

## MEDIA COVERAGE

Low Carbon Technology Partnerships initiative

# Three Ways Companies are Changing the Climate Conversation

By Sarah King



The UN climate conference in Paris is underway now – with governments, NGOs, businesses and civil society organizations from around the world convening to solve one of our most pressing global challenges. The role of the private sector in tackling climate change will be one of the many subjects discussed in Paris. Indeed, companies have played a unique role in helping to shift the dialogue from risk to opportunity. The business community is demonstrating that it is possible to tackle the climate challenge while creating growth and greater global prosperity. Here are three ways I believe companies are changing the conversation on climate:

1. **Taking a Stand:** Not so long ago, many companies were hesitant to take a stand on climate change. The diverse coalition of businesses and NGOs that comprised the [US Climate Action Partnership \(USCAP\)](#) was something of a novelty – and an early step. Today, the drumbeat for action from global corporations is growing exponentially. Companies are taking bold steps to address climate change – and in doing so nudging governments to raise ambition levels in setting global and national targets. There has been a surge in companies setting [100 percent renewable energy targets](#) – commitments that 5+ years ago would have been seen as impossible (or at least very aspirational). Over 150 companies – including DuPont – have supported the [White House's American Business Act on Climate Pledge](#), making commitments that will support efforts to reach the national targets set by President Obama. In the lead-up to COP21, many companies also have voiced their support for a strong outcome in Paris through visible statements such as this [Business Backs Low Carbon USA](#) ad that appeared in The Wall Street Journal earlier this week.



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- 2. Collaboration for Change:** Leadership in corporate sustainability is no longer about how much a single company can reduce its footprint, but about how well it collaborates to create transformational positive change in a sector or value chain. We are seeing several exciting examples of this trend, such as companies using their collective demand for renewable energy to open a new dialogue with power providers through the [Corporate Renewable Energy Buyers' Principles](#); bold commitments made around food waste, commodity sourcing, and deforestation by the [Consumer Goods Forum](#); and sectoral collaboration on topics like climate smart agriculture and renewable energy through the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's [Low Carbon Technology Partnerships initiative \(LCTPI\)](#).
- 3. Innovation + Deployment:** We have a problem to solve – a big one. Decarbonizing the economy will take ingenuity, creativity and persistence. But it is possible. Business thrives on finding creative solutions that deliver value for their investors, customers and society. The private sector is investing in the development and commercialization of technologies and solutions that will enable a low-carbon economy. At DuPont we recently announced a [Sustainable Innovation Goal](#) that challenges our scientists to develop all products in our pipeline to contribute to a safer, healthier, more sustainable world. Many of the products that we commercialize in the coming years will deliver meaningful climate benefits.

However, many technologies that can drive step change reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions already exist. As Jigar Shah said in his [recent post](#) on the Breakthrough Energy Coalition, “What we need is deployment.” In other words, an important role and responsibility *governments* can play in changing the conversation on climate. Leadership by national governments is needed to articulate a global vision for how we will decarbonize the economy and to create policy architecture that enables the cost-effective deployment of low-carbon technologies. It's critical that we get a path established that will create more certainty and send the right signals to the markets, companies, and ultimately, all of us as consumers.

To ensure that the private sector continues to play a transformational role in addressing global climate change we must work with a broad set of stakeholders to continue the momentum after the meetings in Paris conclude. Let's scale up progress. Motivate each other. Continue to pursue opportunities that address climate change while growing our global economy and delivering societal benefits for this and future generations.



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*Sarah King is Climate & Sustainability Manager at DuPont. Sarah has been a member of the DuPont sustainability team for almost 10 years, helping lead efforts to embed sustainability into the overall corporate strategy.*

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