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CLIMATE CRIMINALS
OF COP21

#ClimateCriminals



BENJAMIN SPORTON



MYRON EBELL



MARC MORANO



CHRIS HORNER



BJORN LOMBERG



FIONA WILD



JAMES TAYLOR

**INSIDER
DOSSIERS**

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The world is calling for a commitment to a 100% clean future at the climate summit in Paris. But a group of climate criminals is trying to stop that deal. Their tactics are different, but their end game is the same: shift the focus away from emissions targets and keep fossil fuels at the centre of human development. Some even argue that more money should be spent on coal - the worst carbon-polluting fuel. Most get paid by fossil fuel companies like Exxon to speak against climate action. Some of them have launched extreme public attacks against scientists and others.

That is why Avaaz is exposing the seven biggest climate criminals attending the COP21 Paris climate summit. We are publishing their photo and their biographies and insider dossiers on their activities to shine a spotlight on their dirty backroom dealings and stop them from destroying our future.

Benjamin Sporton
(World Coal Association, UK)

Myron Ebell
(Competitive Enterprise Institute, USA)

Marc Morano
(Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, USA)

Chris Horner
(Competitive Enterprise Institute, USA)

Bjorn Lomborg
(Copenhagen Consensus Center, DK)

Fiona Wild
(BHP Billiton, AUS)

James Taylor
(Heartland Institute, USA)

www.avaaz.org/ClimateCriminals



BENJAMIN SPORTON

**COAL LOBBYIST-IN-CHIEF
WORLD COAL ASSOCIATION**

Benjamin Sporton is the newly-appointed chief executive of the World Coal Association (WCA), the body that represents the interests of the coal industry.² He will be “the coal industry’s point man at United Nations-sponsored climate negotiations”, according to one newspaper.³

Emissions from burning coal alone produced “15 billion tonnes of CO₂ worldwide in 2012”.⁴ That’s 43% of the world’s total.⁵ With coal companies reeling from a plummeting coal price⁶ and the prospect of a global climate agreement spelling tough times ahead, the WCA’s job is to somehow convince the world that it makes sense to keep on burning coal, the most carbon-intensive fossil fuel.⁷ Or as Sporton puts it: “We need to see more investment in ensuring that people can access new coal technology”.⁸

The WCA is now arguing that coal is the only realistic way to provide energy to much of the world’s poor⁹ - a message which may sound selfless, but is motivated by self-interest and conveniently ignores the huge impact that climate change will have on the world’s poorest people. Despite the figleaf arguments about access to energy, carbon capture and storage, and ‘efficient’ coal plants, it’s clear the coal industry’s real interest is in creating a “sustainable future for coal in the twenty first century [sic]”.¹⁰

Ahead of Paris, the WCA met with officials from India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Malaysia -- all governments that “anticipate a significant role for coal in their future energy mix”, according to Sporton, to ask them to defend coal-fired power in any Paris agreement”.¹¹ The WCA even wants governments to fork over money to build new high-efficiency coal plants.¹² But investing in new coal plants and related technologies is fraught with financial and environmental hazards beyond carbon emissions.¹³

In previous years, the WCA has gone as far as to organise their own conference during the UN climate talks.¹⁴ The ‘International Coal and Climate Summit’ was held in collaboration with coal-friendly host Poland in 2013, creating an opportunity for coal industry executives to argue for their own continuing importance.¹⁵ The coal industry has dismissed peer-reviewed scientific data to serve their own interests, instead relying on climate denial rhetoric to try and shape critical US climate legislation.¹⁶



MYRON EBELL

LOBBYIST AND CLIMATE DENIER
COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Vanity Fair describes **Myron Ebell**¹⁷ as a “policy analyst, soundbite artist, and oil-industry mouthpiece”.¹⁸ He is the director of the Center of Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI),¹⁹ a free-market think tank based in Washington, D.C. He also chairs the Cooler Heads Coalition, a group of over two dozen non-profit organisations formed in 1997 that claims to, “question global warming alarmism and oppose energy rationing policies”.²⁰ CEI is a central component of a network of US think tanks that have thrived on money from the fossil fuel industry,²¹ and the tobacco industry before it.²² In a CSPAN interview in August 2015, Ebell said he’d “like to see a lot more funding from all of those [mining] companies, but unfortunately many of the coal companies are now going bankrupt”.²³

Ebell was previously policy director at the Frontiers of Freedom, a public policy advocacy organisation that lobbies for constitutionally limited government founded by former Senator Malcolm Wallop, an advocate for the development of domestic coal, oil, and natural gas.²⁴

