a particular social context so it is relevant to examine the construction of

sustainability narratives in corporate reports (W. Creswell & N. Poth, 2018). This research is directed to identify how pharmaceutical companies construct the reality of sustainability through the use of symbolic themes, persuasion strategies, and rhetorical visions built into sustainability reports. Thus, the research examines not only what the company communicates, but also how the message is shaped to gain social and environmental legitimacy.

The research was conducted on pharmaceutical companies operating in Indonesia and have participated in the Company Performance Rating Assessment Program in Environmental Management (PROPER). The research object is focused on pharmaceutical companies that obtain a Gold PROPER rating and publish sustainability reports publicly through the company's official website. Data collection is carried out during 2025 using the latest sustainability report published by the company in 2024. The selection of the period was made because the report represents the current state of the company's sustainability implementation and is relevant to the development of global and national sustainability reporting standards.

This research covers several key aspects related to corporate sustainability communication. The first aspect is the symbolic themes (fantasy themes) that companies use in building sustainability narratives. The second aspect is the narrative structure consisting of the main character (dramatic personae), plotline, scene, and source of legitimacy (sanctioning agent). The third aspect is a dynamic theme that includes pragmatic, social, and moral dimensions. The fourth aspect is the strategy of persuasion which is analyzed through the elements of Aristotle's rhetoric, namely ethos, logos, and pathos (Stephen W. Littlejohn, 2009). Through these four aspects, the research seeks to explain how companies build sustainability identities, communicate organizational values, and gain legitimacy from stakeholders.

The research population was all pharmaceutical companies in Indonesia that participate in the PROPER program and have a Green and Gold rating. The population was chosen because companies that fall into this category are considered to have shown a commitment to environmental management and corporate sustainability. Sample determination was carried out using purposive sampling techniques, which is sample selection based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives (W. Creswell & N. Poth, 2018). The criteria used include pharmaceutical companies that have the status of public companies (Tbk), participate in the PROPER program, have public access to sustainability reports, and receive the Gold PROPER award. Based on these criteria, the study identified seven pharmaceutical industry groups as initial data sources, namely Kalbe Farma Group, Pyridam Farma Group, Bio Farma, Phapros, Kimia Farma, Sido Muncul Group, and Soho Global Health Group. After the data search, the study focused on PT Bio Farma and PT Sido Muncul because both companies have the most representative sustainability reports and show the achievement of Gold PROPER consistently.

The main source of data for the research is in the form of sustainability report documents published by PT Bio Farma and PT Sido Muncul in 2024. The document was chosen because it contains comprehensive information about the company's policies, programs, achievements, and sustainability communication strategies. Secondary data were obtained from various scientific literature related to sustainability communication, organizational legitimacy, Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT), Aristotle rhetoric, ESG, SDGs, and OWN regulations. The literature is used to strengthen the interpretation of research results and build a relevant conceptual framework.

The main instrument in this study is the researcher himself (human instrument) who plays a role in identifying, grouping, interpreting, and drawing meaning from the data obtained. To support the analysis process, the researcher used an analysis matrix that integrates Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) and Aristotle's rhetoric.

The matrix includes the identification of fantasy themes, structural themes, dynamic themes, as well as ethos, logos, and pathos elements. In addition, the research utilizes artificial intelligence assistance (ChatGPT) as a tool in the initial coding process, theme identification, and thematic data visualization. The use of artificial intelligence is carried out as a supporting instrument and does not replace the interpretation process carried out by researchers (Squier & Booth, 2023).

Data collection was carried out through documentation studies. The first stage is carried out by identifying pharmaceutical companies that meet the research criteria. The next step is to download the sustainability report available on the company's official website. All documents are then collected and selected based on relevance to the research objectives. The documents that have been collected are analyzed in depth to identify themes related to green legitimacy, sustainability communication strategies, and the construction of the company's rhetorical vision. This process allows researchers to understand how companies convey sustainability messages to stakeholders through narratives built into sustainability reports.

Data analysis was carried out in stages using a theory-driven thematic analysis approach with reference to Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) developed by Bormann (2009). The analysis focused on identifying the symbolic themes that form the collective perception of corporate sustainability (Hossain et al., 2019). The analysis process is carried out through several stages. First, the data is reduced by selecting the parts of the report that are relevant to the focus of the research. Second, the data is classified into predefined theme categories. Third, the data is compiled in the form of an analysis matrix to facilitate the identification of patterns of relationships between variables. Fourth, interpretation of the themes that arise is carried out to understand the meaning that the company has built in its sustainability narrative. The research also uses Framework Analysis to organize data systematically to facilitate the interpretation process (Christou, 2023). The analysis is then deepened with Aristotle's rhetorical approach which includes ethos as a representation of corporate credibility, logos as a form of rational data-based argumentation, and pathos as an effort to build emotional attachment with stakeholders (Stephen W. Littlejohn, 2009).

