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Major Industry Groups Lobby to ‘Delay, Dilute and Rollback’ Biodiversity Policy

Pilot study reveals 89% of biodiversity policy engagement is negative

Major industry associations in Europe and the United States are overwhelmingly lobbying to delay, dilute or rollback policies designed to tackle biodiversity loss, according to a new *pilot study* by climate think tank InfluenceMap.

The research analyzed more than 750 pieces of evidence covering 12 industry associations - including the **US Chamber of Commerce**, the **American Petroleum Institute (API)**, **BusinessEurope**, and **Copa Cogeca**. The 12 organizations represent five key sectors with the greatest impact on biodiversity loss, as well as the major cross sector industry association in each region.

It found that in 89% of cases, the policy engagement was aimed at blocking progress on addressing biodiversity loss. Just 5% were found to be supportive, with the rest either mixed or neutral.

The report's findings come ahead of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) due to be held in Montreal in December where delegates will negotiate a new set of 10-year targets. National policies and regulations assessed in this report will be critical in ensuring these targets are achieved.

None of the previous decade's targets were fully met.













InfluenceMap Program Manager Rebecca Vaughan said: *"Scientists are warning that biodiversity loss is occurring globally at an unprecedented rate, yet powerful industry associations are overwhelming pushing back against policies designed to slow or reverse this trend."*

"This research sheds new light on an area of lobbying that has largely been able to slip under the radar and should act as a wake-up call to policymakers ahead of the UN's upcoming biodiversity conference."

"This report raises questions about whether these industry associations are fairly representing the policy positions of their corporate members, many of which have made public commitments on biodiversity protection."

The industry associations covered in this report count some of the world's biggest and most powerful companies among their members, such as **Saudi Aramco**, **JPMorgan Chase**, **Amazon**, **Apple**, **Toyota**, **Samsung** and **ExxonMobil**. Given this pilot study only focuses on the policy positions of industry associations, InfluenceMap intends to carry out further research to ascertain whether these positions align with the positions of individual companies.

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION RESULTS

Industry Association	Sector	Region	Performance Band
International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP)	Oil & Gas		D
BusinessEurope	Cross-sector		D
Confederation of European Paper Industries (Cepi)	Forestry & Paper		D-
National Fisheries Institute	Fisheries		E
Euracoal	Mining		E
Europeche	Fisheries		E-
American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF)	Agriculture		E-
US Chamber of Commerce	Cross-sector		E-
Copa Cogeca	Agriculture		E-
American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA)	Forestry & Paper		E-
National Mining Association (NMA)	Mining		F
American Petroleum Institute (API)	Oil & Gas		F

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The policies assessed in the report include the implementation of the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy in the EU and Trump-era rollbacks in the US and subsequent reversals to regulations including Waters of the United States (WOTUS) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

InfluenceMap's research on corporate climate lobbying has established the critical contribution of advocacy via industry associations in policy engagement strategies, notably in allowing companies to pool resources and take advantage of well-resourced lobbying operations as well as providing public distance between companies and their most regressive policy positions.

The industry associations were analyzed, scored and graded using a new methodology, adapting InfluenceMap's existing methodology for assessing corporate engagement on climate policy which is used extensively by investors, including via the Climate Action 100+ process.

Key findings from the report include:

- All 12 industry associations scored poorly (D or below), however European-based organizations tended to be less negative than their United States counterparts. US-based associations were also slightly more engaged than European organizations.
- Several industry associations have made misleading statements about the science of biodiversity loss. For example, EU-based agricultural lobby group **Copa Cogeca** stated that climate change is the "main driver" of biodiversity loss, in contrast to the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Similarly, **Europeche** responded to extinction warnings, describing them as "a bit far-

fetched".

- At least five of the 12 industry associations have engaged directly on statutory protection of specific species, with the **American Petroleum Institute** appearing to be the most active to do so by lobbying against protections for animals including bumblebees, seals and polar bears.
- Several industry groups have used the war in Ukraine as a reason to push back on biodiversity-related policy and roll-back existing regulation, citing concerns about food or energy security. In many cases, this lobbying appears opportunistic given that these industry association advocated similar positions before the invasion.

In both the EU and the US, the report notes that the next few years are going to be crucial in terms of policy implementation and reversing the trend of biodiversity decline.

The research responds to the growing interest from investors in wanting to understand how corporate interests are engaging with biodiversity policy.

In responding to the report, **BNP Paribas Asset Management's Head of Stewardship - Americas, Adam Kanzer**, said: *"In order to reverse nature loss, it is crucial to ensure the right public policies are in place, particularly those to protect key ecosystems. Therefore, companies and their trade associations must align their lobbying activities with biosphere integrity. This is why InfluenceMap's work is so critically important. This report provides us with a significant first step towards nature-positive lobbying."*

Chair of the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources, Raúl M. Grijalva, said: *"Protecting biodiversity is fundamental to our health and way of life. InfluenceMap's study of industry influence over biodiversity policy shows how major industry trade associations across the world—including the American Petroleum Institute and the National Mining Association—have been undermining efforts to address biodiversity loss. This important report lifts the veil on yet another example of industry putting itself above repairing the immense damage it has done to our planet's welfare and security."*

HSBC Asset Management's Global Stewardship Lead for Biodiversity, Clinton Adas, said: *"Addressing biodiversity loss requires transformational change. Key to this is aligning actions with words through having the ability to look at industry associations and their supporters."*

Columbia Threadneedle Investment's Vice President, Analyst, Responsible Investments, Harry Ashman, said: *"Biodiversity loss poses a significant risk to both the global economy and human prosperity, whilst also hindering climate mitigation. As policymakers come together at COP15 to chart a path for tackling global nature loss and companies develop strategies to reduce the risks and impacts of nature loss, they should be conscious of the lobbying activities they are supporting and seek to ensure they are aligned with their nature goals. We applaud the transparency and attention InfluenceMap are starting to bring to this issue."*

Storebrand's Head of Climate and Environment, Emine Isciel, said: *"The level of investor activity on corporate political engagement has been limited, and where there is action, it is centered on climate lobbying. We are therefore pleased to see the new research from InfluenceMap demonstrating which industry associations in the world are lobbying to delay critically needed"*

policy aimed at preventing and reversing biodiversity loss in the EU and US, and ultimately impede the successful implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.”

[*Click here for the full report*](#)

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About InfluenceMap

InfluenceMap is a London-based think tank with offices in Tokyo, Seoul, and New York. It provides data driven analysis on issues related to energy and climate change. Our metrics for measuring corporate influence over climate policy are used by investors, including the global Climate Action 100+ investor engagement process.