



**Friends of
the Earth
Europe**



Initiative für Transparenz und Demokratie



Worst EU Lobbying Awards 2007 – the candidates

Online Voting for the “Worst EU Lobbying” Awards 2007 runs from October 15 – November 24 at www.worstlobby.eu

Through the annual Worst EU Lobbying Awards, the organisers aim to raise public awareness of controversial lobbying practices in Brussels, and put pressure on politicians to introduce effective EU lobbying transparency and ethics rules.

This briefing gives a detailed explanation of the case against each of this year’s nominees. These texts are also available on the website.

A Worst EU Lobbying category

- 1) **BMW, Daimler & Porsche** for their full-scale lobbying offensive to water-down and delay the EU mandatory targets for CO2 emissions from cars, impeding progress to combat climate change
- 2) **Cabinet Stewart** for running the International Council for Capital Formation – this so-called ‘unique European think tank’ is in fact a front group for US-based opponents of the Kyoto Protocol
- 3) **EPACA** (the European Public Affairs Consultancies Association) for its high-profile counter-campaign against the European Commission’s plans for a lobby transparency register
- 4) **Viscount Étienne Davignon** for advising EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel about African development issues, even though he sits on the board for Suez – a transnational corporation looking to expand its energy and water business into Africa
- 5) **Repsol** for distorting the EU’s research agenda on agrofuels to ensure that outcomes fit narrow commercial interests, at the expense of genuine measures to combat climate change.

B Worst Greenwash Category

- 1) **Airbus** for a series of adverts in which passenger jet silhouettes are filled with beautiful landscapes, pretending that Airbus jets are green and clean
- 2) **BAE Systems** for promoting deadly weapons as environmentally friendly
- 3) **ExxonMobil** for purporting it is reducing its greenhouse gas emissions while in reality its emissions are increasing
- 4) **The German Atomic Forum** for its campaign “unloved climate protectionists”, abusing the public’s concern about climate change in order to promote nuclear energy
- 5) **Shell** for suggesting that their oil refineries emit flowers not smoke

A Worst EU Lobbying Category

1 BMW, Daimler and Porsche

This trio of German car-makers is nominated for their full-scale lobbying offensive to water-down and delay the EU mandatory targets for CO2 emissions from cars, impeding progress to combat climate change.

In February 2007 the European Commission finally grasped the nettle and tackled a highly charged political issue by proposing a binding target to limit CO2 emissions from cars to 130 gr per km by 2012 (from an average 160gr in European cars). Initially, Environment Commissioner Dimas wanted to impose a stricter target of 120gr/km, but the Commission bowed in the end to an intensive lobbying campaign by the powerful car industry. At the forefront of this campaign were German car manufacturers, with a dirty PR campaign that included heavy doses of scaremongering and threats of massive factory close downs and job losses. Until this point, for sometime the car industry had managed to delay binding regulations with the promise of substantial voluntary action. In fact that Commission only proposed a mandatory target when it became clear that the industry was failing to meet targets agreed under a 10 year voluntary agreement.

The Commission's proposal left some crucial issues unresolved, such as how to tailor the targets to different car types and companies, or how to measure compliance. The outcome of these discussions will determine the very essence of the new legislation. The Commission is now tasked with presenting concrete plans. Meanwhile, the car industry, particularly the German lobby, has intensified their lobby campaign, with the support of the German government and German industry Commissioner Günther Verheugen. The German trio are the worst amongst a bad bunch, and it seems they have found a way of subverting the proposed target. They are pressing to establish different categories that create higher CO2 allowances for heavier cars. This would allow them to continue the production of extremely polluting luxury cars (with a an average of 297 gr/km for Porsche, 190 for BMW and 184 for Daimler).

Drive home the message that the scaremongering and heavy lobbying tactics used by these three to fight climate protection are unbearable, and vote these three for the Worst EU Lobbying Award 2007!

Supporting documents:

- [Car industry flexes its muscles, Commission bows down](#), Briefing paper, Corporate Europe Observatory, 16 March 2007
- [German car giants pressure EU over emissions](#), by Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, 8 August 2007, Telegraph.com
- [Europe's cars may get weight-based emissions allowances](#), by Honor Mahony, 7 August 2007, Euobserver.com

2 Cabinet Stewart

EU public affairs consultancy Cabinet Stewart is nominated for running the International Council for Capital Formation – a uniquely fake European think-tank that serves as a front group for opponents of the Kyoto Protocol .