To ensure the validity of the data, the research applies the principle of trustworthiness which includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Creswell, 2013). Validation is carried out through triangulation between the results of artificial intelligence-assisted analysis and manual examination of the original document. The researcher also verified using the document search feature (Ctrl+F) to ensure the conformity of the coding results with the content of the sustainability report. The entire analysis process is systematically documented to maintain transparency and allow the research audit process to be re-conducted if necessary (Nicmanis & Spurrier, 2025). Through these stages, the research is expected to be able to produce credible findings and provide a comprehensive overview of green legitimacy strategies and the construction of rhetorical visions in the sustainability reports of pharmaceutical companies in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Researchers conducted an analysis of Biofarma and Sidomuncul's sustainability reports, using the Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) framework and Aristotle's rhetorical analysis (Ethos, Logos, Pathos). This study revealed how sustainability narratives are not only conveyed, but are deliberately constructed to create certain symbolic realities, build consensus with stakeholders, and ultimately gain social legitimacy.

Analysis of Rhetorical Elements and Fantasy Themes in Sustainability Reports

Analysis of the two reports reveals striking differences in the emphasis of the persuasive style and fantasy themes presented, which reflect the character and identity strategy of each company.

1. PT Bio Farma: A Rational-Instrumental Vision with Global Legitimacy

Table 1. Analysis of Fantasy Themes and PT Bio Farma's Green Legitimacy Strategy in the 2024 Sustainability Report (based on Ethos, Logos, Pathos)

No	Example of Fantasy Type words	Appears on the page	frequency of occurrence	Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			Explanation
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	<i>Beyond Compliance</i>	9, 67, 76, 204, 205, 210	6x	V	-	-	in accordance with PROPER values, it confirms credibility and moral leadership in environmental compliance.
2	<i>Green Company</i>	9, 67, 75, 206, 206,	5x	-	-	V	in accordance with the PROPER context which is emotionally charged (<i>pathos</i>) about companies committed to the environment
3	<i>Green Process</i>	9, 67, 75, 82, 206, 208	6x	-	V	-	According to PROPER assessment, focus on energy efficiency, waste reduction, and emission control, data-based narrative and logic.
4	<i>Green Supply</i>	9, 67, 75, 209	4x	-	V	-	According to PROPER assessment and rational/logical systemic approach
5	<i>Energy Efficiency</i>	9, 82, 190(5), 191(5), 192(5), 193(5), 207, 213, 218, 219(10), 220(8),	51x	-	V	-	According to the PROPER assessment, energy efficiency rationalization through reducing electricity and fuel consumption.

		221(2), 226(2), 240(2), 355, 377					
6	<i>Emission Reduction</i>	226, 324, 334, 355, 363	5x	-	V	-	According to PROPER assessment, data-based narrative and sustainability indicators, strengthen the logic of green companies.
7	<i>Industrial / Digital / Technology Transformation</i>	5(2), 31(2), 50	5x	-	V	-	Bio Farma is positioned as an agent of change that balances technology and ecology.
Total / percentage of occurrences				6x ≈ 7.3%	71x ≈ 86.6%	5x ≈ 6.1%	The dominance of logos over ethos and pathos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Fantasy type</i> emphasizes more than compliance with regulations in various ways dominated by energy efficiency. - The dominance of logos indicates a persuasive style that emphasizes the data-based logical narrative presented in the sustainability report as a basis for providing self-identity to the reader or audience. 							

Bio Farma presents itself as a highly rational entity oriented towards global standards. The dominance of Logos (86.6%) in the Fantasy Theme is proof of this. Logos as the Main Foundation: Bio Farma builds its arguments based on measurable data, technology, and processes. The most prominent Fantasy Type is "Energy Efficiency," which appears 51 times, accompanied by the narratives "Green Process," "Green Supply," and "Emission Reduction." This is a fantasy of control, a narrative that emphasizes the company's ability to manage its resources and environmental impact with scientific precision and technical efficiency. The ongoing digital and industrial transformation reinforces this image, positioning Bio Farma as a modern, structured, and predictable company.

The dominance of Logos (86.6%) in Bio Farma's Fantasy Theme isn't just an indication of the abundance of data, but rather a philosophical statement that sustainability is a scientific project that must be proven with measurable metrics. Every time they mention "energy efficiency" (51x), they are building an argument: that the path to a sustainable future lies through rational optimization and technological innovation. Logos here serves as a shield against skepticism, where every claim is protected by verifiable data.