CEI and Frontiers of Freedom both received funding from ExxonMobil.²⁵ Between 1998 and 2005, CEI received just over \$2 million from ExxonMobil,²⁶ taking \$405,000 in 2002²⁷ and \$270,000 in 2005.²⁸ Frontiers of Freedom have received money from tobacco and oil companies, including Philip Morris Companies, ExxonMobil, and RJ Reynolds Tobacco.²⁹

CEI opposes a global climate agreement on principle -- Ebell has said, “We felt that if you concede the science is settled and that there’s a consensus... -- the moral high ground has been ceded to the alarmists”.³⁰ CEI’s representatives regularly attend climate summits to frustrate the process.³¹



MARC MORANO

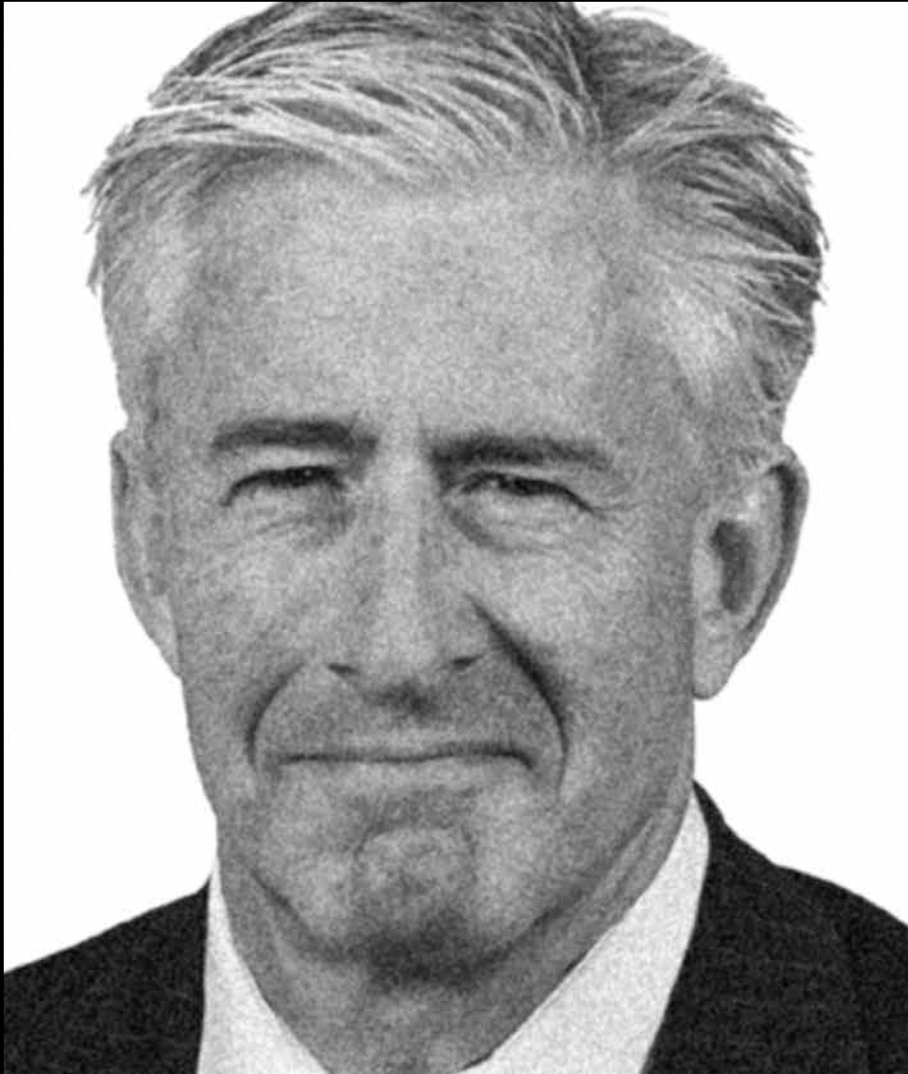
**BLOGGER, PR MAN AND CLIMATE DENIER
COMMITTEE FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE TOMORROW**

Marc Morano³² has made a career out of spreading climate misinformation through the Climate Depot website, and has said that climate scientists, “deserve to be publicly flogged”.³³ He is an outspoken and aggressive climate change denier, with no scientific expertise, whose signature trick is to publish the email addresses of climate scientists,³⁴ a move journalists suggest leads to cyber-bullying.³⁵

