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PERI Names Top Climate, Air, and Water Polluters; Environmental Justice Report Card Tracks Unequal Risk for Poor and Minorities

AMHERST, MA, February 26, 2018 - 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 2015 direct emissions from large sources. The top three companies, Southern Company, Duke Energy, and American Electric Power, each released over 100 million metric tons of CO₂-equivalent emissions in 2015. Together these three released almost 5% of all (energy, industrial, agricultural, transportation, and household) U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Rounding out the Greenhouse 100 top ten are NRG Energy, Berkshire Hathaway, Dynegy, Xcel Energy, FirstEnergy, and Calpine, with the U.S. government ranking 7th. The top company whose direct emissions are not dominated by electric power plants is Exxon Mobil at rank 13. 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 2015 companies in terms of total potential chronic human health risk are DowDuPont, Berkshire Hathaway, General Electric, Royal Dutch Shell, TMS International, Arconic, LyondellBasell Industries, Robert Bosch, Freeport McMoRan, and Exxon Mobil.* The Toxic 100 Air Index covers publicly-traded as well as privately-held companies, such as Koch Industries at rank 15, that appear on Forbes, Fortune, or S&P lists.

The Toxic 100 Air Polluters Index includes an environmental justice report card showing companies' pollution burden on minority and low-income communities. While minorities make up only 39 percent of the U.S. population, minorities bear, for example, 72 percent of the air-toxics risk from facilities owned by steel company TMS International. Minorities bear disproportionate risk from eight of the top ten companies.

The Toxic 100 Water Polluters Index ranks the pounds of toxics released into surface water or from water-treatment systems, adjusted for chemical toxicity. DowDuPont, American Electric Power, and Honeywell International top the Toxic 100 Water index for 2015.

"The Toxic 100 informs consumers, shareholders, lawmakers, and communities which large corporations release the most toxic pollutants into our environment," said Professor James Boyce, 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," explains Professor Michael Ash, co-director of PERI's Corporate Toxics Information Project. "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."

** Zachry Group was previously ranked at number one among the Toxic 100. However, Zachry Group has submitted new reports to EPA revising its 2015 TRI reporting. Based on the revision, Zachry Group is now ranked 53rd among the Toxic 100. New editions of the Toxic 100 reflect the most current information from the EPA.*

