

THE CLIMATE SMOKESCREEN

PR COMPANIES LOBBYING FOR BIG POLLUTERS
IN EUROPE



Corporate
Europe
Observatory

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PR companies lobbying for big polluters in Europe

With the Paris climate summit underway,
Corporate Europe Observatory presents case
studies of seven PR and lobbying consultancies
working in Europe to greenwash the images of
corporate climate criminals and lobby against real
climate action.

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INTRODUCTION

Public affairs and lobby firms working in Europe include among their clients some of the worst corporate perpetrators of climate change. Volkswagen, hit with a major scandal over its vehicles' dirty emissions levels, brings in a PR crisis communications team. Big palm oil goes for rebranding as Indonesia's rainforest burns. Fossil fuel companies present gas as part of the renewable energy revolution. Gazprom pays for PR diplomacy as it drills the Arctic. The PR companies' job is to make corporations whose business model is pushing the planet towards runaway climate change appear to be part of the solution, whilst lobbying against the very policies that would keep us below the catastrophic tipping point for global warming.¹

The professional lobbyists' tactics are numerous. They arrange cocktail parties with politicians. They organise business summits where those causing climate change and the officials charged with solving it mingle. They train corporate executives in how to influence EU policy. They polish the image of environmentally destructive products with glossy publicity, far removed from the reality of melting glaciers or burning rainforest.

Paid by big polluters – from aviation to automobiles, fossil fuels to food producers – to create a smokescreen, European PR firms' tasks include creating a false green image or promoting positive initiatives while the majority of the corporation's polluting business model remains intact. This often includes lobbying for climate 'solutions' that in fact allow the client to avoid changing their business as usual (see "BOX 2. The climate criminals' agenda"). And most disturbing of all, it involves pushing back against and delaying real action that might help avert the worst climate impacts, at a time when we have at most a decade to enact a transition to clean energy.

Reality check

To avoid hitting a catastrophic climate tipping point, scientists say we need to keep 80 per cent of all known fossil fuels in the ground.² That affects not just the energy industry but all sectors, requiring a huge transformation. Rather than face up to the changes that science demands, many highly polluting industrial sectors are instead seeking to manipulate the narrative.

PR is employed when there is a gap between the image a corporation wishes to portray – to consumers, regulators, investors, even its own staff – and the actions it really pursues. Note Volkswagen's boast to be the greenest car manufacturer, while its diesel engines coughed out up to 40 times the permitted rate of particulates that cause thousands of premature deaths each year, and it was concealing the amount of CO₂ pumped out by its vehicles (see case study 3). Moreover, public affairs lobbying is not just about portraying an image, it is also about changing policy to benefit the client. This is why many of PR agencies' professional lobbyists have come through the revolving door between public officialdom and private firms, bringing knowledge, contacts, and influence with them.

The power and influence of this type of lobbying explain why the European Commission's 2030 climate and energy package sidelined energy efficiency and renewables, despite clear evidence from the Commission's own research that these are the best options for cutting costs, creating jobs, and reducing energy imports.³ As a result of this lobbying, the EU has a weak 40 per cent emissions reduction target, which means we have a very high chance of crossing devastating global warming thresholds.

BOX 1. PR playing different sides of the debate

Some of the PR firms we highlight as lobbying for climate criminals also have clients in the renewables sector. PR firms like to see themselves rather as lawyers do, neutrally pushing the side of the debate most appropriate for their clients. Yet PR practitioners are not lawyers, they are directly involved in shaping the public debate around one of the most important crises humanity has ever faced.

We suggest that companies in the green and renewable energy sector ask careful questions about the ethics of a PR company and who else they work for before engaging them. If PR lobbyists won't avoid climate criminals on ethical grounds, they should at least see them as high-risk clients that will damage their reputation and lose them other work.

PR ethics: less to them than meets the eye

The PR industry has a long and dirty history with climate change, assisting their big polluter clients in fuelling doubt about the science of global warming.

However, in Europe the PR tactics are somewhat more subtle than the outright climate denial that persists in some parts of the world. Most businesses in Europe at least pay lip service to the need to address climate change. But there is a gap between what the PR companies and their clients say and what they do.

PR practitioners are increasingly vulnerable to criticism over ethical practice when it comes to topics like climate change. The world's

biggest PR company, Edelman, came under fire and lost clients in the US over its controversial work for powerful climate deniers the American Petroleum Institute, and for Keystone XL pipeline companies connected to the destructive Alberta tar sands project.⁴

“Big Oil is starting to be a Big Headache for Big PR”

As DeSmogBlog put it, “Big Oil is starting to be a Big Headache for Big PR”.⁵ In 2014 *The Guardian* reported that ten of the leading PR practitioners announced they would no longer represent climate deniers, or those lobbying against climate regulation.⁶ Edelman followed suit a year later.⁷

Yet Corporate Europe Observatory’s new research into European PR firms and their climate lobbying work shows these ethical announcements by PR firms have less to them than meets the eye.

Table 1: What they say versus what they do

What they say	What they do
Burson Marsteller parent firm WPP says they would not represent clients who deny human-made climate change. ⁸	Burson Marsteller in Brussels represents ExxonMobil, which continues to fund climate science denial groups and politicians in the US. ⁹ ExxonMobil had confirmed human-made climate change was happening by 1981 and built it into their business plan, while ploughing millions into casting doubt on the science in public. ¹⁰
German PR firm Hering Schuppener is also owned by WPP (see above). WPP corporate responsibility documents say, “Climate change affects all of us – and we can all be part of the solution.” ¹¹	Hering Schuppener provides Volkswagen with crisis PR communications after the car company lied about its vehicles’ CO ₂ and diesel emissions (see case study 3).
Weber Shandwick says, “We would not support... efforts to obstruct regulations cutting greenhouse gas emissions and/or renewable energy standards.” ¹²	Weber Shandwick in Brussels represents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (members produce half of the EU’s oil and gas, lobbied EU against stricter fracking rules).¹³ › Zero Emissions Platform (the most powerful lobby voice in the EU pushing Carbon Capture and Storage, see Box 2, The climate criminals’ agenda). › FuelsEurope (see case study 6).¹⁴
Edelman announced in 2015 that it would no longer represent climate deniers, coal producers, or fake front groups seeking to spread disinformation on global warming.	Edelman in Brussels represents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › ExxonMobil and Chevron, both still funding climate denial groups.¹⁵ › The vegetable oil producers’ association FEDIOL which pushes palm oil interests linked to deforestation (for context on palm oil see case study 2).¹⁶
Cambre Associates in Brussels says, “We are working to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are integral to all we do.” ¹⁷	Cambre Associates lobbies for the notorious Koch Industries in the EU, ¹⁸ a company accused of funnelling millions into climate science denial groups in the US. (See case study 6) ¹⁹

A lobby register full of holes

A key tool for democratic scrutiny is knowing who is paying lobbyists to lobby whom, on what subjects, and how much. Yet the EU Transparency Register, a register of lobbyists operated jointly by the European Parliament and the Commission, remains voluntary; PR firms may well have clients lobbying against climate policies who remain unrecorded. For example, trade association GasNaturally (see case study 1) is a client of PR firm Fleishman Hillard, yet this information does not appear in the register.