The International Council for Capital Formation (ICCF) is a subsidiary of the American Council for Capital Formation (ACCF). Both organisations fiercely oppose government regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since 1998, the US-based ACCF has received over US\$1.6 million from oil giant Exxon Mobil to cast doubt over the human origins of climate change and to delay US government action on climate change. The ICCF was set up to bring this lobbying effort to Europe and other parts of the world.

In its publications, the ICCF describes itself as a “unique European think tank”, with headquarters next to the European Parliament buildings in Brussels. In reality the headquarters have the dimensions of a letterbox on the fifth floor of the office building on Rue Wiertz 50 and the telephone is usually picked up by Nicolas Robin, associate director at Cabinet Stewart.

The ICCF has no permanent presence in Brussels beyond the Cabinet Stewart consultants that are acting on its behalf. Cabinet Stewart has organised a range of activities for the ICCF over the last three years, aimed at influencing EU decision-makers. This includes several workshops on climate change issues held in the European Parliament.

When confronted with these findings, Catherine Stewart, director of Cabinet Stewart, refused to clarify her company’s relations with the ICCF (including the budgets received from the ICCF for the services provided), invoking citing confidentiality clauses in the contract.

Vote for Cabinet Stewart to show your disapproval of their shady role in running a fake think tank!

Supporting documents:

- “Awarding deception: Rewarded for anti-Kyoto lobbying ?”, Corporate Europe Observatory, 25. Juni 2007, <http://www.corporateeurope.org/awardingdeception.html>

3 EPACA (the European Public Affairs Consultancies Association)

Nominated for its high-profile counter-campaign against the European Commission's plans for a lobby transparency register.

EPACA, describes itself as “the representative trade body for public affairs consultancies working with EU institutions”. A role for which it has taken high-profile and determined action in recent months against the European Commission's plans for a lobby transparency register - even though initial measures of transparency control will be fairly weak. The designated obligations to disclose their financing within this register have caused outrage among the Brussels-based lobby consultants. EPACA's media offensive denounced the Commission's transparency plans as “excessive”, “an unnecessary burden”, “impossibly complex” and “voyeurism”, and even threatened to boycott the transparency register.

Amongst the range of criticisms that EPACA throws at the Commission's transparency plans is the argument that “money does not equal influence”, so financial disclosure is therefore irrelevant or even “dangerous”. EU Commissioner Kallas, who heads the transparency work, replied by suggesting that “nobody would pay real money for lobby services without expecting something in return – and that ‘something’ is influence”. Yet EPACA is determined to maintain the shroud of secrecy that cloaks the clients they lobby for, and sources of financing.

EPACA's (over-)reaction and its shifting of positions demonstrate they are political opportunists of the highest degree. Initially EPACA argued for a voluntary register, now they argue for a mandatory one, but without financial disclosure. The main target seems to be to delay and eventually stop the whole transparency initiative. The opportunistic attitude is further revealed by the fact that many of EPACA's members are subsidiaries of US-based consultancy firms that operate in Washington D.C., where for more than a decade, far more stringent mandatory lobby disclosure obligations have been in place.

There can be little doubt that these professional spin-masters know very well that the (often contradictory) arguments they present against a meaningful lobby register are fundamentally flawed.

Expose these cynical opportunists and use your free vote to cast influence and award them with the Worst Lobby Award 2007!

Supporting documents:

- “Hired-gun lobbyists in last-ditch battle against EU transparency plans”, Corporate Europe Observatory,
<http://www.corporateeurope.org/lobbyistbacklashagainsttransparency.html>

4 Viscount Étienne Davignon

Nominated for advising EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel about African development issues, even though he sits on the board for Suez – a transnational corporation looking to expand its energy and water business into Africa.

This spring, the European Commission for the first time ever published a list of the names and mandates of special advisers to EU Commissioners, 55 in total. The list revealed that Suez director and shareholder Étienne Davignon advises Development Commissioner Michel on “Africa policy, in particular the role of the private sector in the economic development of sub-Sahara Africa”. Both Mr. Davignon and Commissioner Michel claim that there is no conflict of interest between the role as special advisor and sitting on the board of Suez, the world’s largest water multinational. Davignon owns shares worth more than 350,000 Euro in Suez, a company with operations that also include electricity, natural gas and waste management. Suez has clear commercial interests in Africa and plans to increase those interests.