However, this hyper-rational approach carries its own risks. By minimizing Pathos to 6.1%, Bio Farma could potentially be perceived as an overly mechanistic entity, disconnected from the pulse of humanity. The narrative of "community empowerment" (10x) presented as Pathos feels like compensation, an attempt to show the "soul" in a near-perfect machine, but it still doesn't become the main thrust of their story.

Ethos through External Legitimacy: Bio Farma's credibility is built not only on internal claims, but also on alignment with external authorities. Within the Structural Theme, ESG and SDGs serve as the primary Sanctioning Agents, appearing 32 times in total. By referencing this global framework, Bio Farma is not simply reporting its activities; it is "resting" its credibility on globally recognized standards. The "Beyond Compliance" narrative (appearing 14 times) is the culmination of this ethos strategy, implying that the company's moral integrity extends

beyond simply complying with the law to a higher level of ethics.

Pathos as a Complement: Pathos's role is deliberately minimized (only 6.1% in the Fantasy Theme). When present, such as in the community empowerment narrative, it serves as a counterbalance, demonstrating that this highly technocratic corporation still has "heart." However, this human touch does not become the primary driving force of the narrative.

Overall, Bio Farma's Fantasy type is "Sustainability as a Globally Legitimized Technocratic Project Conducted Beyond Compliance." They invite stakeholders to share the belief that the path to a sustainable future is through scientific innovation, rigorous governance, and adherence to international norms.

2. PT Sido Muncul: A Vision of Emotional Harmony with Local Wisdom

In contrast to Bio Farma, Sido Muncul builds a warmer, more emotional narrative rooted in local values. The nearly even balance between Logos (36.6%), Pathos (37.7%), and Ethos (25.7%) in its Fantasy Theme reflects a holistic approach.

Table 2. Analysis of Fantasy Themes and PT Sido Muncul's Green Legitimacy Strategy in the 2024 Sustainability Report

No	Example of Fantasy Type words	Appears on the page	frequency of occurrence	Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			Explanation
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	Growing harmoniously towards sustainability	1, 2, 217	3x	-	-	V	This narrative instills moral and spiritual values of sustainability, representing PROPER's signature <i>fantasy of harmony</i> .
2	Sido Selaras	14(5), 15(3), 16, 18, 41, 50, 52, 55, 65, 82, 121, 160, 185	19x	-	-	V	Corporate symbolism rooted in the five pillars of sustainability: environment, inclusion, well-being, product integrity, and sustainable supply. It displays a <i>fantasy of order</i> , a systemic narrative, and moral values aligned with the environment and society.
3	Reducing emissions (GHG, Carbon)	14, 15, 45, 46, 81, 83(2), 88, 92(3), 93, 97, 98, 99, 189	17x	-	V	-	Demonstrate scientific control over environmental impacts and meet PROPER emission control aspects
4	Efficiency (water, energy)	7, 14(2), 46, 50, 53, 82(3), 83(2),	20x	-	V	-	Rationalization of resource control: 7% reduction in water intensity and 68%

		86(2), 89(3), 90, 91, 99, 193					increase in renewable energy. Building a highly technocratic <i>fantasy of control</i> that aligns with PROPER.
5	Renewable energy	29, 44(2), 46, 51, 55(3), 81, 84(2), 85, 88(2), 89, 92, 93, 94(2), 95(2), 96, 97(2), 98, 197	26x	V	-	-	<i>Fantasy of purity</i> that strengthens the green reputation according to PROPER
6	Agrotourism (including nature conservation)	7(4), 54, 55, 83, 116(5), 117(3), 139	16x	-	-	V	A visual image that combines tradition, nature, and education. It becomes a <i>fantasy of sustainable heritage</i> rooted in local wisdom.
Total / percentage of occurrences				26x ≈ 25.7%	37x ≈ 36.6%	38x ≈ 37.7%	Sido Muncul's 2024 Sustainability Report conveys a powerful narrative of ecological and social harmony , combined with rational control and compliance with standards .

- Sido Muncul's 2024 Sustainability Report exudes a *Fantasy type* or strong narrative about the pharmaceutical industry that always maintains **ecological and social harmony**, combined with **rational control and standard compliance**.
- The balance of the persuasive styles of ethos, logos and pathos, shows that Sido Muncul considers balance and strengthening the emotions of the community important by empowering the community and harmony with local residents.

Fantasy style can be summed up as "Sustainability as a Path to Ecological and Social Harmony." They encourage stakeholders to believe that successful businesses grow with their communities and environment, in a mutually beneficial and familial relationship.