And much of the register information is not kept up to date. For example PR firm Hering Schuppener has not updated its entry since 2013; it is only through trade reports that we know it is currently representing Volkswagen in the wake of the emissions scandal (see case study 3). Lobbyists should have to disclose up-to-date client and financial information. Information on meetings with politicians and officials should be made clear, with decision-makers publishing lists

of all lobby meetings. And the topics that the lobbyists are working on are all too often vaguely defined or left out of the register; PR firms often do not provide a list of the EU legislative dossiers that they work on for clients, despite being required to do so by the lobby register rules. This is in part the result of a lack of political oversight and enforcement.

Moreover, legal firms citing client confidentiality have largely thus far remained outside the register altogether, yet many of them also act as lobbyists. Thus a major global player in the climate lobbying field such as Dentons law firm appears nowhere in the EU register. This firm runs an annual Global Energy Summit²⁰ and mobilised former US Republican Newt Gingrich (now advisor to mining giant Barrick Gold) to represent its big energy clients' interests in Brussels, yet escapes formal registering of its lobbying interests.²¹

BOX 2. The climate criminals' agenda

Common themes in climate lobbying can be broken down into two categories: blocking or watering down effective climate action, and offering false solutions that allow companies to continue business as usual, but with a green sheen.

1. Blocking climate action

- › Undermining emissions cuts, targets for renewable energy generation, and efficiency regulations.
- › Buying up renewable companies and filling their trade associations with fossil fuel producers, then putting the brakes on lobbying for stronger renewables targets and rebranding natural gas as a clean fuel.
- › Opposing attempts to cut greenhouse gas emissions at source.
- › Warning of economic costs, job losses and 'carbon leakage' which in reality means corporations relocating to avoid regulation; and ignoring the job creation possibilities of renewables and the vast financial costs of inaction on climate.
- › Joining voluntary environmental schemes to avoid regulation.

2. Offering false solutions

- › **Carbon capture and storage (CCS):** an expensive technology a long way from being workable, to bury power plants CO₂ emissions; it allows corporations to keep using fossil fuels on a future promise that technology will solve the problem.
- › **Agrofuels:** the use of crops to create fuel with lower CO₂ emissions than fossil fuels can cause the destruction of carbon sinks through the cutting down of forests to create agricultural land; and can contribute to land grabs and rising food prices. Bio-energy CCS (BECCS) is the same principle as CCS, but with burning biomass; it has the same associated problems as agrofuels, added to some of the limitations of CCS.
- › **Carbon markets:** business as usual, but corporations can buy and sell credits to pollute. The EU's carbon market (Emissions Trading Scheme or ETS) has singularly failed to cut emissions and has only benefited banks and big polluters with what are essentially taxpayer-funded subsidies.
- › **Natural gas:** in theory it has half the emissions of coal, so industry is keen to portray natural gas as a 'clean' or 'bridge' fuel. But extraction techniques for this fossil fuel, including fracking, can result in similar pollution levels to coal; and the gas companies promoting it don't see this fossil fuel as a bridge but a destination.
- › **'Climate-Smart' Agriculture:** promoted as an integrative approach to address the interlinked challenges of food security and climate change, in reality it is a model of carbon-intensive fertiliser and chemical use, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and land grabs.

For more information see CEO's '*Corporate Cookbook: how climate criminals have captured COP21*'

Conclusion: a firewall against lobbyists

If we are to solve the climate crisis, those who are most responsible for creating it need to be separated from the writing of climate policy. But at the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP21), climate criminals and their paid PR lobbyists will be given access to decision makers during the negotiations, at industry-sponsored pavilions, breakaway meetings, or special jamborees.

We need a firewall such as Article 5.3 implemented at the World Health Organisation for rules on global tobacco legislation. This article ensures that, "In setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry."²² In effect, this keeps big tobacco out of the room when it comes to policy making, applying not just at the international level but also to all countries who have signed the treaty. Such a firewall is needed for climate policy making, applying not just to the big polluters but to the lobbyists paid to represent them.

The parallels with big tobacco go further. While the tobacco industry is viewed as 'toxic' due to their decades of lobbying against public health, climate wrecking industries such as big oil will be viewed by history as far worse. Indeed their behaviour with regards to climate change is already beginning to be investigated legally. Exxon has been subpoenaed by New York's Attorney General over whether it misled the public and investors over climate change.²³ Recently Filipino typhoon survivors have asked the Philippines Human Rights Commission to investigate and acknowledge the complicity of 50 investor-owned fossil fuel companies in helping to cause extreme weather events.²⁴

These companies' PR firms equally need to look to their ethical record, and consider how they, too, will be judged by history for lobbying for climate criminals.

***PR firms need to look
to their ethical record,
and consider how
they will be judged by
history for lobbying for
climate criminals***

CLIMATE FILE 1: GAS AS A BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

Industry	Natural gas
Client	GasNaturally
PR firm	Fleishman Hillard, Brussels
Lobby spend	€420,000*

* This is GasNaturally's total lobbying spend for 2014, as listed in the EU's Transparency Register;²⁵ the Register does not report what proportion of this total goes to Fleishman Hillard; Fleishman Hillard does not list GasNaturally as a client.



Gas Naturally is a super trade association made up of six European and international gas lobby groups: International Association of Oil and Gas Producers (IOGP), Eurogas, European Gas Research Group (GERG), Gas Infrastructure Europe (GIE), International Gas Union (IGU), Marcogaz. Its member companies are associated with all aspects of the exploration, research, storage, retail sale and distribution of natural gas.

GasNaturally's lobbying strategy is to promote natural gas, a fossil fuel, as a key transition fuel (see "BOX 2. The climate criminals' agenda").

GasNaturally does not appear as a client in Fleishman Hillard's EU Transparency Register entry. However, it shares an address with Fleishman Hillard.²⁶ [See infographic page 13] And Fleishman Hillard's Energy Practice site boasts: "GasNaturally enlisted Fleishman Hillard Brussels in 2013 to take its campaign to a new level by helping elevate awareness among EU stakeholders of the environmental and economic benefits of using natural gas. FH Brussels helped GasNaturally successfully launch its marquee annual event, Gas Week, in April [2013] at the European Parliament."²⁷

Fleishman Hillard Energy Practice packs a powerful punch (see infographic); the new head of its Brussels energy team is Matt Hinde, former Head of EU Strategy in the UK's Department of Energy and Climate Change.

Its agenda involves locking in gas infrastructure decades into the future, long after we should have moved away from fossil fuels

The PR strategy for GasNaturally is to describe natural gas as part of the 'energy transition' – implying a move away from fossil fuels altogether – yet also to insist on its playing a key role into the future. GasNaturally includes shale gas (extracted by fracking) as well as conventional gas in this vision, making no distinction between the two; yet fracking is implicated in particularly high release of potent greenhouse gas methane, and can in no way be considered a climate-friendly option (see "BOX 2. The climate criminals' agenda").

But then, neither can conventional gas: one study suggests that rather than lowering emissions, the burning of natural gas could lead to up to ten per cent higher CO₂ emissions by 2050.²⁸ Add to that the local impacts on environment and livelihoods of gas extraction, and GasNaturally's spin on gas as a clean fuel seems just that – spin. An impression that a look at its members confirms, since many are also pushing some of the dirtiest fuels around. For example US member ConocoPhillips, one of the 'big six' oil majors globally with a history of climate denial,²⁹ currently boasts of its oil and gas exploration in the Arctic and "global exploration programme", as well as its "growing North American shale and oil sands businesses".³⁰ This is clearly not part of the 'transition' to renewables that GasNaturally talks about, but very much climate-wrecking business as usual.