When asked about this conflict of interest the European Commission changed its tune and said that Davignon’s work is “exclusively about European affairs” and “he does not advise about infrastructure works in Africa.” The next day, in a flurry, a further statement was released by Commissioner Michel, which attempted to clarify the contradictory responses. It said Davignon was tasked with “involving the private sector in the development policy.” Davignon himself reacted with fury when a Belgian newspaper covered the criticism of his double roles as Suez lobbyist and shareholder and Special Adviser to the European Commission. “The role of adviser can be only of a general nature”, Davignon argued in a written response. There therefore “can be no talk of this overlapping with the professional responsibilities that I observe elsewhere.”

In summer 2007, after months of uncertainty, it became clear that Commissioner Michel had re-appointed Davignon as his special adviser, despite numerous unanswered questions about what appears to be clear conflicts of interest.

If you agree that conflicts of interest are a serious matter and must be resolved, then cast your vote for Viscount Étienne Davignon for the prize of Worst EU Lobbying Award winner 2007.

Supporting documents:

[EU adviser’s role questioned](#), Andrew Bounds, Financial Times, 6 March 2007

[Campaigners Counter Privatisation Source](#), InterPress Service, 30 March 2007
<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=37152>

[Davignon ‘Special Adviser’ on African Development: Conflict of Interests?](#), Corporate Europe Observatory, 31 March 2007
<http://www.corporateeurope.org/davignonspecialadviser.html>

[Chronology](#) of the controversy about Davignon’s conflict of interests, Corporate Europe Observatory, March 2007
<http://www.corporateeurope.org/davignoncontroversy.html>

5 Repsol

Nominated for distorting the EU's research agenda on agrofuels; ensuring that outcomes fit narrow commercial interests, at the expense of genuine measures to combat climate change.

Repsol is a leading oil corporation. Repsol's Luis Cabra, Director of Technology, chairs the European Biofuels Technology Platform (EBFTP), an industry-dominated advisory group promoted by DG Research and partly funded by the Commission. The Commission has entrusted the group to elaborate the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) on agrofuels which will identify key research areas (and allocating funds) for the next 20 years. In September 2007 a draft SRA, completed by Repsol and other EBFTP members was made public. This draft proposed an astonishing and ambitious target for 25% of road transport fuel to be agrofuels by 2030.

The Platform describes itself (and therefore the SRA) as a multistakeholder effort bringing together "the biofuels community". Yet despite rhetoric about open participation, membership has been stitched up from the start. For example, members of the Platform's steering committee were chosen by the Chair (from Volvo) and the vice-Chairs of BIOFRAC (the predecessor of the Platform, dominated by oil, car and biotech companies). Unsurprisingly, the result is an organisation full of industry representatives and research centres with close ties to industry. There is not a single citizen organisation represented in the steering committee. As for the 5 working groups, there are only 2 NGO representatives out of some 125 members.

Importantly, Repsol and the other corporations in the EBFTP have a commercial interest in the development of agrofuels in the EU, and they are now designing this policy agenda. The impacts of their 'advice' through the EBFTP are far-reaching and already evident. For example, the EU has already proposed a binding target of 10% use of agrofuels in all road transport fuel by 2020. This pays no attention to concerns that agrofuels threaten to exacerbate the problem of climate change and create a range of new insecurities and devastation.

Vote for Repsol and help unmask the corporate takeover of public research!

Supporting documents:

[The EU's agrofuel folly: policy capture by corporate interests](#), Briefing paper, Corporate Europe Observatory, June 2007

<http://www.biofuelstp.eu/consultation.html>

B Worst Greenwash Category

1 Airbus

For a series of adverts in which passenger jet silhouettes are filled with beautiful landscapes, pretending that Airbus jets are green and clean

In its latest advertisement campaign, Airbus takes the outline of an aircraft and fills it with picturesque landscapes in an attempt to create the impression that aviation is green and clean. Adverts in the Financial Times appeal to readers with the claim that by “Flying in an A380, you’re personally creating less CO₂ than you would do driving the average family car.” Airbus fails to say that the distances travelled also matter. For example, on a transatlantic return flight, each passenger emits the equivalent of the consumption of an average car over the period of one year. Furthermore, because of different chemical reactions at high altitudes, aviation emissions have a climate change impact 2.7 times higher than CO₂ emissions from land-based sources.

