



capturing
COP21

corporate influence & the
UN climate summit in Paris
cop21.corporateeurope.org

FALSE SOLUTIONS COP21

Pushing the corporate agenda at
PARIS 2015

‘Solutions COP21’ is a big corporate-sponsored expo coinciding with the Paris climate talks. A chance for big business to promote its pie-in-the-sky market-based techno-fixes to climate change. (False) Solutions COP21 is all about ensuring damaging business models can continue, keeping up corporate profits whilst wrecking the climate, local environments and communities’ livelihoods.

The corporate partners of Solutions COP21 include big companies with dodgy records towards people and planet, such as **GDF Suez** (now **Engie**), **Coca-Cola**, **Renault-Nissan**, **Avril/Sofiproteol** and **Suez Environment**.

With 50,000 expected visitors
and 250 conferences,
Solutions COP21’s website tells us
to **“BE PART OF
THE GRAND PALAIS
CLIMATE EXPERIENCE”**.

We say:
**BE PART
OF EXPOSING
THE CORPORATE
AGENDA BEHIND
‘SOLUTIONS COP21’**



Corporate
Europe
Observatory

WHERE?

Grand Palais

Bourget, Official COP21 venue

WHEN?

4 to 10 December

30 November to 11 December

WHAT?

Exhibitions and events

Networking area / “Pavillion”

WHO?

Organised by Club France Développement Durable and Comité 21.

Both are so-called “sustainable development” networks – but their members include companies with bad records of human rights and environmental abuse.¹

KEY DATES

‘Trophies for Climate Solutions’ has been launched by Solutions COP21 and others² to “reward the best solutions in businesses (big corporations, subsidiaries, SMEs, VSEs)” for mitigation of climate change, and adaptation to its effects.

The Trophies’ awards ceremonies are surely not to be missed... You’ll get a chance to see big corporations whose core activities have disastrous impacts basking in the glory of the success stories of small companies who are part of the solution. All whilst patting themselves on the back for their own self-interested (but well-marketed) false solutions.

2 Dec: Trophies awarded at World Efficiency’s ‘Solutions Gallery’, Le Bourget

4 Dec: Winners honoured at Solutions COP21 Winners Conference, Grand Palais.³

GREENWASHING

Solutions COP21 promises to “showcase all the solutions and initiatives deployed in the energy, mobility and construction sectors”.⁴

But the reality is one of corporate goliaths – and their profit-motivated false solutions – riding on the coat tails of the real solutions being exhibited by the little guys. Here’s how:

- **GREENWASHING** – companies that wreck the climate, pollute the earth and destroy livelihoods paint themselves as environmentally friendly and socially progressive;
- **DISTRACTING** from the negative impacts of their core activities (eg burning fossil fuels), helping them to pretend to be part of the climate solution (rather than problem);
- **MISLEADING** policy-makers into believing polluters deserve a seat at the table.

¹ www.comite21.org/entreprises/liste-adherents.html;

<https://clubfrancedeveloppementdurable.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/mai-2015-liste-des-membres-du-club-france-dc3a9veloppement-durable1.pdf>

² The French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME), C3D, the Crédit Coopératif, the OREE Association, The Shift Project and World Efficiency are the other co-organisers.

³ www.cop21.gouv.fr/en/civil-society/labelling-process-and-project-support/trophies-solutions-climat

CORPORATIONS PAY for ACCESS to POLITICIANS

Big companies pay big money to get privileged access to climate policy-makers. Solutions COP21 Partners are promised the opportunity to host “stakeholders during privileged meetings: formal (business meetings) and informal (hospitality areas, gala dinner, etc.)” including “committed institutional players (France/International)”⁵ ie the national delegations of policy-makers negotiating the climate deal.

Different “Partner packages” offer different degrees of privilege:

- **€30K** gets you “Privileged visibility conditions” (eg your company logo plastered all over the place), a speaker slot at the press conference launch (a great place for the media to pick up on your, ahem, good intentions), and more

⁴ www.solutionscop21.org/dispositif/?lang=en; <http://www.solutionscop21.org/concept/?lang=en>

⁵ www.solutionscop21.org/dispositif/?lang=en; <https://clubfrancedeveloppementdurable.files.wordpress.com/2014/06/solutionscop21-presentation-v1-eng.pdf>

⁶ Each partner package contained Solutions COP21-Partnerships-v1-ENG.pdf, no longer available on Solutions COP21 website. Organisations can also just pay for e.g. cocktail evening (€25,000), 25 minute TV slot (€5000) – see www.solutionscop21.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FORMULES-PARTICIPATION-SOLUTIONS-COP21.pdf

- **€75K** gets you 30m² exhibition space (so you can show the thousands of visitors just how good you are), “**Privileged access**” to the press room at the Grand Palais and 5 VIP badges to ‘Solutions COP21’ “communications and networking areas at Le Bourget and the Grand Palais” – all the better for schmoozing with the right people!
- **€150K** gets you 200 m², TV studio coverage, 10 VIP badges, and **private hospitality** space at Grand Palais (ramping up the visibility and access even further).
- **€250K** gets you an additional “large evening event” at the Grand Palais...delightful!⁶

Some rates are lower for “authorities, public organizations and associations”. A kind gesture? Or a cunning recognition that their participation lends legitimacy and neutrality to the event, helping big businesses’ false solutions gain the cover of real solutions...

Solutions COP21 is premised on one simple fact: money talks. The more money you have, the better you can buy your way to being seen and heard by our political leaders, and the more effectively you’ll be associated with solutions to the climate crisis. Yet civil society struggles to be heard even when hundreds of thousands take to the streets, highlighting the undemocratic nature of this kind of luxurious corporate lobbying show.