Fleishman Hillard's work for GasNaturally includes an annual Gas Week, described as "enabling industry stakeholders and EU policymakers to come together and discuss the future of Europe's climate and energy policy". In 2015 the Week included a panel debate, 'Gas and Renewables – a New Reality?' in the European Parliament with presentations by MEP Elisabetta Gardini and Policy Officer at the Commission's Directorate General for Energy, Augustijn van Haasteren, as well as representatives of General Electric Europe and the European Wind Energy Association.³¹

The 2015 Gas Week also included an 'MEP assistants' cocktail party' which GasNaturally described as "a good opportunity to meet with young energy industry representatives and other stakeholders over a drink", a trip to a liquefied natural gas terminal in Zeebrugge, and



a workshop on 'Moving forward with a secure natural gas supply for Europe' which included the Chair of GasNaturally, MEP Adina-Ioana Valean, Stefan Moser, Head of Unit Security of Supply, European Commission's Directorate General for Energy, and representatives from energy firm Eni and Norwegian oil company Statoil.³²

In a similar vein, Gas Week 2014 included a workshop held in the European Parliament on 'Reducing emissions with natural gas and Carbon Capture and Storage', which presented CCS (see "BOX 2. The climate criminals' agenda") case studies from Statoil, Total, and Shell.³³ The panel included a presentation from Paula Abreu Marques from the European Commission, in her role as Head of Renewables and CCS from DG Energy, as well as two MEPs, Eva Kaili and Jude Kirton-Darling. Statoil's presentation included an admission of the

risk of 'financial liabilities' should there be a CO₂ leak; but not of the risk to the climate. The Shell presentation discussed the 'carbon bubble' – referring to the notion that fossil-fuel companies are overvalued due to the fact that most of their 'assets' are un-burnable fossil fuels, and offers 'CCS operating at scale' as a way out.³⁴

We can also gather more about GasNaturally's real agenda from the position papers published on its site. One report from a Gas Week conference discusses a "golden age" for gas and the potential for fracking in Europe.³⁵ A page on 'the role of policy makers' seeks state "investments in gas infrastructure" as well as other subsidies in the form of research and development.³⁶ Unsurprisingly, its agenda involves locking in gas infrastructure decades into the future, long after we should have moved away from fossil fuels.

BOX 3. Hipster Shell crowdsourcing its climate cool

A new but growing public relations technique used by GasNaturally member Shell was to crowdsource its greenwashing. It put out a tender to PR firm Zooppa to create a video about natural gas that would appeal to young, green consumers.³⁷ Zooppa specialises in building brands through 'user generated content'; that is, corporations pay young and student film-makers a tiny fraction of what a standard advertisement would cost to create promotional videos, in the hope that they will go viral.

Shell's brief titled, 'The future is bright, the future is... gas?' says, "all sustainable energy sources will need to be mobilised if we are to keep the lights on... – in fact fossil fuels will still provide the majority of the energy we need beyond the middle of this century." They want "compelling and thought provoking films that challenge preconceptions that fossil fuels, especially natural gas, have no part in our future lives". They continue, "With gas, fossil fuels can be part of a cleaner energy future."

"you should NOT mention on your storyboard Arctic Oil"

The videos "should be targeted towards Millennials [sic] (18-34 years of age) who would want to watch and share your video. We are looking for non-corporate style videos, so animation, humor, songs, entertainment etc. are encouraged! For inspiration, think of videos like 'Dumb Ways to Die'. Videos should be engaging and entertaining to watch but also provide viewers with a chance to learn something. We are looking for compelling and educational content fit for platforms like Vice or National Geographic but delivered in a light hearted manner with Millennials [sic] in mind."

Now a video featuring two young pink and blue-haired vegan, solar panel-toting millennials espousing the benefits of natural gas in their 'hybrid house' has appeared on Shell's YouTube channel, though the company hasn't confirmed if this is the result of the Zooppa commission. Since young video-makers were competing to fulfil the brief, the moody black and white Godard-style short 'The Beautiful Relationship', also on Shell's YouTube channel, could be one of the shortlisted Zooppa videos. In this one, 'Renewables' is a lonely young woman looking for love when she meets an extremely clean and reliable young man called... 'Natural Gas'.

A private email between Shell and Zooppa obtained by Greenpeace said, "you should NOT mention on your storyboard Arctic Oil".³⁸

KEY EU PR FIRMS WITH MOST CLIMATE DESTRUCTIVE CLIENTS,* PART 1

*Based on Transparency Register figures September 2015; three PR firms with the most clients whose business we consider damaging to the climate.



FLEISHMANHILLARD

Fleishman Hillard³⁹

One of the biggest PR companies in the world, owned by Omnicom, and with 111 offices across the globe, Fleishman Hillard's slogan is "The power of true".

They have a very strong energy practice, including oil and gas, fracking, mining, and a number of banks that are major oil investors. Among their clients is the Carlyle Group. A global asset manager with global heads of state on the board, and investments in everything from oil to defence, Carlyle has been described as simply "the military-industrial complex".

€6,250,000 -
€6,499,999

Annual lobby
spend EU

Lobbyists in the EU
(full time
equivalent):

26.5

Member of trade
associations EU:

AmCham EU
BritCham
EPACA
Center for European Policy (CEPS)
European Policy Center (EPC)
American European Community
Association (AECA)

Client lobby spend	Big polluters as clients (for 2014)		New clients (not included in 2014 total lobby spend)
€300,000-€399,999	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">BARCLAYS CAPITAL</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">JP MORGAN</div>	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">HSBC</div>	
€200,000-€299,999	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">BLACKROCK</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">MORGAN STANLEY</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">MONSANTO EUROPE</div>	<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">EXXONMOBIL</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">PC/BPA (PLASTICS EUROPE)</div>	
€100,000-€199,999	<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">BP</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">IOGP (Inter. Assoc. Oil and Gas Producers)</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">GE</div>	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">CARLYLE</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">CREDIT SUISSE</div>	
€50,000-€99,999	<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">BG GROUP</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">EUROGAS</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">GIE Gas Infrastructure Europe</div>	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">BAYER</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">EMIRATES</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">HONEYWELL</div>	
€25,000-€49,999	<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">LUKOIL</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">IGU International Gas Union</div>	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">BPA Coalition</div>	
€10,000-€24,999	<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">GERG European Gas Research Group</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">MARCOGAZ Tech. Ass. of the European Natural Gas Ind.</div>	<div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">BNP Paribas</div>	
			<div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">NIS Petroleum Industry of Serbia</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">TOTAL</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">SHELL</div> <div style="background-color: #4b4b4b; padding: 2px;">STATOIL</div> <div style="background-color: #92d050; padding: 2px;">ENI</div>

Caption: Agriculture Aviation Banking
Dirty Energy Investor Electricity Oil and Gas
Pharmaceutical Plastics Trade Association

CLIMATE FILE 2: REBRANDING PALM OIL AS THE FOREST BURNS

Industry	Palm oil
Client	Malaysian Palm Oil Council
PR firm	Havas Paris, France Gracias Press, Belgium
Lobby spend	Not declared



Rainforests in Indonesia have been burning since July 2015, the resulting haze across south east Asia causing an estimated 500 million people to be affected by respiratory illness. In what the *Jakarta Globe* described as “the environmental crime of the century”⁴⁰ the fires, blamed in part on the palm oil industry, have destroyed vast ecosystems, affecting many species on the endangered list; for example one third of the world’s remaining orangutans are at risk.

