

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Michael Ash mash@econs.umass.edu or Kim Weinstein kweinstein@peri.umass.edu / 703-229-2146 or visit PERI's Corporate Toxics Information Project on the web at <http://toxic100.org>.

PERI Names Top Climate, Air, and Water Polluters; Environmental Justice Indicators Track Unequal Risk for Poor and Minorities

AMHERST, MA, January 27, 2021 - Researchers at the Political Economy Research Institute (PERI) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst today published new editions of the [Greenhouse 100](#) Index, ranking U.S. companies by their emissions responsible for global climate change according to the U.S. EPA Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, and the [Toxic 100 Air](#) and [Toxic 100 Water](#) Indexes, ranking U.S. industrial polluters using the U.S. EPA Toxics Release Inventory. The PERI Indexes include Environmental Justice indicators to assess impacts on low-income people and minorities.

The Greenhouse 100 Index ranks companies by 2018 direct emissions from large sources. For the second year in a row, the top three companies are Vistra Energy, Southern Company, and Duke Energy. They each released almost 100 million metric tons of CO₂-equivalent emissions in 2018. Together these three released almost 5 percent of all (energy, industrial, agricultural, transportation, and household) U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Rounding out the top ten in the Greenhouse 100 are Berkshire Hathaway, American Electric Power, Xcel Energy, NRG Energy, Calpine, and Dominion Energy, with the U.S. government ranking 6th. The top company whose direct emissions are not dominated by electric power plants is Exxon Mobil at rank 11. Among the top ten, Calpine has the highest weighted share of minorities living within 10 miles of its facilities with likely disproportionate exposure to co-pollutants of combustion.

The Toxic 100 Air Polluters Index reports that the top ten 2018 companies in terms of total potential chronic human health risk are LyondellBasell, Boeing, Huntsman, BASF, Dow Inc., Celanese, General Electric, Terumo, Eastman Chemical, and Royal Dutch Shell. Two of these companies are in the top ten almost entirely because of ethylene oxide from one facility; one of them due to chromium from one facility. The Toxic 100 Air Index covers publicly-traded as well as privately-held companies, such as Koch Industries at rank 24, that appear on Forbes, Fortune, or S&P lists.

The Toxic 100 Air Polluters Index includes environmental justice indicators showing companies' pollution burden on minority and low-income communities. While minorities make up just under 40 percent of the U.S. population, minorities bear, for example, 68 percent of the air-toxics risk from facilities owned by LyondellBasell.

The Toxic 100 Water Polluters Index ranks the pounds of toxics released into surface water or sent to water-treatment systems, adjusted for chemical toxicity. Northrop Grumman, BASF, LyondellBasell, Dow Inc., and Celanese top the Toxic 100 Water Index for 2018.

In addition to the top-100 lists, a search facility provides information on all companies reporting releases to the Toxics Release Inventory or the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program.

"The Toxic 100 and Greenhouse 100 inform consumers, shareholders, regulators, lawmakers, and communities which large corporations release toxic and climate-altering pollutants into our environment," said Professor Michael Ash, co-director of PERI's Corporate Toxics Information Project. "We assess not just how many pounds of pollutants are released, but which are the most toxic. People have a right to know about toxic hazards to which they are exposed. Legislators need to understand the effects of pollution on their constituents."

"In making this information available, we are building on the achievements of the right-to-know movement," notes Ash. "Our goal is to engender public participation in environmental decision-making, and to help residents translate the right to know into the right to clean air, clean water, and a livable planet."