Box 1: FALSE SOLUTIONS

False solutions pushed by big business and dirty industry include:

Carbon capture and storage (CCS) burying power plant’s CO₂ emissions with experimental, costly and far-off technology keeps us hooked on fossil fuels and doesn’t cut emissions NOW. We need to move to a renewable future.

Carbon markets they don’t cut emissions and only benefit banks and big polluters, the last people we should put in charge. We need to cut emissions at source and invest in renewable energy, not leave it to the ‘market’.

Fracking destroys local environments, and poisons water and agriculture. Fracking is not moving us away from fossil fuels and no one but industry wants it!

Natural gas gas isn’t a solution, its a fossil fuel, with some extraction techniques making it as polluting as coal! And we need to leave at least 80% of all fossil fuels in the ground.

Biofuels land grabs, deforestation and food price rises are what we’ll get. That’s only a solution for oil companies looking for a substitute. No thanks.

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) they’ve failed in the real world, wreck the environment, and are really about big business taking control of seeds from farmers. We demand food sovereignty and agro-ecology to cool the planet.

False solutions like these enable multinationals to maintain their profits without changing their damaging business models, or fixing the climate crisis in a just way.

Solutions COP21 has a special promotional web platform for dirty companies to write charming stories about their environmentally friendly activities, to promote their false solutions, or to ride on the coat tails of real solutions: climatesolutionsplatform.org

CORPORATE PARTNERS - The reality behind the greenwash

GDF SUEZ



- GDF Suez (now re-branded 'Engie') is an official COP21 sponsor. The French government holds 33% of the company's shares.
- It has 30 coal power plants, which emit equivalent to half of France's emissions! It plans to invest in 7 new coal plants, including in Germany and India, despite coal's devastating climate, environmental and health impacts.
- It lobbies for a global carbon market, inspired by the way Europe's carbon market enabled dirty companies to keep profiting from polluting (see Box 1).
- Lobbied hard against important EU renewables and energy efficiency targets – spending €2.5 million on EU lobbying in 2014 alone!
- On the Solutions COP21 web platform, Engie boasts of planting native plants to reduce soil erosion in Mexico⁷ – an underwhelming attempt to distract from the huge negative impacts of its fossil fuel projects.



- Renault-Nissan is an official COP21 sponsor.
- Says its electric vehicles are “to fight against global warming” on the Solutions COP21 web hub, but...
- ...at the same time, the Chairman of Renault Nissan Alliance, Carlos Ghosn, is President of a powerful car industry lobby group ACEA, which has fought hard against tougher EU emissions reduction targets for cars!
- ACEA lobbies for a climate deal that treats all EU car industry rivals – ie industrialising countries – the same way, despite huge differences in historical responsibility for climate change, and very different capacities to deal with it.

⁷www.climate-solutionsplatform.org/solution/native-plants-to-protect-installation-from-erosion

⁸www.arnisdelatere.org/Emissions-d-Etat-stop-a-l.html; <http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=90947457424-20>; <http://corporate.europe.org/pressreleases/2015/05/cop21-sponsors-are-not-so-climate-friendly>; www.gdfsuez.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/climate-negotiations-gdf-suez-s-position-december-2014_v2.pdf; www.foeeurope.org/sites/default/files/publications/endingaffair_briefing_march14.pdf

⁹www.climate-solutionsplatform.org/solution/how-reault-nissan-alliance-electric-vehicles-are-helping-the-fight-against-global-warming

¹⁰For more background on false solutions, see e.g. CEO and TNI, The COP19 Guide to Corporate Lobbying, 2013.

Avril

- Avril is a French agribusiness. Its name may not be well-known, but it is a huge company with a €7.3bn turnover, standing in the way of small farmers and undermining food sovereignty.
- Avril is the leading biofuels producer in France, and is involved in biotechnology, including the development of GMOs (see Box 1).
- Its CEO Xavier Beulin has close ties with French President Hollande. Xavier has presented the ridiculous and incoherent position that “biotechnology is the future of organic farming.”



- Suez is an official COP21 sponsor.
- It lobbies for shale gas, including as part of pro-fracking group, the Centre for Non-conventional Hydrocarbons.
- Suez has business interests in waste-water treatment from coal mining and fracking... A nice incentive for it to support continued dirty energy extraction!
- On the Solutions COP21 web hub, it boasts of making highly-polluting waste incineration more efficient... and has the cheek to call such “energy from waste” a climate solution!

Coca-Cola

- Coca-Cola has a documented history of depleting water sources in poor countries.
- It has pushed against progressive waste and recycling legislation and practices.
- Companies like Coca Cola use Solutions COP21 as an opportunity to greenwash their image.

Other Solutions COP21 partners include:



¹¹www.tni.org/files/download/cop19_guide_to_corporate_lobbying-with_references.pdf

¹²<http://reporterre.net/ENQUETE-5-Xavier-Beulin-l-homme>; www.peuples-solidaires.org/sites/files/action/aid/agrocarburants_position-des-organisations-francaises.pdf; www.rac-forng/IMG/pdf/DP_B_C_Summit.pdf; www.bastamag.net/Quand-l-agriculture-sert-a-nourrir

¹³<http://corporate.europe.org/pressreleases/2015/05/cop21-sponsors-are-not-so-climate-friendly>; www.climate-solutionsplatform.org/solution/producing-energy-from-non-recyclable-waste

¹⁴www.news.com.au/national/anger-at-cokes-successful-bid-to-abolish-northern-territory-recycling-deposit/story-fncynjr2-1226590581256; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Coca-Cola#cite_note-18