Meanwhile the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC) has contracted Havas Paris for a “mythbusting” publicity campaign to counter growing European consumer concern over the environmental costs of palm oil in food products. MPOC was set up by the Malaysian government, with private firms strongly represented on its board. The Indonesian fires had already been burning for two months when the palm oil campaign was launched in Paris in September 2015. MPOC said it wanted to counter the misconceptions about palm oil and has complained that in France consumer products are increasingly labelled as having ‘no palm oil’ due to sustainability concerns. Havas subcontracted PR outfit Gracias Press to run the campaign in Belgium.⁴¹

BOX 4. A man-made disaster

Exacerbated by El Niño, the fires are set deliberately to clear land for plantations. The palm oil and pulp and paper industries, as well as smallholders, have all been named ‘as’ culprits. Palm oil is widely used in global food manufacturing and biodiesel.

At the time of writing, Indonesia is currently the largest CO₂ emitter in the world due to the fires, and has lost a considerable carbon sink of at least two million hectares of forest and peatland.⁴² The Union of Concerned Scientists calls palm oil a “major contributor to global warming” due to industry methods that cause “the destruction of carbon-rich tropical forests and peatlands”.⁴³ Deforestation and land degradation are responsible for around 12% of CO₂ emissions in the last decade.⁴⁴

Friends of the Earth Indonesia/Walhi has been investigating who owned the palm oil and pulp concessions where this year’s fires broke out. Their investigation involves on-the-ground research in the burnt areas, and comparison with companies’ concession maps. Companies named as culprits by the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry have also been included in their list. They name giant palm oil conglomerates including Cargill Indonesia (see Box 5), Wilmar (a Singapore-owned multinational), and Sime Darby (a Malaysian conglomerate), among many others.⁴⁵

While many industry figures have blamed smallholders for the fires, 40 per cent of the palm oil bought by the large conglomerates is produced by these smallholders. Thus even if this claim is 100 per cent true – which criminal investigations indicate it is not – palm oil companies are part of the impetus for deforestation.⁴⁶

Valérie Planchez, the Vice President of PR agency Havas Paris, speaking at the campaign’s launch said, “Palm oil raises questions for consumers,” and explained the PR strategy is a tool “to address fears and fight misconceptions” and deal with “reputation issues”. She said, “We will respond with transparency, openness, and education.”⁴⁷ Havas’ campaign for MPOC has the strapline ‘They say everything and anything at all about Malaysian palm oil’. The PR firm created a website to educate consumers – *malaysianpalmoil.info* – with an accompanying social media strategy, a documentary, and a print and poster campaign. It also included a competition in which people could win a trip to Malaysia by answering quiz questions about palm oil.

The campaign supposedly follows three students to Malaysia to learn about how sustainable palm oil is, with heavy use of images of orangutans and intact rainforest, showing concern over biodiversity and human rights. Yet the fires of 2015 occurred in the area of forest where the largest colony of orangutans remain, and smallholders blamed for the fires call themselves “slaves” of the palm oil companies, according to the Friends of the Earth Indonesia/Walhi report.⁴⁸

The contradiction between their climate-friendly language and Havas Paris’ role in greenwashing palm oil as Indonesia’s forests burn couldn’t be starker

Meanwhile MPOC’s President, Yusof Basiron, who launched the Havas PR campaign, has been an outspoken critic of environmental campaigning pressure on the palm oil industry, and has said, “we don’t respond to non-governmental organisations”.

Basiron also sits on the board of Sime Darby, largely owned by Malaysian government interests and one of the companies named by Friends of the Earth Indonesia/Walhi as having extensive fires burning within the areas of its palm oil concessions in 2015.

The disconnect between Havas’ images of intact rainforest and talk of sustainability, and Basiron’s opinions for MPOC via Twitter, is startling. He blames the NGOs trying to save burnt orangutans for failing to prevent the forest fires and claims that burnt areas of forest should be turned into plantations so they won’t burn again next year.⁴⁹

Previous advertising campaigns by MPOC in Europe (conducted by unknown agencies, if any) were deemed to breach the UK Advertising Standards Council’s codes, including on substantiation, truthfulness, and environmental claims.⁵⁰



Havas PR and the road to Paris

Havas Paris also happens to be corporate partner of the Nicolas Hulot Foundation's initiative to mobilise French society for COP21, 'My positive impact'. The Foundation's initiative website www.mypositiveimpact.org profiles the PR firm, saying: "Havas Paris undertakes to work... alongside all those who have solutions to the climate."

Havas Worldwide also co-organised the pre-Paris COP21 'Business & Climate Summit' in May 2015, a massive corporate lobbying opportunity which "brought 2,000 international business leaders, policymakers and investors to Paris – 200 days before COP21. The Summit was an unprecedented mobilisation convening 25 business networks representing over 6 million companies from more than 130 countries."⁵¹

Havas describes itself as "at the heart of the debate on climate risks for over a decade" and this year has launched Havas Worldwide's Climate Practice, to "assist companies and institutions towards COP21 and greater integration of climate issues into their strategies".⁵² Havas offers strategic lobby consultancy on climate change issues, and says: "world leaders are beginning to face up to the greatest global challenge of our age. But business and civil society have key roles to play, as well... The Havas Worldwide Climate Practice will ensure that their voices are a critical part of that conversation, too."⁵³

The contradiction between their climate-friendly language and Havas Paris' role in greenwashing palm oil as Indonesia's forests burn couldn't be starker.

BOX 5. Cargill's plantation fires

Cargill, named by Friends of the Earth Indonesia/Walhi as owning land on which some of the Indonesian fires broke out, is represented in the EU by lobbyist Acumen public affairs. Cargill Indonesia's plantations cover "76,000 hectares of company-owned planted land" and makes heavy claims to be an "active supporter of sustainable palm oil".⁵⁴ It is part of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) initiative.

Meanwhile sister firm Acumen in Australia is a 'Certification Consultant' for the same (RSPO) initiative, saying "Acumen is able to assist organisations in the palm oil supply chain develop and implement management systems to meet various international standards".⁵⁵ This means the PR firm is helping companies become certified as 'sustainable'. RSPO has been described as greenwashing by critics.⁵⁶

CLIMATE FILE 3: CRISIS-MANAGING VOLKSWAGEN'S DIRTY EMISSIONS

Industry	Automobile
Client	Volkswagen
PR firm	Hering Schuppener (Germany, EU, and worldwide) Finsbury (financial PR, London) Edelman (US, global consumer) Kekst (US)
Lobby spend	€3,300,000*

*This is Volkswagen's total lobby spend in the EU for 2014 according to the Transparency Register. Sums paid to individual firms not yet declared.



Four PR companies are helping Volkswagen 'crisis manage' its way through the emissions testing scandal, which has grown from the company hiding the true levels of nitrous oxide emitted by its diesel engines, to encompass the concealing of the vehicles' true CO₂ emissions and fuel use.