Pathos and the Quest for Harmony: The soul of Sido Muncul's reporting is Pathos. Its primary Fantasy Types are "Growing Harmoniously" and "Sido Selaras." These are powerful fantasies of harmony, seeking to evoke feelings of peace, harmony with nature, and togetherness. Agrotourism (appears 16x) is more than just a facility; it is a visual symbol of this fantasy an ideal world where business, nature, and society beautifully blend. The involvement of "Farmer Partners" is also not just a CSR program, but part of a narrative of mutualism and extended family that touches the reader's emotional side.

The balance of Pathos (37.7%) and Logos (36.6%) at Sido Muncul demonstrates an integrative philosophy of sustainability. For them, sustainability is not just about what is measured, but also about what is felt and believed. The narratives "Tumbuh Harmonis" and "Sido Selaras" are not mere slogans; they are emotional anchors that evoke feelings of

nostalgia, togetherness, and connectedness with nature. Agrotourism (16x) serves as a physical pathos, a tangible evidence that can be seen and experienced, making it more easily gripping the reader's heart. Interestingly, Logos is not abandoned. Data on emission reduction (17x) and efficiency (20x) are presented not as the primary goal, but as supporting evidence of the commitment to harmony. In this context, Logos becomes the servant of Pathos; numbers are used to prove that the "harmony" they proclaim is real and is being managed seriously.

Humanized Logos: While Logos are still dominant (50.5% in Dynamic Theme), their presentation differs from Bio Farma's. The narratives of "Environmentally Friendly" (appearing 28 times) and "Emission Reduction" (17 times) are not simply presented as raw data, but are framed as a manifestation of a commitment to maintaining "harmony." The UBET (Eling Tonggo Joint Business) program uses an empowerment logic, but its name, which is rich in cultural meaning (eling = remember; tonggo = neighbor), elevates it from a mere technical program to a narrative of togetherness.

Value-Based Ethos and Internal Policies: Sido Muncul builds its credibility from within. Its Sanctioning Agent is the "Five Pillars of Sustainability" and the "Sido Selaras" philosophy, which stems from the company's own values. Unlike Bio Farma, which adopts a global framework, Sido Muncul emphasizes its autonomy and cultural identity. This builds an Ethos based on consistency and authenticity. They are a company deeply connected to Javanese cultural roots and Indonesian locales.

An analysis of Bio Farma and Sido Muncul's sustainability reports reveals that both companies do not simply report on their activities, but strategically construct complex narratives through a combination of classical rhetorical elements and modern fantasy themes.

Both companies, despite their differing strategies, use Ethos as their ultimate foundation. The difference lies in the source of that ethos. Bio Farma seeks exogenous legitimacy by using ESG and SDGs as sanctioning agents. This is a secure and globally recognized legitimacy strategy. Sido Muncul, on the other hand, builds its ethos endogenously by creating its own sanctioning agent through the "Five Pillars of Sustainability" and the "Sido Selaras" philosophy. This is a riskier strategy but also more powerful if successful, as it builds a strong image of authenticity and independent identity.

Fantasy themes reflect the companies' DNA and strategic positioning. Bio Farma, as a state-owned vaccine company, must appear to be a "good guy" that complies with all global regulations. Sido Muncul, as a private herbal company, must feel like "part of the family" to Indonesian consumers. Therefore, every word, data, and narrative in their sustainability reports is not a coincidence, but rather a strategic weapon in the fight to gain the approval and legitimacy of their respective stakeholders.

Identification of Rhetorical Vision Construction and Communication to Stakeholders

Both companies do not simply convey information, but actively construct reality through SCT elements.

Table 3. Structural Theme Analysis and Rhetorical Vision Formation of PT Bio Farma from the Perspective of Symbolic Convergence Theory

No	Examples of Structural theme words (dramatic personae, plotline, scene, sanctioning agent)	Appears on the page	Calculation of frequency of occurrence	Choose appropriate Aristotelian model			Explanation
				Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	Dramatis personae						
	Biofarma as the initiator of the national life science research forum	103(2), 295(2)	4x	V	-	-	Leadership practices are described as conveying moral values, integrity, and strategic direction.
	Community (internal, external)	37, 65, 176, 178, 187, 315, 323, 351, 371(2)	10x	-	-	V	Social actors who emphasize the meaning of sustainability based on humanitarian concerns
2	<i>Plotline</i>						
	Corporate transformation (technology, digitalization, business models, research, services)	4, 5(2), 50, 103, 135(2), 184(3), 295	11x	-	V	-	A transformative path towards a world-class organization with social and scientific responsibility
3	<i>Scene</i>						
	<i>Life science</i> company (world class)	5, 6, 7(3), 71, 103, 104, 126	9x	-	V	-	Technical background that demonstrates rationality and scientific evidence for quality and safety
	<i>Beyond Compliance (green company)</i>	9(2), 67(2), 75, 76(2), 204, 205(2), 206(3), 210	14x	V	-	-	Environmental flow that describes the transformation towards green business beyond PROPER regulations
4	<i>Sanctioning Agent</i>						
	ESG (<i>Environment</i> ,	8, 32, 65, 78, 80, 82,	19x	V	-	-	Global values used to legitimize

