

Why companies as diverse as eBay, IKEA, and Mars are increasingly supporting US clean energy policies

July 1 2020, by Zdravka Tzankova



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My [new analysis](#) of [companies that seek to buy renewable electricity](#) finds that business is becoming [a powerful new ally](#) in the U.S. political

battle to stop climate change. Driven by [pressure from environmental groups](#) and by [the increasingly competitive prices of wind and solar](#), many companies have [pledged](#) to power their operations with clean energy. But [the legal and technical complexity of U.S. electricity markets](#) has stalled corporate progress on their clean power goals. This has prompted companies as diverse as eBay, Mars, IKEA and Walmart to push for public policies that expand the generation of renewable energy in the U.S. and make it more accessible through [mandates](#), [incentives](#) and other [regulations](#).

Politically powerful fossil fuel interests [have long steered U.S. policy toward carbon-intensive energy and economy](#). [Increased business lobbying for clean energy policies](#) by the likes of Nestle, Salesforce, Unilever and other large companies has the potential to tip the political scale in favor of a carbon-free economy and help the U.S. reach or exceed Paris Agreement emissions targets.

It is still unclear if clean energy efforts by corporate energy buyers will be enough to outweigh the [massive political influence](#) of the fossil fuel industry [in time to avert the worst effects of climate change](#). There's [little evidence of a slowdown in lobbying by fossil fuel interests](#), so the question is whether corporate lobbying for [clean energy](#) will ramp up fast enough to change the course of U.S. climate and energy policy.

For my next project, I plan to compile a database of companies and industries that are struggling to meet pledges for greening various corporate operations and supply chains. Using this database, I aim to identify cases in which stronger public environmental policies can help businesses meet a range of environmental commitments. I further aim to identify ways to mobilize business advocacy in favor of stronger environmental policies.

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