The PR firms are working to restore Volkswagen's massive loss of trust and credibility in the wake of the scandal. Crisis communications are being led by German public affairs giant Hering Schuppener (which has a branch in Brussels dealing with EU affairs). Finsbury, in London, which specialises in financial PR, will presumably work to boost investor confidence (Volkswagen recently posted big losses). Two US PR firms will work on regenerating the corporation's reputation in the US, where the diesel emissions scandal was first uncovered: Kekst, and Edelman which already worked with Volkswagen before the scandal broke.⁵⁷

Hering Schuppener is well connected to powerful decision makers in business, politics, and the media in Germany and across Europe.⁵⁸ As its website states, "we are... committed to fostering a better understanding between business and political leaders. We are convinced that our society gains from an intensive dialogue between the social elites".⁵⁹ Fittingly, then, its senior team includes several ex-politicians including Hans Martin Bury, who brings a wide network of political contacts as former Minister of State, and Minister of State for Europe, in the German Bundestag. Bury was also a Managing Director at Lehman Brothers Germany until the crisis of 2008.⁶⁰

"We are convinced that our society gains from an intensive dialogue between the social elites"

The PR firm describes itself as "the leading strategic communications consultancy for German corporate and blue chip clients", and specializes in crisis communications: "Our strong, experienced team of consultants will assist you in crisis prevention and in overcoming crisis and change situations."⁶¹ Clearly it will need this expertise in handling Volkswagen's crisis communications.

The consequences of the deception over CO₂ are significant: road transport accounts for 14 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions,⁶² and 60 per cent of crude oil production is used for road transport globally.⁶³ The deception over diesel particulates also has life or death consequences: 400,000 premature deaths in the EU are due to pollution.⁶⁴

Hering Schuppener has not yet listed its new contract with Volkswagen in the Transparency Register – indeed, its most recent entry is for the year 2013, where it lists its budget for the lobbying activities covered in the register as between €500,000–€999,999. The shortcomings of the register mean the firm is able to list interests as vague as 'Climate Action', 'Energy', and 'Energy Union'. In Brussels it has seven full-time lobbyist equivalents.⁶⁵ Hering Schuppener refused to detail its work on behalf of Volkswagen to Corporate Europe Observatory, saying, "we have never and will never comment on any client work that we might or might not be doing".

However, as part of its crisis communications services Hering Schuppener offers coaching of company executives, for example offering 'talking points', which Volkswagen may well need for their media and political appearances.⁶⁶ Volkswagen executives have to appear before the European Commission explaining the CO₂ emission discrepancies for one million of its vehicles.⁶⁷ Hering Schuppener's expert on CEO communications explains that the Chief Executive Officer requires particular focus as the representative of the company, and that for them, "preparation for a public appearance can be turned into a strategic success factor".⁶⁸

Hering Schuppener services include "on-going monitoring of the political and regulatory environment" and the development of "tailored, credible CSR [corporate social responsibility] strategies".⁶⁹ Hering Schuppener describes the work of reputation management as securing the client's "license to operate".⁷⁰

***Volkswagen claimed
to be the greenest
carmaker in the
industry***

Volkswagen used to claim to be the greenest carmaker in the industry saying "sustainability is a real, measurable value driver for our business";⁷¹ now it is paying PR companies to get its image back on track. But there is not just a big gap between what VW claimed its cars' emissions were, and what they really were. A brief glance at the company's lobbying record on climate shows the gap between its claims to be green and the reality is even bigger. Volkswagen has dragged its heels on climate policy and CO₂ emissions reductions, lobbying hard against European laws to increase vehicle efficiency and help reduce dependence on oil. As the most powerful car company in Europe it has been a major obstacle to strong climate targets.⁷²

While it is VW that is currently under close scrutiny, in fact we are likely to find big gaps between CO₂ emissions in test conditions and those reported on the road across the automobile entire industry. Just one in ten cars is compliant.⁷³

CLIMATE FILE 4: FIRST MELT THE ARCTIC, THEN DRILL IT

Industry	Oil and gas
Client	Gazprom
PR firm	gplus Europe
Lobby spend	Gazprom Export: €100,000-€199,999* Diversified Energy Communications Ltd (Gazprom): €50,000-€99,999* NIS (Petroleum Industry of Serbia - controlling share owned by Gazprom Neft, Gazprom's oil subsidiary): €50,000-€99,999*

*As listed in the Transparency Register for 2014. NIS no longer listed as of 21/11/15. For a query over Gazprom's true spend with gplus, see text.

With nearly a fifth of all known reserves globally, Gazprom is the world's largest gas producer and Europe's biggest supplier. The Russian state owns over 50 per cent of the company, and Gazprom has a monopoly not just on production in the region but on the world's largest gas transportation and storage system.⁷⁴ Its subsidiary, Gazprom Neft, is engaged in exploitation of Arctic oil and gas reserves.

Gazprom is the fifth biggest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases; together the top five entities, all fossil fuel companies, are responsible for 14.6 per cent of cumulative historical global industrial emissions of CO₂ and methane.⁷⁵

PR firm gplus, with offices in London, Brussels, Paris, and Berlin, has represented Gazprom since 2007 (it also represents the Kremlin). (See infographic on page 21). gplus' Transparency Register entry shows Gazprom Export paid them €100,000-€199,999⁷⁶ for 2014. It also shows that a company registered in the UK, Diversified Energy Communications Ltd (Gazprom) (DEC), brings in revenue of €50,000-€99,999. DEC is listed in London as having net assets of £2, and is owned by Omnicom, also the owners of gplus.⁷⁷ Company records show that several DEC directors are gplus employees. The *EUObserver* reports that "the full extent of [gplus'] work on behalf of the Russian firm is likely to be worth more," because "British records show the value of G-Plus' transactions with DEC in 2013 was £6.6mn, indicating the Gazprom contract is worth millions."⁷⁸ The doubts over this case show some of the shortcomings of the unmonitored and unverified Transparency Register.

The melting of the Arctic has opened up new business possibilities



Gazprom has the world's largest net profits, according to the *New York Times*, which also describes the company as riddled with "rampant and Kremlin-directed corruption".⁷⁹ At the end of 2014 Russia and Gazprom's relationship with gplus' sister PR firm in the US, Ketchum, ended as the conflict in the Ukraine and geopolitical tensions led the PR work to become increasingly untenable; yet gplus continues the contracts.⁸⁰ gplus' Gregor Kreuzhuber, who leads the Gazprom account, was previously European Commission industry spokesman,⁸¹ while Tim Price, previously of the European Commission's Press Office in London, is Senior Communications Adviser to Gazprom Export.⁸²

Melting the Arctic

gplus also until recently listed NIS (Petroleum Industry of Serbia) as a client worth €50,000-€99,999, a company in which Gazprom Neft, Gazprom's oil-producing arm, has a controlling share. NIS is one of the largest vertically-integrated oil and gas companies in south-eastern Europe, engaged in the exploration, production and refining of oil and gas, as well as in the marketing of petroleum products. It recently ran an exhibition called 'Let's explore the arctic'.⁸³ Its controlling shareholders, Gazprom Neft and Lukoil (PR by Fleishman Hillard), have entered into an alliance to exploit the Arctic for fossil fuels.

