



25 October 2016 – A year ago, an entire room burst into applause at the closing of the United Nations Climate Conference in Paris ([COP21](#)), as they finally reached an agreement on climate change. The President of COP21, France's Foreign Minister at the time, Laurent Fabius, was close to tears at this historic event. Sadly, a year later, the [World Meteorological Organization](#) (WMO) had some bad news: a new record of CO₂ emissions in the atmosphere.

The aim of the Paris Agreement is to sufficiently reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit rising global temperatures to 2 degrees by 2050.

As a strong greenhouse gas, Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) is one of the main reasons for global warming. The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere reached new levels in 2015 (400 parts per million – ppm) and will continue to rise throughout 2016.

”Without tackling carbon dioxide emissions, we cannot tackle climate change and keep

temperature increases to below 2 degrees Celcius above the pre-industrial era”, warned the Secretary-General of the WMO, Petteri Taalas.

Since COP21, states have been invited to present their national objectives, in terms of reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, called: Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC). The President of the upcoming COP22, Salaheddine Mexouar, indicated that this year States will be encouraged to announce “the rapid implementation of the INDC, and possibly raise their ambitions.”

Ranking eco-friendly companies

The private sector has also been called to action. Gone are the days where businesses could get away with “greenwashing” their communication strategies – painting their communications with a bit of green in order to seem like they are friends of the environment and the planet. In recent years, companies’ environmental responsibilities have become an obligation in some countries, and an economic issue around the world.

Proof of this is the annual ranking of businesses according to their environmental assessment, which enrolls more participants every year.

“It is interesting to see that the businesses that get an A in our ranking are the ones that are performing the best in the stock exchange”, noted Laurent Babikian from the [Carbon Disclosure Project](#) (CDP), an international organisation that specialises in reporting on the environmental aspect of businesses.

On Tuesday 25 October in Paris, CDP released its annual ranking for France and the Benelux. This is a ranking gathering 151 companies, representing only 81 % of the market capitalisation of the area. Schneider Electric is on the top of the list, keeping its class A for the 6th year in a row.

Atos, Philips, L'Oréal and Proximus are part of the class A for the 4th time while BAM and ING are in for the 3rd time. The other members of class A are AkzoNobel, Bic, Bouygues, DSM, EDF, ENGIE, PSA, ICADE, Klépierre, KDN, Michelin, Renault, Suez and Veolia. The full classification and the methodology are available in the CDP France Benelux report.

Over a one year period, more than half of the companies working with CDP cut their CO2 emission, to an average of 2 %.

However, as highlighted by Ségolène Royal, French Minister of the Environment, Energy and Marine Affairs in the introduction of the report, "there is still a lot of work to be done, because, even if the companies assessed by CDP reach their goals, it would only cover 25 % of the cuts needed to keep the rise of global temperatures under 2 degrees".

Additional links:

- [UN Climate Conference in Paris \(COP21\)](#)
- [Carbon Disclosure Project \(CDP\)](#)
- [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#)