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New Guide Helps Companies Report Their Climate Policy Positions

First-of-its-Kind Guide Calls on Companies to Align Corporate Sustainability Initiatives and Climate Policy

NEW YORK, November 14, 2013 – For the first time ever, companies have a guide to manage and report on their direct and indirect influences on climate policy. The UN Global Compact, in cooperation with seven leading international organizations, including the [World Resources Institute](#), today released guidelines to help companies engage in climate policy in a transparent and accountable way that is consistent with their sustainability commitments.

The [Guide to Responsible Corporate Engagement in Climate Policy](#) sets baseline expectations for companies to provide proactive, constructive input for governments to create effective climate policies. It helps companies to connect the dots between sustainability commitments, such as emissions reductions across their value chains and efficiency improvements, with their corporate policy positions.

There is a mixed record on public policy engagement. In a recent survey of UN Global Compact companies, only 30 percent have aligned their traditional government affairs activities with their corporate responsibility commitments, such as taking action on climate change.

The report comes as the role of business in policymaking receives increased attention and negotiators meet at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP19) in Warsaw, Poland, in order to guide progressive businesses to lobby in favor of a global, legal climate agreement by 2015. Businesses and investors are also becoming more aware of the risks of climate change, and want clear and consistent climate policies in place to create a productive operating environment.

To address calls for alignment by business, investors and other stakeholders, the guide establishes the core elements of responsible corporate engagement and translates that into three practical actions for companies to provide a constructive and positive voice on climate policy:

- **Identify** the company's *opportunity and legitimacy* by creating an inventory of its influences on climate policy;
- **Align** its positions and influences to ensure *consistency and accountability*; and
- **Report** on climate change policy influences, intentions and outcomes using a three-tiered framework for *transparency*.

"Engagement by the private sector that is collaborative, serious and solutions-oriented is vital, and can help ensure widespread support for sustainability, climate action and broader UN goals. With leading technological and social innovations already in place, there is enormous potential to produce results if greater scale is achieved," said UN Global Compact Executive Director **Georg Kell**. "The time is ripe for enlightened business leaders to scale up corporate sustainability by engaging responsibly on climate policy, ultimately helping to drive energy efficiency, renewables and technology in a low-carbon economy."

The business case for companies to engage responsibly in climate policy has strengthened as companies are increasingly asked to track and report their policy positions. Responsible corporate engagement can help a company to execute on its corporate strategy; create trusted relationships with Government and generate regulatory certainty; enhance shareholder value; build and sustain public and stakeholder trust; and promote policies that protect against impacts from climate change.

"When it comes to climate policy, many leading businesses are struggling to match their words and their actions. This report finds that seven of 10 businesses have not fully aligned their sustainability goals with government affairs practices," said **Andrew Steer**, President and CEO, World Resources Institute. "Those businesses that are serious about addressing climate change will follow the actions in this guide."

The *Guide to Responsible Corporate Engagement in Climate Policy* is the result of research and interviews with more than 75 business and policy leaders from more than 60 organizations across 20 countries. It will be highlighted at a special session of the inaugural [Caring for Climate Business Forum](#) during COP19, on 19 November in Warsaw.

Download the **Guide to Responsible Corporate Engagement in Climate Policy**
here: <http://www.wri.org/publication/guide-responsible-corporate-engagement-climate-policy>

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Additional Quotes:

“Governments have provided a policy signal and are working on further clarity. But the private sector need not wait for policy perfection. Business leaders can demonstrate and communicate the need for long-term energy plans, increased efficiency and climate-friendly investment—policies beneficial to the triple bottom line. This in turn, gives governments the support they need to act on the international stage.”

Christiana Figueres , Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

"Environmental change is accelerating and generating new and emerging challenges but also opportunities for business. Companies that face up to these realities are likely to be the ones that survive and indeed thrive in a rapidly evolving world where factors such as climate change and dwindling availability of natural resources will shape future patterns of profit and loss while driving new and smarter markets."

Achim Steiner, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme; Under-Secretary-General, United Nations

“In the past, efforts by some corporations have significantly slowed the emergence of climate change legislation and this has created unacceptable risks to public safety in general, as well as fiduciary investors in particular. All investors need to understand the risk posed to their whole portfolios by irresponsible corporate engagement seeking to delay climate policy, and the value created by a responsible, pro-climate business voice in helping policy makers deliver on their responsibilities to protect citizens. With the date for agreement on a global climate deal set for 2015, this report shows how businesses can play a positive role in helping politicians and civil society deliver a robust, necessary outcome over the next two years.”

Paul Simpson, Chief Executive Officer, CDP

“Addressing climate change, stopping deforestation and building a sustainable future powered by 100% renewable energy has never been more urgent. We applaud companies acting according to climate science and pushing policy-makers to take forceful action on this major planetary risk. WWF supports the guidelines from this broad partnership, which require companies to make sure their lobbying is aligned with what scientists tell us must be done, and asks corporate leaders to get trade associations to move from defending the fossil fuel status quo to calling for climate action and a sustainable future for people and planet alike.”

James Leape, Director General, WWF International

“While some are holding fast to old models of doing business, true leaders of 21st century companies are charting a new course toward a clean energy economy. They see the risks, the opportunities, and the need for policy action. By following the best practices set forth in this report, responsible businesses will model effective participation in the democratic process and help to inform meaningful

climate policy.”

Mindy S. Lubber, President and Chief Executive Officer, Ceres

“With public scrutiny – and distrust – of the corporate world more intense than ever before, businesses need to follow their words on climate with initiatives that affect real, tangible, measurable change, and engage in policy debates in a manner that is ethical, consistent and transparent. Climate leadership is not some sort of “moral” imperative: it entails real business benefits and the avoidance of real business risks. Active, responsible and transparent engagement in supporting policies consistent with imperatives of climate science lies at the heart of this leadership: this report provides a tool to guide such engagement.”

Mark Kenber, CEO, The Climate Group

“Engaging responsibly on climate change policy is part of being a modern business.”

Steve Howard, Chief Sustainability Officer, Ikea

“Many companies that have engaged on climate policy in the past have tried to block it and their actions are often hidden from public view, so it’s refreshing to see a path forward for companies looking to engage constructively and transparently on climate change issues.”

Gretchen Goldman, Analyst, Center for Science and Democracy, Union of Concerned Scientists

“As the first Chinese company and the first renewable energy manufacturer to join WWF’s Climate Savers Program, we are pleased to hear about the launch of this report. This report is not only a useful guidance, but also an essential requirement for responsible companies to engage in climate policy. With our commitments to corporate social responsibility, environmental protection and sustainable development, Yingli looks forward to continuously collaborate with leading institutions and progressive businesses in the fight against climate change.”

Liansheng Miao, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Yingli Green Energy