The melting of the Arctic has opened up new business possibilities: "The Arctic remains a strategic priority for our company," commented Alexander Dyukov, Gazprom Neft's Chief Executive Officer: "Thus far, Arctic territory has remained under-researched, although we are, step by step, progressing further every year."⁸⁴ Gazprom Neft now has two functioning oil wells in the Russian Arctic; its current plan is to drill a total of 36.⁸⁵

gplus' head office in London held an 'Arctic event' on "responsible economic development" of the polar region in October 2014. gplus Account Manager Richard Pace described the "sturdy grounds for co-operation between all interested parties when it comes to the Arctic". The event involved a roundtable discussion and networking reception, included a number of guests from "industry, academia and the diplomatic community", such as members of the Russian embassy. The roundtable was chaired by former Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. An unnamed invitee was quoted saying: "we must not allow current political rhetoric to undermine the great support and assistance our Russian colleagues have provided in developing sensible policies for safe navigation and the sustainable development of the Arctic".⁸⁶

gplus France's Jeanne Dromard is described as advising "a major international energy company on communications and public affairs for the French market. She also provides counsel to clients in strategic communication, as well as in their relations with French Parliament and government." Dromard is listed as account manager in France for Gazprom on several press releases, so it is likely she will also be working hard to represent their views during COP21.⁸⁷

***Putin thinks of
Gazprom as one of the
ultimate sources and
attributes of power***

Foreign policy tool

According to Vladimir Milov, former Russian Deputy Energy Minister, Russian President Vladimir Putin "thinks of [Gazprom] as one of the ultimate sources and attributes of power,"⁸⁸ – as we can see in the way he has leveraged access to Russian gas as a foreign policy tool. gplus circulated a letter to European nations in April 2014 threatening to cut off gas supplies to the Ukraine. gplus explained that Putin's "point is that Russia has been paying a huge price to stabilise Ukraine's economy and the EU also has to play a part."⁸⁹

This political context has led the EU to both challenge Gazprom's monopoly and push for an Energy Union across the EU, in part to lower its dependence on the company's gas. Meanwhile, heavy lobbying in Europe by Gazprom allies successfully removed Chair Alexei Miller – who has repeatedly called climate change a media-created PR campaign – from a list of EU sanctions in May 2014.⁹⁰ Gazprom faces charges from EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager of being an unfair monopoly due to the strong-arming oversupply and pricing, particularly in central and eastern Europe. gplus Europe partner Thomas Barros-Tastets is described by ESAQuest, a public affairs recruitment site, as advising Gazprom "in its dealings with the EU competition authorities".⁹¹ The *EU Observer* reported that in the wake of the Gazprom antitrust charges, "G-Plus... began to informally brief journalists in the EU capital."⁹²

Barros-Tastets was seen in the company of Russian Energy Minister Aleksandr Novak when the Minister was in Brussels for gas negotiations with EU and Ukrainian officials on October 2014.⁹³ Barros-Tastets has been the source of some controversy due to his 2013 marriage to the spokesperson for the EU's Foreign Policy Chief, Catherine Ray, but the Commission announced it did not consider a conflict of interest at play, since Ray does not work on Russian affairs.⁹⁴

KEY EU PR FIRMS WITH MOST CLIMATE DESTRUCTIVE CLIENTS,* PART 2

*Based on Transparency Register figures September 2015; three PR firms with the most clients whose business we consider damaging to the climate.



gplus Europe⁹⁵

gplus is a UK-based PR firm, part of the Omnicom group. gplus Europe is based in Brussels; the firm also has offices also in London, Paris, and Berlin.

It employs a large number of former EU officials and has been described as “virtually the exclusive employer of former spokesmen at the European Commission”. It has a large number of mining and energy companies on its roster, notably Gazprom (see case study 4), as well as the Russian and Moroccan governments.

Annual lobby spend EU

€3,000,000 -
€3,249,999

Lobbyists in the EU (full time equivalent):

22

Member of trade associations EU:

EPACA

Client lobby spend	Big polluters as clients (for 2014):	
€300,000-€399,999	Archer-Daniels-Midland Company	
€100,000-€199,999	BG Group	Gazprom Export
€50,000-€99,999	Diversified Energy Communications Ltd (Gazprom)	NIS Petroleum Industry of Serbia
€25,000-€49,999	AngloAmerican Rio Tinto PLC	Glencore International AG South Stream Transport BV
€10,000-€24,999	Jet2.com	
Below €9,900	BP IFC Belgium BVBA ExxonMobil Repsol Shell	Arcelormittal SA BHP Billiton PLC ENI

Caption:	Agriculture	Aviation	Electricity
	Mining	Oil and Gas	Pipeline
	Steel		

CLIMATE FILE 5: PUBLIC FUNDS TO CLEAN THE FACE OF DIRTY ENERGY

Industry	Fossil fuels
Client	Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP)
PR firm	Weber Shandwick (EU)
Lobby spend	€200,000-€299,000*

* 2014 figures according to the Transparency Register.



Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP) is a technology platform consisting of big energy firms, electricity groups, and others. ZEP is the biggest promoter of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) in the EU, and is the advisory body to the European Commission on the technology.⁹⁶

Carbon capture and storage (CCS) is an expensive and unproven technique that allows dirty energy power plants and fossil fuel infrastructure to continue to be built on a future promise that technology will bury their CO₂ emissions. Not surprisingly, then, ZEP’s Advisory Council includes big oil and dirty energy companies such as Shell, BP, Statoil, Total, GE Energy, and Alstom. A key goal of ZEP is to “Make CCS technology commercially viable by 2020 via an EU-backed demonstration programme.”⁹⁷ But as the *Financial Times* says of CCS: “Few technologies have had so much money thrown at them for so many years by so many governments and companies, with such feeble results.”⁹⁸

“Few technologies have had so much money thrown at them for so many years by so many governments and companies, with such feeble results”

ZEP contracts Weber Shandwick for lobbying and communications, a PR firm with one of Brussels’ largest public affairs energy and environment teams. Weber Shandwick helps coordinate high level political access, media relations, core messaging, and lobbying strategy for ZEP – including helping to access public financing for CCS.

Seeking public funds

An internal meeting presentation shows Weber Shandwick involved in crafting strategy and organising the minutiae of accessing public funds for Carbon Capture and Storage: “WS has drafted an overview of the different funding streams to consider and the key contacts for each of these streams.” The PR strategy for ZEP involves identifying key political contacts in the EU institutions with a “contact programme to prepare the ground, gather information and establish or build relationships and ensure that ZEP has the full picture on the different funding streams.” Key stakeholders identified include officials in the European Commission’s Directorate Generals for Energy, Research, and Regional Development.⁹⁹

A 2015 ZEP document shows Weber Shandwick recommending steps ZEP needed to take to attract public financing such as from the EU’s Connecting Europe Facility and Horizon 2020 funds (relating to energy infrastructure and research), as well as the “Research Fund for Coal and Steel... which ZEP has had a role in when it comes

to deciding the priorities.... [F]unds are made available... for the reduction of CO₂ emissions from these technologies.”¹⁰⁰

We can clearly see Weber Shandwick working to attract public subsidies for a technology the IPCC describes as having “only limited evidence on the potential for large scale deployment”.¹⁰¹ And this is on behalf of some of the richest companies in the world (ZEP members such as Shell, BP, and Total).

