

BANKTRACK

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



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Front cover image: BankTrack staff and other activists at the 'Ende Gelände' action against the Garzweiler open-pit lignite mine in the German Rheinland, organised by 350.org, August 2015. Photo: Fossil Free

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BANKTRACK 2.0 - A NEW START

It was not an easy question we asked the forty members and partners of the BankTrack network to consider and vote on in early 2015: 'Do you agree to formally dissolve our global network and turn the BankTrack secretariat into a standalone tracking, campaigning and NGO support organisation targeting private sector banks?' After an internal review, our Steering Committee concluded that a lot of work capacity could be freed up if the secretariat no longer worked at maintaining the network infrastructure and instead focused entirely on our core business: pushing banks towards adopting sustainable business strategies, and moving them out of financing destructive business sectors wrecking the planet.

Ultimately, boosting our campaign capacity was a proposal that resonated well with our results-focused membership, and so we proceeded, leaving behind the old BankTrack network and reinventing ourselves as the independent "BankTrack 2.0". A year later we remain convinced it was a good move: the new BankTrack has been more energetic than ever before, pushing forward campaigns on issues from climate change to human rights to forest protection. We also do not seem to have lost any of our leverage and influence in the debate on sustainable banking (as we feared might result from BankTrack ceasing to represent a global network), and have continued to be able to present our ideas and proposals where it counts. And finally, the reinvention of BankTrack was well-received by our funders, which continued to support our work.

With this report we would like to present you our work and achievements over the last twelve months. 2015 was first and foremost the year of the Paris Climate Summit, where the world finally woke up to the urgency and severity of the climate challenge and decided to keep the global temperature rise within 2 degrees, while aiming to limit it further to 1.5 degrees. This target cannot be reached without leav-

ing the vast bulk of known fossil fuel reserves buried in the ground, which is why BankTrack demanded in the run-up to the summit that banks 'Do the Paris Pledge' and quit financing the coal industry as an urgent first step to moving away from all fossil fuel finance.

The Paris climate target also requires that the world's remaining forests are well protected and preserved, the focus of our 'banks and forest' campaign. And the post-carbon world we want to build is also one in which everyone's rights are respected, and so we have kept a focus on holding banks responsible for respecting human rights in all their business activities through our human rights campaign. On all these fronts we saw tangible improvements in how banks operate, and we share those success stories here. Most importantly it inspires us to carry on with full energy in 2016.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Johan Frijns, director BankTrack



2015 HIGHLIGHTS

1 21 BANKS SIGN THE PARIS PLEDGE TO QUIT COAL

In summer, BankTrack launched its Paris Pledge campaign for all banks to make a pledge, in time for the Paris climate summit, to phase out their finance for the coal sector. The call for banks everywhere to Quit Coal was backed by over 160 civil society organisations. 21 ethical banks around the world got on board and pledged to stay away from the sector, showing the larger ‘coal banks’ that it can be done as well as showcasing alternatives for those who want a coal-free bank. See [page 11](#).

2 NINE GLOBAL BANKS TAKE STEPS AWAY FROM COAL

While none of the large international banks signed the Paris Pledge, there is no doubt they got the message of the campaign, with a number of large banks making commitments in the run-up to the Paris summit to step away from financing either coal mining or coal power. Natixis and ING went furthest by ending their direct financing for coal mines and new coal plants, and also ending general financing for “pure play” coal companies. We showed the state of progress in The Coal Test report. See [page 11](#).

3 APRIL COMMITS TO STOP RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION AS BANKS WALK AWAY

Santander and ABN AMRO, the two biggest European banks financing the Indonesian pulp and paper giant APRIL, walked away from the company in February and March respectively, following efforts from BankTrack and allies to alert banks to illegal deforestation and social conflict caused by the company as well as a major petition launched against Santander by Greenpeace at the start of the year. Credit Suisse, another APRIL financier, refused to cut ties with the company despite pressure from BankTrack and local activists at the bank’s AGM. Then in June APRIL caved to the pressure and announced a new Sustainable Forest Management Policy which included an immediate end to logging in natural forests. We will be watching to see whether they stick to it. See [page 13](#).