Aviation is the fastest growing source of climate-changing emissions in the European Union. EU emissions from international flights grew by 73% from 1990 to 2003 and could be as much as 150% by 2012 unless action is taken to prevent this. Attempts to generate such action are thwarted by misleading advertising campaigns that promote flying as a green and clean option.

If you think it is highly misleading to paint aircraft with nature’s peaceful sunsets, happy dolphins and lush rainforests, vote for Airbus!

Links to Airbus’ four main advertisements

Smarter...

http://www.airbus.com/store/photolibrary/Print_advertising/Airbus_ads/att00009813/media_object_file_highres_A380_Smarter_hr.pdf

Quieter...

http://www.airbus.com/store/photolibrary/Print_advertising/Airbus_ads/att00009812/media_object_file_highres_A380_Quieter_hr.pdf

Greener...

http://www.airbus.com/store/photolibrary/Print_advertising/Airbus_ads/att00009811/media_object_file_highres_A380_Greener_hr.pdf

Cleaner...

http://www.airbus.com/store/photolibrary/Print_advertising/Airbus_ads/att00009810/media_object_file_highres_A380_Cleaner_hr.pdf

More information on the climate impact of aviation: Clearing the Air – The Myth and Reality of Aviation and Climate Change

http://www.transportenvironment.org/docs/Publications/2006/2006-06_aviation_clearing_the_air_myths_reality.pdf

2 BAE Systems

For promoting deadly weapons as environmentally friendly

BAE Systems is a global defence and aerospace company developing weapons and technologies for military purposes. In late 2006 BAE Systems started to present itself as a greener and more ethical corporation, promoting the slight environmental improvements they have made in their production of weapons and military technologies. BAE are making great play of their ethical and environmental record to counter a blitz of negative publicity regarding bribery and undue influence on government decision making.

BAE claimed in their annual report of 2006, through a third party endorsement, that “Despite the snigger factor of ‘green bullets’, there is no reason why BAE Systems should be treated differently from any other large manufacturing company whose products have an environmental impact.” Except perhaps the fact that most other manufacturers don’t make products that are actually designed to kill people. The greenwash here is that the company are trying to use their very marginal green ‘achievements’ to diffuse proper scrutiny and criticism.

One example is their promotion of lead-free in munitions. But BAE systems continue to make munitions using depleted uranium. Consult the most recent company sustainability report to get a fuller understanding of the responsible product stewardship strategy with the expectation that: “product stewardship to become more important to the UK MoD and other customers and believe that BAE Systems could gain competitive advantage by being an early mover. This could also reduce costs and benefit the company's reputation.” (<http://www.baesystems.com/CorporateResponsibility/> - page 9)

If you think that saving the planet while killing its inhabitants isn’t really responsible behaviour cast your vote for BAE systems now!

Supporting info:

BAE Systems 'above the law' over Saudi enquiry, claim campaigners,
<http://www.forbes.com/business/feeds/afx/2007/01/05/afx3301541.html>

Legal challenge to decision to drop BAE corruption inquiry,
<http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/item.shtml?x=548917>

Sustainability Report by BAE Systems,
<http://www.baesystems.com/CorporateResponsibility>

3 ExxonMobil

For purporting it is reducing its greenhouse gas emissions while in reality its emissions are increasing

The world's biggest publicly-listed oil company has launched its latest public relations offensive. The winner of last year's 'Worst EU Lobbying Award' for cynical manipulation of the climate debate, ExxonMobil launched an international advertisement campaign to greenwash the oil giant's image: Adverts published in newspapers such as the European Voice and in public spaces such as Brussels International Airport peddle one main message: that ExxonMobil is doing its best to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and to protect the environment.

Messages floating in bright blue bubbles are designed to deceive observers into believing that Exxon is “**...working to reduce emissions**”. While another advert claims a “**record low number of oil spills**”. However, Exxon's own corporate citizenship report tells a different story: Over the last 4 years, greenhouse gas emissions have increased by almost 6.5% and gas flaring (a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions) by over 45%. While the number of actual oil spills has decreased, the absolute amount of oil spilled has more than tripled between 2005 and 2006.