The art of political networking

CCS is so expensive that in order to attract public funds ZEP needs powerful allies in the EU institutions, member state governments, and in industry. Weber Shandwick plays a crucial role in this, organising networking and high profile events to showcase CCS. Minutes from Weber Shandwick and ZEP’s communications team show their lobbying strategy, from developing key messaging to identifying supportive officials to developing an engagement plan; for all these tasks, the personal political connections are crucial.¹⁰²



For example straight after the 2014 European elections, Weber Shandwick sent a congratulations and CCS information pack to each newly elected MEP, and worked to “Assess where CCS fits within the new political agenda” and to “Refine strategy and tactics for leveraging CCS in the new environment”.¹⁰³

Crucially, Weber Shandwick both organised and attended a “high level engagement programme” in July 2014 in Brussels for ZEP Chair Dr Graeme Sweeney and Vice Chair Dr Reinhold Elsen with an impressive range of high-level officials, “in the context of the next steps on the 2030 framework [for climate and energy policy in the EU], building networks in the new European Parliament and the ongoing discussions at EU level on CCS.”¹⁰⁴ The meetings were with Jos Delbeke, Director General of DG Climate Action, Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director also from DG Climate Action, and Marie Donnelly, Director of DG Energy. They also met the French and Latvian Energy Attachés, a pair of MEP Committee Chairs, and several others.

Weber Shandwick celebrated “key outcomes” from these meetings, including that “ZEP’s efforts to model the future energy system were warmly appreciated by Marie Donnelly” and interest from the key member states they approached, and note a need to identify more MEPs who would work on the issue “on a day by day basis”.¹⁰⁵ Some of those they approached later appeared as speakers at ZEP events.¹⁰⁶

A good way to gain high profile support is to organise events in the European Parliament – and Weber Shandwick uses their contacts to attract MEPs and high-level officials. For example they helped organise European Parliament breakfast briefings in September 2014 on ‘Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) – enabling Energy Security for Europe’, with attendees from EU institutions, ZEP, and industry. At this event Paula Abreu-Marques, Head of Renewables at the Directorate General for Energy said CCS should be a key component in Europe’s energy security strategies.¹⁰⁷

We can see Weber Shandwick working to attract public subsidies for CCS on behalf of some of the richest companies in the world

Another crucial lobbying event was a European Parliament hearing in November 2014 for which Weber Shandwick helped craft roundtable discussions with politicians and industry. Those July meetings paid off, as EU’s Climate Action Director Jos Delbeke spoke at this event to say that a “CO₂ free economy won’t happen without CCS”.¹⁰⁸ A similar high-profile ZEP European Parliament hearing in November 2015 was entitled ‘Towards a global CCS breakthrough’.

Weber Shandwick describe as “productive” their “Engagement programmes with EC [European Commission], EP [European Parliament] and Enll [energy intensive industries]”. The PR firm identified further potential allies in building political support for CCS including “the forthcoming Italian presidency”, the “US Energy attaché”, and Directorates-General Enterprise and Industry, and Regional Policy.¹⁰⁹ In addition they crafted outreach to energy intensive industries such as steel and cement: “Weber Shandwick to develop a draft plan to approach Energy Intensive Industry via the Brussels based industry groupings”.¹¹⁰ Here we can see how the PR firms and the industry trade associations can make useful political alliances to achieve lobbying objectives.

Weber Shandwick celebrates the “Many results both quantitative and qualitative” from their lobbying activities, such as “CCS being explicitly included in the Energy Council conclusions and the Energy Security paper seen as main results”. Other concrete results that Weber Shandwick presents include: “Instead of chasing the press, they now increasingly start to seek for ZEP statements,” and the formation of a stronger coalition for CCS in the Parliament.¹¹¹ Their plans for the future were, naturally, a “deepening of engagement” and “increasing the funding sources for CCS”.¹¹²

It’s clear how Weber Shandwick, commissioned by ZEP, is helping dirty industry make the case for public funds and political support for a technology that is risky, hugely expensive, and could keep those companies extracting fossil fuels and polluting for years to come.

Public Funding: Objective/ Background

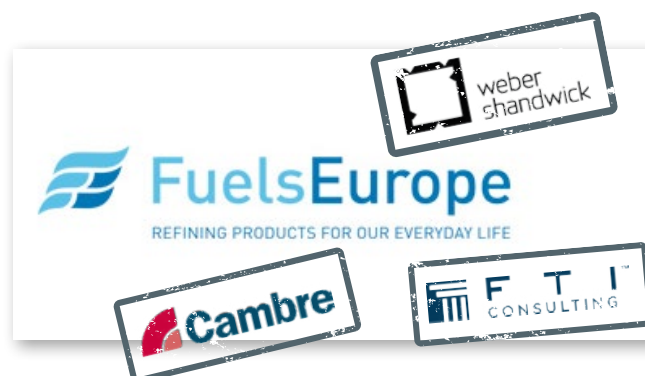


- Facilitate discussion around how to leverage all potential EU funding for CCS
- To provide background for this, WS has drafted an overview of the different funding streams to consider and the key contacts for each of these streams. In particular, the:
 - Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)
 - Horizon2020
 - Cohesion fund
 - European Regional Development Fund
- It should be borne in mind that these all present different challenges and opportunities, which would be worthwhile exploring. In the coming years there may also be other opportunities through funds agreed under the 2030 energy and climate framework.

CLIMATE FILE 6: CLIMATE CRIMINALS' CLUB SAYS OIL IS HERE TO STAY

Industry	Oil refining
Client	FuelsEurope
PR firm	Cambre Associates Weber Shandwick FTI
Lobby spend	Cambre Associates €25,000-€49,000* FTI consulting less than €9,999* Weber Shandwick less than €9,999*

* 2014 figures according to the Transparency Register.



FuelsEurope is a trade association that represents almost the entire crude oil refining and vehicle fuel retails sales in the EU. Its members, which include Koch Industries, ExxonMobil, Lukoil, Shell, Total, and BP, consist of some of the corporations most responsible for climate change,¹¹³ including those who have for decades sought to occlude or deny climate change's existence.

Brussels PR firm Cambre Associates represents FuelsEurope. Cambre works in areas of issues management, lobbying, crisis support, and media relations. Its website describes its work for FuelsEurope: "The European association representing petroleum refiners hired Cambre to design and implement an online campaign aimed at educating the public at large about oil refining and the contribution of its products to society. The campaign was built around a multilingual website with animations, videos, and a quiz competition."¹¹⁴

The website Cambre built for FuelsEurope as part of this campaign – www.fuelingeuropesfuture.eu – seeks to educate the public on just how embedded petroleum products are in everyday life, with slogans such as 'Oil is key to society'. Cambre also showcases a YouTube channel for FuelsEurope which includes videos on subjects like 'Where is crude oil used?', tips for efficient driving, and hashtags like #youngrefiners with a video about young people working in the refining industry.¹¹⁵

FuelsEurope's members' very existence is based on fossil fuels, and its rebranding courtesy of Cambre, and its lobbying, reflect that. For example FuelsEurope's position paper on the

2030 climate and energy policy framework describes the EU's current target of cutting emissions by 40 per cent from their 1990 levels by 2030 as "technologically and economically unachievable. To meet its obligation, the refining industry would therefore be left only with the choice to reduce capacity or to buy [carbon market] allowances."¹¹⁶

FuelsEurope's members' very existence is based upon fossil fuels

While FuelsEurope has declared its support for a climate deal at COP21, its position is entirely incoherent. FuelsEurope says, "The European [refining] industry also believes it has a role to play [sic] and can contribute to the growing global demand for energy while at the same time limiting the emission of greenhouse gases." Cambre Associates co-ordinated FuelsEurope's new 'Save more than fuel' campaign, aimed at "promoting more 'energy conscious' behaviour [by] consumers". Brussels-based communications agency Morris & Chapman showcases the work it was contracted to do by Cambre for FuelsEurope for the 'Save more than fuel campaign' on its website, and says, "FuelsEurope represents the interests of Companies conducting refinery operations in the EU with the EU Institutions. We worked closely with Cambre Associates to design and deploy their campaign, website, produce videos and develop online content."¹¹⁷ The press release for the 'Save more than fuel' campaign insists that petrol provides 90 per cent of the EU's mobility needs and two thirds of the material for the petrochemical industry (plastics, etc.); and offers no indication that this should change. In other words, FuelEurope wants to keep refining oil, because that is its members' core business, and rely on its consumers to make emissions cuts.¹¹⁸