Morano is the PR man of the climate denial industry -- Rolling Stone calls him ‘the Matt Drudge of climate denial’.³⁶ In anticipation of Pope Francis’ 2015 visit to the US, Morano orchestrated a report accusing the Pope of creating an ‘unholy alliance’ with climate activists.³⁷ For his achievements as a climate denier, Morano is featured in the 2015 documentary film “Merchants of Doubt”, a film that exposes how ‘a professional class of deceivers’ has been paid by the fossil fuel industry to mislead the public about the science of climate change.³⁸

Morano’s mouthpiece, the blog Climate Depot, is run by the conservative think-tank CFACT, which has received funding from ExxonMobil, Chevron, and Donors Trust/ Donors Capital Fund (DONORS) -- organisations that funnel money to ‘conservative and libertarian causes’ and fuel the climate denial movement.³⁹ In 2010, CFACT received \$1.3 million from DONORS - 45% of its total budget.⁴⁰

Morano previously worked for Senator James Inhofe, arguably the most prominent climate denier in the US Senate.⁴¹ Inhofe accepted \$662,506 from oil companies between 2000 and 2008, in addition to \$152,800 in contributions from the coal industry during the 110th Congress.⁴² On the Paris talks, Morano recently wrote, “The notion that a U.N. agreement to limit emissions will somehow alter the Earth’s temperature or storminess is bordering on belief in witchcraft.”⁴³



CHRIS HORNER

LAWYER, COAL INDUSTRY
LOBBYIST AND CLIMATE DENIER
COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

A darling of the fossil fuel industry,⁴⁴ **Chris Horner** is a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI), a US think tank that has received more than \$2 million in funding from ExxonMobil since 1998.⁴⁵ He also works with the Energy and Environment Legal Institute (formerly the American Tradition Institute), and has received funding from Big Coal.

As a 'go-to guy' for coal companies,⁴⁶ Horner's specialty is hounding climate scientists to get access to their email using aggressive tactics supported by the industry.⁴⁷ Horner's work includes using freedom of information requests and litigation to gain access to climate scientists' private emails, behaviour that the Washington Post described as 'harassment'.⁴⁸ In a message sent by top coal industry leaders in June 2015, they highlight 'the commitment we have to support Chris Horner's work' as the "'war on coal' continues."⁴⁹ Earlier this year, bankruptcy documents from US coal company Alpha Natural Resources revealed that he received nearly \$18,600 from the company in 2015.⁵⁰

Horner has authored four books, the titles of which help explain his views: 'Power grab: How Obama's green policies will steal your freedom and bankrupt America' (2010), and 'Red hot lies: How global warming alarmists use threats, fraud, and deception to keep you misinformed' (2008). He has accused NASA's chief scientist James Hansen of 'doctoring' temperature data, and appeared on a range of right wing chat shows and speaking tours promoting climate denial.⁵¹

Earlier this year Horner visited Europe to network with european climate denial activists. It's likely he'll want to use Paris as an opportunity to further attack momentum for climate action.



BJORN LOMBORG

ACADEMIC, AUTHOR, FILMMAKER,
AND SELF-PROMOTER
COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS CENTER

Danish author **Bjorn Lomborg**⁵² could be described as ‘delayer in chief’ when it comes to climate. Lomborg argues that governments should abandon the 2 degree target.⁵³ Instead of spending money to de-carbonize the economy, he insists that those funds should be redirected to poverty alleviation and more research and development. The delay tactic he’s best known for is his promotion of ‘wildly futuristic’ high-tech geoengineering schemes designed to cool the planet.⁵⁴ Among the proposals he’s championed is one where massive amounts of sulfate aerosols are injected into the atmosphere to reflect sunlight and reduce global warming.⁵⁵

Founder and president of the think tank Copenhagen Consensus Center,⁵⁶ Lomborg is a Visiting Professor at the Copenhagen Business School and a prolific public speaker and columnist on climate related issues. Over the years, Lomborg has woven a narrative that he’s a reasonable, middle-ground thinker who uses fact-based analysis to stymie consensus on global emissions targets by focusing on poverty alleviation and technology R&D -- a strategy aligned with those of conservative lawmakers and right-wing think tanks.⁵⁷