If you believe that companies should make real efforts to reduce emissions instead of spending millions on manipulating the facts, vote for ExxonMobil!

Pictures:

- Two adverts which were part of a series published in the European Voice (April 4-11, 2007 and May 24-30, 2007):
- An advert published in different German newspapers (end 2006 and beginning 2007)
- Ceiling-high adverts hanging in the jetways of Brussels International Airport (Zaventem)
- The same advertising scheme as it was published on ExxonMobil's own website (10 September 2007); Exxon has since removed this page.

More information:

ExxonMobil's Corporate Citizenship reports can be downloaded from:
<http://www.exxonmobil.com/Corporate/Citizenship/citizenship.asp> 2006

More about ExxonMobil's misleading advertising campaign:
<http://www.foeeurope.org/corporates/news/exxon.htm>

More information about ExxonMobil's Greenwash advertising at Brussels International Airport and a complaint against it: <http://www.exxon-files.eu/takeaction/index.php>

4 the German Atomic Forum – Germany’s “unloved climate protectionists” (Klimaschuetzer.de)

For abusing the public’s concern about climate change in order to promote nuclear energy

Behind the seemingly pathetic slogan, “Germany’s unloved climate protectionists”, lie the German Atomic Forum (representing Germany’s big energy corporations as well as manufacturers of nuclear equipment). This slogan, masquerading like an appeal for sympathy, launched their greenwash campaign in early 2007. The campaign targeted leading media outlets and included posters, a booklet distributed in several magazines and a website, with the shameless domain www.klimaschuetzer.de (climate protectionists).

This slogan masks a more sinister campaign to improve the public’s perception of nuclear energy. It aims to portray it as the clean energy source of the future and postpone the closure of the oldest nuclear power plants in Germany. The slogan is supported by wholesome images of the natural environment; unpolluted and unspoilt, with happy people or sheep, against the seemingly benign backdrop of an old nuclear power plant, creating the impression of glorious harmony. The campaign is an outstanding example of European wide efforts by the nuclear lobby to use climate change to improve the image of nuclear power plants.

If you want to shed a healthy dose of cynicism on this attempt to distort nuclear power’s real effects, show the German Atomic Forum just how ‘unloved’ they really are by voting for them now!

More information:

The ads and the brochure can be found at
<http://www.klimaschuetzer.de/klimaschuetzer/broschuere.php>

5 Shell

For suggesting that their oil refineries emit flowers not smoke

In the wake of increasing public conviction that climate change needs to be addressed, Shell is trying to remodel its image in order to appeal to the environmental consciousness of potential customers. Advertising in newspapers and magazines in April and May 2007, the company showed a refinery emitting flowers from its chimneys with claims that it uses its “waste CO₂ to grow flowers and [its] waste sulphur to make concrete”. However, in reality, less than 0.5 percent of Shell’s total CO₂ emissions are piped into Dutch greenhouses to grow flowers. Furthermore, most of Shell’s sulphur waste is used for ship fuel and is finally released in the air. Sea ships are one of the biggest sources of sulphur dioxide pollution.

Adverts contain poetic wording; “Don’t throw anything away, there is no away”, somehow implying that the oil company operates in line with such sentiment. Yet worldwide, people are suffering from the effects of pollution emitted by Shell’s refineries, for example in Nigeria, South Africa, the US and the Philippines. In Nigeria, Shell illegally flares gas, emitting sulphur which causes acid rain, devastates the environment and corrodes people’s homes. This flaring in Nigeria causes 60 times more greenhouse gas emissions than the carbon dioxide that is reused by Dutch farmers to grow flowers.

If these attempts, to bloom-up this oil giant’s operations and cover up a smoky record, don’t green-wash with you, then cast your vote for Shell today!

More information:

The full text of a complaint against this greenwash advertising by FoEE in Belgium (in English) can be found at:

http://www.foeeurope.org/corporates/pdf/FoE_complaint_Shell_May07.pdf

Latest available figures – from Shell’s Sustainability Report

http://www.shell.com/static/envandsoc-en/downloads/about_this_site/shell_sustainability_report_2005.pdf