FuelEurope wants to keep refining oil, because that is its members' core business, and rely on its consumers to make emissions cuts

BOX 6. Koch Industries and their EU lobbyists

Cambre Associates also represents Koch Industries in its own right. This US company spends half a million euros on its own in-house lobby operation in Brussels; on top of this it spends between €25,000 and €49,999 to be represented by Cambre Associates, according to the register.¹¹⁹ In the US, Koch Industries has channelled \$120 million dollars into what *The Guardian* described as a “vast network of climate denial think tanks”¹²⁰ and paid PR firms to squash any hope of a carbon tax there.¹²¹

Koch Companies lists Phillip Ellender as one of its two in-house lobbyists in the EU. Ellender is described by *Politico* as part of the Koch brothers’ “inner circle” and “in charge of the Kochs’ multimillion-dollar lobbying operation as well as the response to what he calls ‘an orchestrated campaign against Koch that has been enthusiastically supported and aided by some in the media.’” *Politico* reports that under Ellender’s watch Koch have assembled a strong crisis communications team and set up Kochfacts.com to hit back at criticism.¹²²

KEY EU PR FIRMS WITH MOST CLIMATE DESTRUCTIVE CLIENTS,* PART 3

*Based on Transparency Register figures September 2015; three PR firms with the most clients whose business we consider damaging to the climate.



FTI Consulting¹²³ is a global PR firm headquartered in Washington DC, with offices in 27 countries. FTI Europe's biggest client is Shale Gas Europe, a trade association including some of the world's biggest polluters – Chevron, Cuadrilla, Halliburton, Shell, Statoil, and Total – who promote fracking as sustainable. FTI pushed shale gas as a “fuel of the future” for the EU's 2030 climate and energy package; Shale Gas Europe was accused of taking over the European Commission's expert group in unconventional hydrocarbons.

FTI's blog on COP21 can be found here:
<http://ftiatcop21.com/blog/>

€1,750,000 -
 €1,999,999

Annual lobby
 spend EU

Lobbyists in the EU
 (full time
 equivalent):

32.5

Member of trade
 associations EU:

- AmCham EU
- AmCham Belgium
- British Chamber of Commerce
- Spanish Chamber of Commerce
- EPACA
- SEAP
- Friends of Europe
- CIPR (Chartered Institute of Public Relations)
- Institute of Directors
- WFES (Women's Forum for Economy and Society)
- Institute of Journalists

Client lobby spend	Big polluters as clients (for 2014):	
€600,000-€699,999	SHALE GAS EUROPE (SGE)	
€400,000-€499,999	BAYER	
€300,000-€399,999	EN+	
€200,000-€299,999	HALLIBURTON	EUROPEAN CROP PROTECTION ASSOCIATION (ECPA)
	TRANS ADRIATIC PIPELINE	
€100,000-€199,999	NOBLE ENERGY	NOVARTIS
€25,000-€49,999	BHP BILLITON	CUADRILLA
below €9,999	FUELSEUROPE was EUROPIA	

Caption:

Agriculture	Coal	Electricity
Mining	Oil and Gas	Pharmaceutical
Pipeline	Trade Association	

CLIMATE FILE 7: OIL GIANT'S PR FIRM ORGANISES NEXT UN CLIMATE SUMMIT

Industry	Oil
Client	Total
PR firm	ESL & Network Public Consultants Net Intelligentz (PCNI) Weber Shandwick EPPA Europtimum Conseil
Lobby spend	ESL & Network - €50,000-€99,999* EPPA - €25,000 - €49,999* Weber Shandwick - €25,000-€49,999*

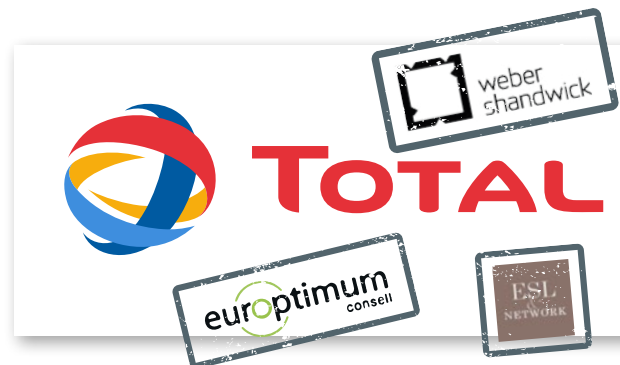
* 2014 figures according to the Transparency Register.

The fifth largest oil and gas company in the world, French multinational Total, has a slew of PR firms working for it in Europe alone. As Paris hosts the COP21 climate summit, Total has been particularly keen to present itself as part of the solution – taking part, controversially, in the 'Solutions 21' showcase event during COP21.¹²⁴ Yet as climate lobby tracker the Influence Map notes, despite its "active and largely negative engagement with climate policy" Total "often... exhibit misalignment within their messaging".¹²⁵

Take their recent 'Committed to better energy' global awareness campaign, for example. While Total continues to resist moves away from fossil fuels in its lobbying positions, for example blocking dramatic emissions reductions in its response to the consultation on the EU's 2030 targets,¹²⁶ their \$64 million dollar PR and advertising campaign, co-ordinated by public relations firm Public Consultants Net Intelligentz (PCNI) in France and internationally,¹²⁷ seeks to promote them as a climate leader, pushing the company's "focus on addressing climate change by developing a diversified energy mix that has a small carbon footprint and uses resources more wisely," according to *PR Week*.¹²⁸

Total claims to support an international agreement on climate change, the 'support' is couched in ambivalent language that in reality blocks progress, since it demands such an agreement is "implemented gradually and... does not distort competition" or Total's bottom line.¹²⁹ Total's executive Jean-Michel Laverne is on the board of the American Petroleum Institute, an institution notorious for the promotion of climate denial.¹³⁰

Total continues to resist moves away from fossil fuels in its lobbying positions



Total's French PR power players organise COP events

Total is listed in the EU Transparency Register as a client of the European Affairs wing of corporate intelligence firm ESL & Network, a powerful French player.¹³¹ *Intelligence Online* reports that, "Jean-David Levitte, the former diplomatic advisor to French presidents Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy, has... been hired as a consultant to ESL & Networks. Levitte, a former ambassador to the US nicknamed "Diplomator" still has a lot of contacts in the English-speaking world and at the UN."¹³² All of this will surely help Total's point of view be heard at the COP21 summit. ESL & Network's board includes Total's Philippe Boisseau as well as Michel Pébereau of the bank BNP Paribas, a major coal investor and an official sponsor of COP21.

Moreover, by acquiring the events firm Agence Publics, ESL & Network is actually undertaking the organisation of the COP22 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change summit in Morocco in 2016.

Agence Publics also played a key role with Havas PR in organising the pre-Paris COP21 'Business & Climate Summit' in May 2015, a major corporate lobbying event (see case study 2).¹³³ The summit was opened by French President François Hollande, and co-sponsors included trade associations notorious for having lobbied against effective climate action for years.

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