Many writers and academics have raised issues with Lomborg’s research methods,⁵⁸ including his beliefs that global warming has “dramatically slowed or entirely stopped” in the past 12 years,⁵⁹ and that the link between global warming and extreme weather events is alarmist.⁶⁰ His factual distortions have been extensively documented by Danish biologist Kåre Fog.⁶¹ Earlier this year, Lomborg tried to get the Australian government to provide \$4 million to fund a research centre for him, but after a wave of opposition and a change of government, they dropped it.⁶² Previously, Lomborg was funded by the Danish government and right-wing US funders with links to the Koch brothers.⁶³

The Canadian promotional tour for ‘Cool It’, a book and documentary film by Lomborg arguing that many of the impacts of climate change are better addressed through adaptation,⁶⁴ was sponsored by the Fraser Institute, a right wing think tank with funding links to ExxonMobil.⁶⁵

Lomborg is feverishly writing dispatches from COP21,⁶⁶ deriding attempts to achieve reduced emissions targets, urging governments to abandon climate focused aid, and criticising and undermining the talks.⁶⁷



FIONA WILD

**PR MANAGER FOR THE WORLD'S MOST
VALUABLE MINING COMPANY
BHP BILLITON**

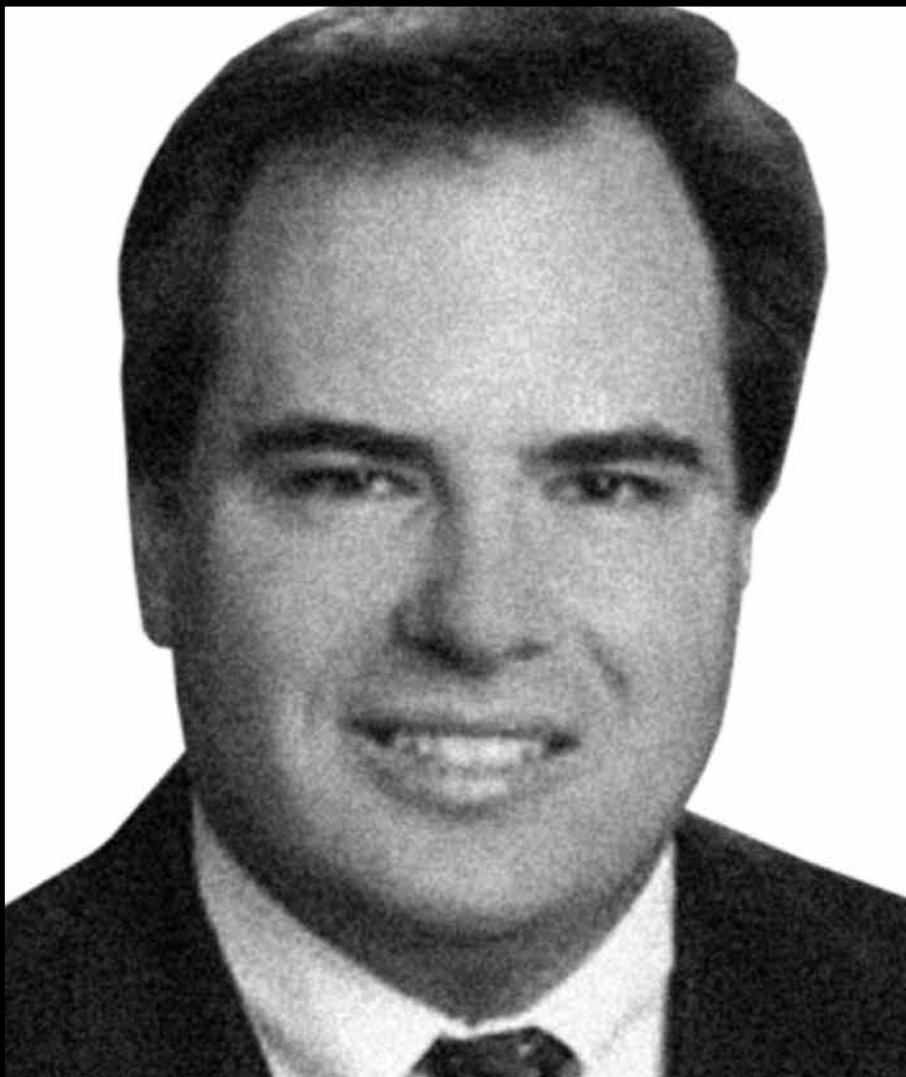
Fiona Wild is the Environmental Affairs Manager at BHP Billiton, the world's top mining company based on 2015 market value.⁶⁸ She leads the implementation of BHP Billiton's climate change strategy.⁶⁹