<i>Social, Governance)</i>	84, 86, 90(2), 154, 155(2), 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 353					Bio Farma's sustainability policy direction
SDGs (Sustainability Development Goals)	7, 11, 44, 68, 73, 76, 83, 311, 316, 321, 370(3)	13x	V	-	-	
Total / Percentage of Occurrence			50x ≈ 62.5%	20x ≈ 25%	10x ≈ 12.5%	The dominance of ethos is something that is wanted to be highlighted as the company's identity.

- **The dramatis personae** are Bio Farma itself as a visionary initiator and various communities as partners. The plotline **centers** on the company's transformation toward a more modern future, while the setting **portrays** Bio Farma as a world-class life sciences company committed to going beyond mere regulatory compliance. Most importantly, this entire narrative gains legitimacy and credibility from **sanctioning agents** in the form of global frameworks like ESG and SDGs.
- Biofarma's Sustainability Report predominantly relies on ethos (62.5%), building the company's credibility and character through alignment with global standards (ESG, SDGs) and a commitment to *going beyond compliance*. Logos support (25%) is evident in the presentation of the company's rational and structured transformation path, providing a logical basis for each strategic step. Meanwhile, a touch of pathos (12.5%) is present to touch the reader's emotional side, particularly through an emphasis on community involvement and concern, thus going beyond numbers and logic to building human bonds.

Formation of Symbolic Reality through Structural and Dynamic Themes: Both Structural Themes (dramatic personae, plotline, scene, sanctioning agent) and Dynamic Themes (pragmatic, social, righteous) function as bricks to build their "narrative world".

Bio Farma creates a world where Bio Farma, the Initiator (dramatist personae), leads the Technocratic Transformation (plotline) towards becoming a World-Class Life Science Company (scene), following ESG and SDGs guidelines (sanctioning agent). This world is logical, structured, and meets international standards.

Biofarma's Stakeholder Communication Strategy: Bio Farma focuses on vaccines and biological products, and its target stakeholders are governments, institutional investors, and global health organizations (such as the WHO). These groups are highly sensitive to credibility, adherence to standards, and technological capacity. Bio Farma's technocratic, globally standardized rhetoric directly addresses these expectations.

Table 4. Structural Theme Analysis and Rhetorical Vision Formation of PT Sido Muncul from the Perspective of Symbolic Convergence Theory

No	Examples of Structural theme words (dramatic personae, plotline, scene, sanctioning agent)	Appears on the page	Calculation of frequency of occurrence	Choose appropriate Aristotelian model			Explanation
				Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	Dramatis personae						
	Farmer Partners	13, 18, 174, 186, 187, 190	6x	-	-	V	Social actors who demonstrate inclusivity and mutualistic relationships with companies.
	Farmer groups	19, 142, 185, 190	4x	-	-	V	
2	<i>Plotline</i>						
	Environmentally friendly (products, business, operations, technology, energy)	5, 10(2), 34, 42, 43(3), 44, 45(3), 46(2), 51, 52, 80, 81, 84, 85, 87(2), 89, 91, 176, 193, 195, 197	28x	-	V	-	The narrative flow emphasizes and emphasizes all things related to being environmentally friendly, both from the products produced, the production process, operations, technology and energy.
3	Scene						
	UBET (Usaha Bersama Eling Tonggo)	9, 56(2), 124, 138(2)	6x	-	V	-	The technical background is described as a direct beneficiary of the company's sustainability.
	Sido Muncul Agrotourism	7(3), 116(2), 117, 139	7x	-	-	V	A setting that evokes emotions through visualization of nature conservation and public education.
4	Sanctioning Agent						
	Five pillars of sustainability	14(2), 41, 50, 82	5x	V	-	-	Policy pillars serve as a source of moral values and a company's ethical framework.
	Sido policy is in harmony	14(3), 41, 52, 160	6x	V	-	-	

