



GAR signs Open Letter to World Leaders urging Climate Action ahead of COP21

23 November 2015

Open letter from CEOs to world leaders urging climate action

We are CEOs from 78 companies and 20 economic sectors. With operations in over 150 countries and territories, together we generated over \$2.1 trillion of revenue in 2014.

In the spirit of the World Economic Forum to foster public-private cooperation, we affirm that the private sector has a responsibility to engage actively in global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to help the world move to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.

We call upon governments to take bold action at the Paris climate conference (COP 21) in December 2015 to secure a more prosperous world for all of us. We are already taking action, and we stand ready to work together with the international community to help deliver practical climate solutions.

Below is a statement we prepared that outlines our vision:

Climate change is one of the biggest global challenges that will shape the way we do business now and in the coming decades.

The [United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties 21 \(COP21\)](#), to be held in Paris in December 2015, aims to deliver a new climate change agreement that will put the world on track to a low-carbon, sustainable future while keeping the rise in global temperature to [under 2 degrees Celsius](#).

This coalition, comprising CEOs from 78 companies with operations in over 150 countries and territories, and facilitated by the [World Economic Forum](#), believes the private sector has a responsibility to actively engage in global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and to help lead the global transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy. This coalition further seeks to catalyze and aggregate action and initiatives from companies from all industry sectors—towards delivering concrete climate solutions and innovations in their practices, operations and policies.

The undersigned, as CEO climate leaders, urge the world's leaders to reach an ambitious climate deal at [COP21](#), aligned with the [UN Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). We extend an open offer to national governments to meet and co-design tangible actions as well as ambitious, effective targets that are appropriate for their different jurisdictions.

Our commitments

- The companies we represent are taking voluntary actions to reduce environmental and carbon footprints, setting targets to reduce our own GHG gas emissions and/or energy consumption while also collaborating in supply chains and at sectoral levels. Technological innovations will be an important element.
- We agree on the need for inspirational and meaningful global action and aligned messaging. We will act as ambassadors for climate action, focusing on solutions and economic opportunities and using "the science debate is over: [climate change is real](#) and addressable"* as one of the common themes to raise public awareness.
- We will actively manage climate risks and incorporate them in decision making—not least to realize growth opportunities. We will take steps to implement effective strategies to strengthen not only our companies' but also societal resilience.

Our vision supporting a climate deal

- We believe that effective climate policies have to include explicit or implicit [prices on carbon](#) achieved via market mechanisms or coherent legislative measures according to national preferences, which will trigger low-carbon investment and transform current emission patterns at a significant scale. We support global mitigation approaches that promote cost effective incentives for cutting emissions, while respecting level playing fields and preventing carbon leakage.
- We urge a strategic action agenda—supported by clear and consistent policies and robust monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV)—that will complement business efforts to stimulate innovation as well as collaborative actions across value chains, and to develop and scale up alternative and renewable energy sources, promote energy efficiency, end deforestation and accelerate other low-carbon options and technologies such as ICT.
- We welcome transparency and disclosure regarding financial investments and policies in relation to all energy-related activities—including fossil-based and alternative. We support assessments of [resilience to climate risks](#) and call for new financial instruments to stimulate alternative energy and efficiency projects as well as green bonds. This will enable climate action to be integrated with financial reporting and instruments.
- We encourage governments to [set science-based global and national targets](#) for the reduction of GHG emissions and the development of alternative energy sources.

Hastening the shift to a low-carbon economy in an economically sustainable manner will [generate growth and jobs](#) in both the developing and developed world. Delaying action is not an option—it will be costly and will damage growth prospects in the years to come. The CEO climate leaders call on government leaders and policy makers to align on global measures, to be consistent in policy-making and to develop helpful innovation frameworks.

A comprehensive, inclusive and ambitious climate deal in Paris on mitigation, adaptation and finance—in combination with a strong set of clear policy signals from the world's leaders—is key to accelerating this transition. This opportunity should not be missed.

** We will build on the data presented by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) of the UN, [NASA](#), and the [New Climate Economy Report](#) ("Seizing the Global Opportunity") of the [Global Commission on the Economy and Climate](#).*



Signatories

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Key Initiatives and Platforms Taking Action with Business on Climate Change:

- BSR
- Business and Climate Summit
- Climate Disclosure Standards Board
- CDP
- Ceres
- Institutional Investor Group on Climate Change
- Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change
- The Climate Group
- The Global Commission on the Economy and Climate
- The Non-state Actor Zone for Climate Action
- Tropical Forest Alliance 2020
- UN Climate Summit 2014: Catalyzing Action
- UN Global Compact
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- We Mean Business
- World Bank Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition
- World Business Council for Sustainable Development
- World Economic Forum Global Challenge Initiative on Environment, Climate Change and Resource Security

Originally posted on World Economic Forum Agenda: <http://wef.ch/climateletter>.