



## Uncovering Corporate Influence over Climate Change

Corporate influence of the climate change debate and policy process has at many levels been cited as a key reason for the relatively slow progress of both the UN COP process and national-level climate legislation.<sup>1</sup> [InfluenceMap.org](https://www.influencemap.org), a new UK based NGO, addresses an important piece of this controversial issue. We have forensically evaluated the 100 leading, publicly traded companies along with 30 trade associations and have scored them according to the extent to which they are exerting this influence, using a [methodology](#) developed with US-based [Union of Concerned Scientists](#). Our full ranking is now [publicly available](#) online. Here are some findings and analysis of what our scoring means for business.

### More than lobbying

We use the term "influence" rather than lobbying for good reason. The capture of climate change policy by corporations [extends beyond](#) formal and financial interactions between lawmakers and corporations and their representatives. Since the 1990s corporations have invested heavily in messaging (advertising, PR, social media, etc.) to ensure their views on climate science and the appropriate policy response are heard loudly at multiple levels. Corporations try to ensure they are continuously engaging at all levels of the policy making process - from providing engineering expertise on matters technical, to CEO phone-calls to political leaders at key policy moments. All of these activities constitute corporate influence and we attempt to objectively assess as much as possible in our analysis. See here for [examples of users of our data](#).

### Trade associations at the center

The role of trade associations and other influencers in controlling climate policy has been studied, by among others our collaborators USC [in the US](#) and our advisor Ben Fagan-Watson [in the EU](#). The same rigorous method InfluenceMap uses on the analysis of corporations is applied to the leading trade associations they are affiliated with. In the US, the lowest scoring influencers in our system are [ALEC](#) and the [American Petroleum Institute](#), closely followed by [NAM](#) and the [US Chamber of Commerce](#). In Europe, powerful trade federation [BusinessEurope](#) and industry-specific trade groups [CEFIC](#) (chemicals) and [ACEA](#) (automotive) score poorly. Japan's powerful [Keidanren](#) openly opposes most climate regulations, suggesting industry can lead the way on its own terms. All of these

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<sup>1</sup> See comments: [President Obama](#), [Christiana Figueres](#) and [Ban Ki Moon](#).



organizations, and more, have consistently undermined climate regulations over the last decade in ever-subtle ways, increasingly arguing for a global treaty that maintains competitiveness while obstructing many of the key regulatory details needed to enforce it. Our system also assesses corporate links to these associations that results in a "relationship score" for each company along side its own score. In most cases these relationships greatly reduce the final performance band the corporation ends up in, in the system.

### **So who tops our rankings?**

We should note that no companies scored above the **B performance band**. **Unilever** received the highest organizational score at 94%, which indicates strong and proactive support for low-carbon policies and regulations. However, its membership of trade associations that have opposed climate change regulations (such as **CEFIC**) places it in a lower performance band than its organizational score would suggest. Tech giants **Google** and **Cisco Systems** make up our current top three in terms of overall score (our scores change in real time as new information becomes available). Google has been particularly vocal about the need for positive legislative action on renewables, for example in its **message to the EPA** in 2014. It is not surprising to those following the corporate capture of climate policy that a trio of US energy companies bring up the rear in the survey. In last place is **Koch Industries** who make little **attempt to hide** their policy influencing behavior. Koch is directly preceded by **Duke Energy** and **Phillips 66** - all three score lower than 25% placing them in the "F" performance band.

### **Who leads each industrial sector?**

As a low carbon regulatory regime will affect sectors in different ways, our scoring is perhaps best looked at within a by-sector context. Various sectors and individual companies will have differing motivations for obstructing (or supporting) climate legislation, but it may be argued that the degree of support (i.e. the InfluenceMap score) is an indication of the corporation's readiness for quicker and stronger climate change regulations. In the automotive sector the InfluenceMap leaders are **Nissan** and **Honda**. Perhaps not coincidentally Nissan leads the globe in numbers of electric vehicles sold and **US EPA** data shows Honda sold the most energy efficient cars of the major makers in its largest market, the US. German makers **BMW** and **Daimler** perform less well on our survey and also **lag in CO2 emissions** performance in their home EU markets. A detailed report by **CDP** of the **chemicals sector and readiness for a low carbon economy** utilizes InfluenceMap data to assess competitive issues and climate change within this sector, with **Du Pont** leading in both the CDP analysis and in InfluenceMap scoring.

### Detailed sector analysis to come

In the coming months InfluenceMap will roll out detailed reports (with specialized partners like [Transport Environment](#) and [Sandbag](#)) analyzing our scoring and implications for competitiveness for key sectors. Here are some current sector leaders, with brief comments.

Sector	Sector Leaders and Comments
Automotive	The leaders are the Japanese duo of Nissan and Honda. Nissan stands out as ranking second in our system and perhaps not coincidentally, second in both the <a href="#">EU</a> and <a href="#">US EPA</a> metrics on fleet emissions. The company's outspoken CEO Carlos Ghosn has messaged his support for stronger GHG emissions standards as well as policy support for electric vehicle infrastructure, both of which could help his company's position as the global leader in electric vehicles.
Consumer Staples	The leaders in this sector are Unilever, Nestle and Coca Cola. Unilever scores higher than any other corporation in our survey with an Organizational Score of 95%! Our study of Unilever's CEO messaging, legislative consultations and official disclosures shows strong support for a UN treaty, a robust price on carbon and progressive reform of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. Nestle displays similar traits although to a slightly lesser extent.
Utilities	The three leading companies are National Grid, Iberdrola and EDF. Iberdrola in particular voice strong support for a 2 degrees-based UN treaty backed up with support for a robust EU Emissions Trading Scheme and early introduction of a Market Stability Reserve to allow for long-term renewable energy investment.
Industrials	The two leaders in this sector are ABB and United Technologies. ABB's CEO messaging on low carbon policy and the company has demonstrated support for energy efficiency targets in Europe. United Technologies likewise has shown support at the US Congressional level for energy efficiency standards in the US. The business interests of both companies are clearly intertwined with the increased adoption of energy efficiency technology.
Information Technology	The Silicon Valley trio of Google, Cisco and Apple lead this powerful sector. All relatively young companies, they less deep relationships with trade associations who may oppose climate regulation and relatively few legacy connections with the high carbon economy. A key area of policy engagement for Apple and Google and others is support of a <a href="#">regulatory framework</a> to facilitate renewable energy proliferation.
Energy	Of the thirteen energy companies (all fossil fuel based) in our survey the top ranked are ENI, Shell and Total. As might be expected the sector performs far worse than any other, with the companies demonstrating a complex array of engagements with various strands of climate change regulations. The trio of US companies Chevron, Exxon Mobil and Phillips 66 lag in this sector with Koch Industries scoring last of any company on our list with an Organizational Score of 13%.

Full details of our results and the organizations we analysed and scored can be found at [InfluenceMap.org](https://www.influencemap.org). Please address enquiries initially [Dylan Tanner](#).