SDGs	15, 17, 19, 24, 49, 75, 85, 100, 121, 146, 171(2), 185, 192	14x	V	-	-	International/global standards that confirm alignment with local implementation.
Total / Percentage of Occurrence			25x ≈ 30.1%	34x ≈ 41%	24x ≈ 28.9%	The dominance of logos shows the rational side which is the main portion of the report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Sidomuncul 2024 Sustainability Report builds a strong shared narrative through key actors such as Farmer Partners and Farmer Groups (<i>dramatists</i>), who place the community at the center of the story. The plotline <i>is</i> dominated by an environmentally friendly commitment to all aspects of the business, while settings <i>such</i> as UBET and Sidomuncul Agrotourism provide concrete evidence of implementation on the ground. This entire narrative draws its legitimacy from the Five Pillars of Sustainability and Sidomuncul's policies. (<i>sanctioning agent</i>) which is an ethical framework, as well as SDGs which align local actions with global standards. - In terms of persuasive style, this report is dominated by Logos (41%), demonstrated through a rational emphasis on environmentally friendly operations and products, as well as technical programs such as UBET. Meanwhile, Ethos (30.1%) is built through internal policies and the company's sustainability framework to establish credibility. A nearly equal touch of Pathos (28.9%) is present through the inclusion of Farmer and Agrotourism Partners, which build a narrative of inclusivity and preservation, thus touching the reader's emotional side. 						

Sido Muncul builds a world inhabited by Farmer Partners (dramatists) who collaborate in Maintaining Environmental Harmony (plotline) in a Beautiful Agrotourism (scene), inspired by the philosophy of Sido Selaras (sanctioning agent). This world is warm, emotional, and full of local wisdom.

Communication Strategy for Different Stakeholders: The choice of this rhetorical vision is very strategic in communicating with stakeholders. Sido Muncul, with its herbal products and mass retail consumers, primarily targets the general public, consumers, and local farmers. This group is more easily connected with emotional narratives, local wisdom, and tangible evidence of social engagement. Sido Muncul's harmonious and locally rooted rhetorical vision is designed to strengthen the brand image and build consumer loyalty

In other words, the "symbolic convergence" each company seeks differs. Bio Farma aims to unify its stakeholders' perceptions around a narrative of global competence and credibility, while Sido Muncul aims to unify perceptions around a narrative of authenticity and cultural harmony.

Support for Rhetorical Vision and Persuasion Style for Corporate Legitimacy

Ultimately, constructing this rhetorical vision is not a neutral activity. It has a very clear strategic purpose: to gain, maintain, and strengthen corporate legitimacy.

Table 5. Analysis of PT Bio Farma's Dynamic Themes in Establishing Organizational Legitimacy through Sustainability Reports

No	Example of Dynamic theme words (Pragmatic, Social, Righteous)	Appears on the page	Calculation of frequency of occurrence	Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			Explanation
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	Pragmatic						
	Biofarma as the initiator of the national <i>life science research forum</i>	103(2), 295(2)	4x	V	-	-	Leadership practices are described as conveying moral values, integrity, and strategic direction.
	Corporate transformation (technology, digitalization, business models, research, services)	4, 5(2), 50, 103, 135(2), 184(3), 295	11x	-	V	-	A transformative path towards a world-class organization with social and scientific responsibility
2	<i>Social</i>						
	Community Empowerment (internal, external)	37, 65, 176, 178, 187, 315, 323, 351, 371(2)	10x	-	-	V	Social actors who emphasize the meaning of sustainability based on humanitarian concerns
3	Righteous						
	<i>Life science</i> company (world class)	5, 6, 7(3), 71, 103, 104, 126	9x	-	V	-	Technical background that shows rationality and scientific evidence for quality and safety
	<i>Beyond Compliance</i> (green company)	9(2), 67(2), 75, 76(2), 204, 205(2), 206(3), 210	14x	V	-	-	Environmental flow that describes the transformation towards green business beyond PROPER regulations
	Total / Percentage of Occurrence			18x ≈ 37.5%	20x ≈ 41.7%	10x ≈ 20.8%	Dominance of logos

-
- Bio Farma's 2024 Sustainability Report builds a shared narrative through three dynamic, complementary themes. The *Pragmatic theme* is demonstrated through Bio Farma's role as a research forum initiator, emphasizing concrete actions and strategic leadership. The *Social theme* is realized through community empowerment programs, which place humanitarian values at the core of the company's operations. Meanwhile, the *Righteous theme* projects a high moral vision, portraying itself as a world-class *life science company and committing to Beyond Compliance*, reflecting integrity and standards that go beyond obligations.
 - In terms of rhetoric, the report balances the three persuasive styles, with Logos (41.7%) being the most dominant, reflected in its emphasis on transformative and scientific arguments. However, Ethos (37.5%) is also very strong, built through the narrative of Beyond Compliance's initiatives and commitment to building credibility and a trustworthy corporate character. A touch of Pathos (20.8%) complements this persuasive strategy, highlighting community empowerment to build bonds and social awareness with stakeholders.
-

For Bio Farma, legitimacy is built through instrumental strategies centered on evidence and alignment with global norms.