The Australia based coal giant claims it supports the need to address climate change, but continues to actively obstruct climate change legislation,⁷⁰ arguing that coal is a vital part of the world's energy mix. Ahead of Paris, "Wild [has] reasserted coal's place -- and that of fossil fuels more broadly -- in BHP's portfolio".⁷¹ This is unsurprising given that BHP is invested in some of the biggest coal mines in the world and is sitting on coal stockpiles that, if burned, would produce billions of tonnes of carbon dioxide.⁷² By supporting Tony Abbott's bid to ditch Australia's carbon tax,⁷³ BHP helped cement Australia's role as one of the leading greenhouse gas emitters in the world.⁷⁴

BHP chief Andrew Mackenzie said BHP may drop coal if carbon-capture and storage aren't successful,⁷⁵ but the miner's investments suggest it's in no hurry to do so. BHP owns 75% of the IndoMet Coal Project,⁷⁶ a collection of coal concessions spanning 350,715 hectares in the Heart of Borneo⁷⁷ region of Indonesia.⁷⁸ Heart of Borneo is one of the largest remaining transboundary rainforests in the world.⁷⁹ Environmental NGOs warn the project endangers local people and wildlife, including orangutans, elephants, clouded leopards, sun bears, and rhinos.⁸⁰ With estimated reserves of 774 million tonnes,⁸¹ IndoMet has the potential to become one of BHP's largest coal projects.⁸²

BHP also owns a 33% stake in the opencast Cerrejon coal mine in Colombia, one of the largest coal mines in the world, which has been dogged by accusations of human rights abuses and environmental damage.⁸³

There are also a string of complaints about the company's activities in other parts of the world. In November 2015, two dams burst at the site of a Brazilian iron ore mine part-controlled by BHP.⁸⁴ Brazil's government has called the event an environmental catastrophe and filed a civil lawsuit against BHP and the other companies involved. It is seeking \$5.2 billion to finance compensation for the thousands of people affected, and to restore the Rio Doce river basin, which was flooded with toxic mine waste and mud.⁸⁵



JAMES TAYLOR

**LOBBYIST AND CLIMATE DENIER
HEARTLAND INSTITUTE**

James Taylor⁸⁶ is a Senior Fellow with the Heartland Institute,⁸⁷ a climate denial lobby group based in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

He argues that climate change has stopped, claiming there has been “absolutely no warming during the past 10 years”, and has said the world should abandon efforts to fight what he calls a ‘mythical global warming crisis’.⁸⁸

In a fundraising appeal ahead of the Paris climate talks, Taylor asked potential donors to help raise \$60,000 for a Heartland trip to Paris, to hold a ‘counter-conference’ that will “expose the agendas and true costs of the agreement being negotiated”.⁸⁹

Heartland is keeping the flame of climate denial burning in the US despite waning interest from the media and public. The Chicago-based free-market think tank “has been at the forefront of denying the scientific evidence for man-made climate change”, according to the website DeSmogBlog.⁹⁰

Heartland has a long history of working with the fossil fuel industry to question the science of climate change, and with the tobacco industry to do the same with the link between secondhand smoke and health risks.⁹¹ It has been funded by ExxonMobil,⁹² the Koch brothers, and Philip Morris Tobacco, amongst others.⁹³

On climate it has run programmes to “cast doubt on the scientific finding that fossil fuel emissions endanger the long-term welfare of the planet”, and planned tailored high school curriculums to the same effect, according to leaked internal documents.⁹⁴

Heartland stunts include travelling to the Vatican to “inform Pope Francis of the truth about climate science”,⁹⁵ and a billboard associating belief in climate change with the US ‘Unabomber’ terrorist and serial murderer Ted Kaczynski, which badly backfired when prominent supporters of the organisation withdrew their funding.⁹⁶

Heartland also publishes the Non Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report, an effort to muddy the waters on the science of climate change. The report concludes that “rising temperatures and atmospheric CO2 levels are causing ‘no net harm to the global environment or to human health and often finds the opposite: net benefits to plants, including important food crops, and to animals and human health’”.⁹⁷

Taylor has a daily podcast from Paris and is busily organising a COP21 counter-conference to trumpet “the compelling evidence that humans are not causing a global warming crisis”.⁹⁸ They have reserved meeting space in Paris and made it available to “allies being sent by other organizations, such as Cooler Heads Coalition, Heritage Foundation, CFACT, Competitive Enterprise Institute, NIPCC and allied groups in Europe”.⁹⁹

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