Pragmatics as the Basis for Instrumental Legitimacy: The dominance of the Pragmatic theme, embodied through the narrative of "Corporate Transformation" (11x) and supported by massive "Energy Efficiency" data, serves to build pragmatic legitimacy. Here, Bio Farma argues that they deserve legitimacy because they demonstrate superior and efficient operational performance. They build a narrative that sustainability is a byproduct of rational business modernization and optimization. Every time they mention digital transformation or energy efficiency, they are reinforcing the perception of a competent and well-managed organization, which is a strong basis for legitimacy in the eyes of investors and regulators.

Social as a Tactical Complement: The Social theme represented by "Community Empowerment" (10x) plays a cognitive legitimizing role. By including the community in its narrative, Bio Farma seeks to normalize its existence as an inseparable entity from society. However, its lower frequency and placement as Pathos suggest that this social aspect is more of a complement than a primary driver of legitimacy. Its function is to soften its technocratic image and demonstrate that behind all the data, there is a social contribution.

Externalized Righteousness: Uniquely, Bio Farma's Righteousness theme is not derived from internal values, but rather is represented almost entirely by its "Beyond Compliance" commitment (14x). This is a clever moral legitimacy strategy. Rather than creating its own moral standards, Bio Farma adopts and commits to going beyond external standards (such as PROPER). Thus, its source of moral legitimacy is external authority. They are essentially stating, "We comply not only with the law, but also with higher environmental standards recognized by third parties." This approach minimizes risk and builds rapid credibility, as it is anchored in an established value system.

Overall, Bio Farma's rhetorical vision is a legitimacy machine driven by Logos (41.7%) and Ethos (37.5%). They construct a symbolic world where legitimacy is earned not by emotional warmth, but by undeniable competence and perfect alignment with global governance.

Table 6. Analysis of PT Sido Muncul's Dynamic Themes in the Formation of Organizational Legitimacy through Sustainability Reports

No	Example of Dynamic theme words (Pragmatic, Social, Righteous)	Appears on the page	Calculation of frequency of occurrence	Put a tick in the appropriate column (V)			Explanation
				Ethos	Logos	Pathos	
1	Pragmatic						
	Environmentally friendly (products, business, operations, technology, energy)	5, 10(2), 34, 42, 43(3), 44, 45(3), 46(2), 51, 52, 80, 81, 84, 85, 87(2), 89, 91, 176, 193, 195, 197	28x	-	V	-	The narrative flow emphasizes and emphasizes all things related to being environmentally friendly, both from the products produced, the production process, operations, technology and energy.
	Growing harmoniously towards sustainability	1, 2, 217	3x	-	-	V	This narrative instills moral and spiritual values of sustainability, representing PROPER's signature <i>fantasy of harmony</i> .
	Reducing emissions (GHG, Carbon)	14, 15, 45, 46, 81, 83(2), 88, 92(3), 93, 97, 98, 99, 189	17x	-	V	-	Demonstrate scientific control over environmental impacts and meet PROPER emission control aspects
2	<i>Social</i>						
	Farmer Partners	13, 18, 174, 186, 187, 190	6x	-	-	V	Social actors who demonstrate inclusivity and mutualistic relationships with companies
	Farmer groups	19, 142, 185, 190	4x	-	-	V	
	UBET (Eling Tonggo Joint Venture)	9, 56(2), 124, 138(2)	6x	-	V	-	The technical background is described as a direct beneficiary of the company's sustainability.
	Sido Muncul Agrotourism	7(3), 116(2), 117, 139	7x	-	-	V	A setting that evokes emotions through visualization of nature conservation

							and public education.
3	<i>Righteous</i>						
	Five pillars of sustainability	14(2), 41, 50, 82	5x	V	-	-	Policy pillars serve as a source of moral values and a company's ethical framework.
	Sido policy is in harmony	14(3), 41, 52, 160	6x	V	-	-	
	Sido Selaras	14(5), 15(3), 16, 18, 41, 50, 52, 55, 65, 82, 121, 160, 185	19x	-	-	V	Corporate symbolism rooted in the five pillars of sustainability: environment, inclusion, well-being, product integrity, and sustainable supply. It displays a <i>fantasy of order</i> , a systemic narrative, and moral values aligned with the environment and society.
	Total / Percentage of Occurrence			11x ≈ 10.9%	51x ≈ 50.5%	39x ≈ 38.6%	The dominance of logos shows a strategic framework in the form of data to build company legitimacy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The three converging agents above demonstrate Pragmatic, a tangible operational commitment, such as environmentally friendly practices and concrete efforts to reduce emissions. The Social theme showcases direct engagement with the community, through partnerships with farmers and the UBET program, which emphasizes the company's role as part of the community. Meanwhile, the <i>Righteous theme</i> provides a moral and ethical framework for all its activities, embodied through the Five Pillars of Sustainability and the Sido Selaras philosophy as the foundation of values that guide every corporate action. - In terms of persuasive style, this report is dominated by Logos (50.5%), which emphasizes rational arguments and data for environmentally friendly commitments and emission reductions. However, a touch of Pathos (38.6%) is also very strong in building emotional bonds, presented through narratives of harmony ("harmonious growth"), partnerships with farmers, and the beauty of Agrotourism. The Ethos style (10.9%), although smaller in percentage, plays a crucial role by building credibility and integrity through formal policies and sustainability pillars that serve as the moral foundation of the entire company narrative. 						

In contrast to Bio Farma, Sido Muncul builds its legitimacy on a value -based strategy rooted in cultural authenticity and emotional connections.

Pragmatics Integrated with Values: Sido Muncul's pragmatic themes, such as "Environmentally Friendly" (28x) and "Reducing Emissions" (17x), do not stand alone. These narratives are consistently framed as manifestations of the company's core values. Reducing emissions, for example, is not simply a matter of complying with regulations, but a manifestation of a commitment to maintaining "harmony" with nature. This transforms purely

instrumental pragmatic legitimacy into morally charged legitimacy. They demonstrate that their pragmatic actions are driven by values, not simply by necessity.

Social as the Heart of Legitimacy: Unlike Bio Farma, the social theme is at the heart of Sido Muncul's legitimacy strategy. Engagement with "Farmer Partners" and the "UBET" program are not peripheral activities, but rather concrete evidence of the "Sido Selaras" philosophy. These activities directly build cognitive and moral legitimacy by making the company an integral part of the social and economic life of the surrounding community. Legitimacy is achieved because the community not only accepts but perhaps even considers Sido Muncul's presence and role as normal and necessary.

Internalized and Distinctive Righteousness: Sido Muncul's source of moral legitimacy comes from within, through the "Five Pillars of Sustainability" and the "Sido Selaras" philosophy (19x). By creating its own sanctioning agent, Sido Muncul does not rely entirely on external standards. This is a risky but powerful legitimacy strategy that builds authenticity. "Sido Selaras" is not just a policy; it is a worldview that becomes the soul of all company operations. Moral legitimacy is obtained because the company is considered to have authentic and consistent core values, which are in line with the values of local Javanese wisdom.

rhetorical vision is a web of legitimacy woven from the threads of Pathos (38.6%) and Logos (50.5%). The dominance of Logos here has a different nuance; numbers are used to prove the efficacy and seriousness of their "harmony" model. Their legitimacy is built on a foundation of emotional bonds, cultural authenticity, and tangible evidence of social engagement that creates a deep sense of belonging and acceptance from their primary stakeholders, namely the community and consumers.

These two pharmaceutical companies demonstrate that there is no single path to achieving legitimacy through communication. Bio Farma chose procedural and global legitimacy, while Sido Muncul pursued substantive and cultural legitimacy. Both were effective in their respective contexts, demonstrating that the persuasive power of a sustainability report lies in its ability to align its rhetorical vision with the corporate identity and the expectations of its core stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to analyze the green legitimacy strategies built by pharmaceutical companies through sustainability reports and identify how rhetorical visions are constructed to gain support and acceptance from stakeholders. Based on the analysis of the sustainability reports of PT Bio Farma and PT Sido Muncul, it can be concluded that the company's legitimacy is not only formed through the achievement of sustainability performance, but also through the organization's ability to package and communicate sustainability values persuasively according to the characteristics of the intended audience. The findings of the study show that each company develops a different communication strategy in building legitimacy. These differences are reflected in the way companies define sustainability, determine sources of legitimacy, and construct narratives that align with organizational identity and stakeholder expectations. This condition indicates that the success of sustainability communication is not determined by a uniform communication model, but by the company's ability to build a fit

between corporate identity, values carried, and the information needs of stakeholders. Academically, this research contributes to the development of the organizational communication and sustainability literature by integrating Symbolic Convergence Theory in the context of PROPER in the Indonesian pharmaceutical industry. The findings of the study show that sustainability reports can be understood as an instrument of symbolic reality formation that serves to strengthen the company's legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Thus, this study expands the perspective on the strategic function of sustainability reports which have been increasingly seen as performance reporting instruments. This study has limitations because it only uses data sources in the form of sustainability report documents from two companies with the Gold PROPER category so that it has not been able to describe the variation of communication strategies in different sectors and levels of environmental performance. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve more companies across sectors, combining document analysis with stakeholder interviews, and exploring the influence of sustainability communication on corporate reputation, public trust, and legitimacy more comprehensively.

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