4 BANK HUMAN RIGHTS FAILURES DEBATED AT HIGH LEVEL UN CONFERENCE

BankTrack research, showing that banks are failing in their responsibility to provide victims of human rights abuses with access to effective remedy, was cited by the UN when it decided to debate the issue at the UN Forum for Business and Human Rights in Geneva. Panellists from civil society, business and academia as well as the UN all agreed on the need for greater progress from the finance sector as a whole. We need to see further progress on this issue, but hope the high-profile recognition of the scale of the problem brings us closer to a solution. See [page 14](#).

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5 FOUR BANKS PULL BACK FROM MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL

PNC, Barclays, Natixis and ING all announced new commitments to cut finance for the controversial practice of mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining in 2015, adding to a growing roster of banks that refuse to support this hugely destructive industry. The announcements were notably clustered around bank AGM season in May, when BankTrack and our partners mobilised to advocate directly to bank share-holders and officials. See [page 10](#).

6 14 INTERNATIONAL BANKS WITHDRAW FROM AUSTRALIAN “CARBON BOMB”

Standard Chartered and Commonwealth Bank became the latest banks to withdraw from their roles in the Carmichael coal mine project in Australia’s as-yet-unexploited Galilee Basin, one of the world’s largest “carbon bomb” projects. And the three largest French banks went even further, committing to not finance any of the coal projects in the Galilee Basin region. See [page 8](#).

7 BANKTRACK COVERAGE IN THE ECONOMIST, NATURE AND WIRED

Our work was featured in some big-hitting publications in 2015: the journal Nature Climate Change compared [BankTrack data on coal finance with green bond issuances](#); The Economist published our [letter drawing attention to bank support for coal](#); and the technology magazine WIRED discussed how “[public shaming makes the world a better place](#)” with our work to stop banks financing mountaintop removal coal mining being used as a prime example.

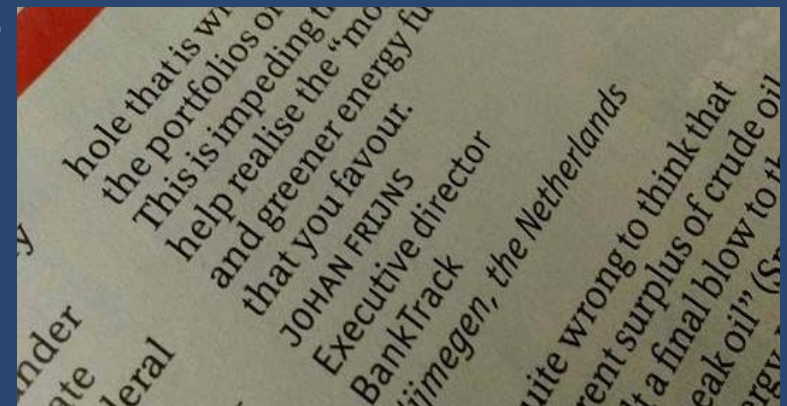
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TRACKING BANKS

TRACKING BANK PROMISES

SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES

Bank sustainability policies were more or less unheard-of when BankTrack began as a network back in 2003 but are now standard practice among large banks in most of the world. However this is not to say the policies are always good enough, or that the banks often stick to them. BankTrack systematically tracks bank policies on its profiles, and benchmarks the policies as part of its campaigning work.

We benchmarked the human rights policies, due diligence and reporting of 32 large banks in December 2014's "Banking with Principles?" report, and engaged with many of the banks covered in that report during 2015, discussing their progress in developing improved human rights standards and what they saw as barriers to faster progress. A new report in 2016 will assess whether banks are moving forward on these human rights standards.

And in December 2015 we launched "[The Coal Test - Where Banks Stand on Climate at COP21](#)" analysing the pre-Paris surge in bank commitments to reduce coal financing and identifying the laggards, slow movers and frontrunners among the big banks.

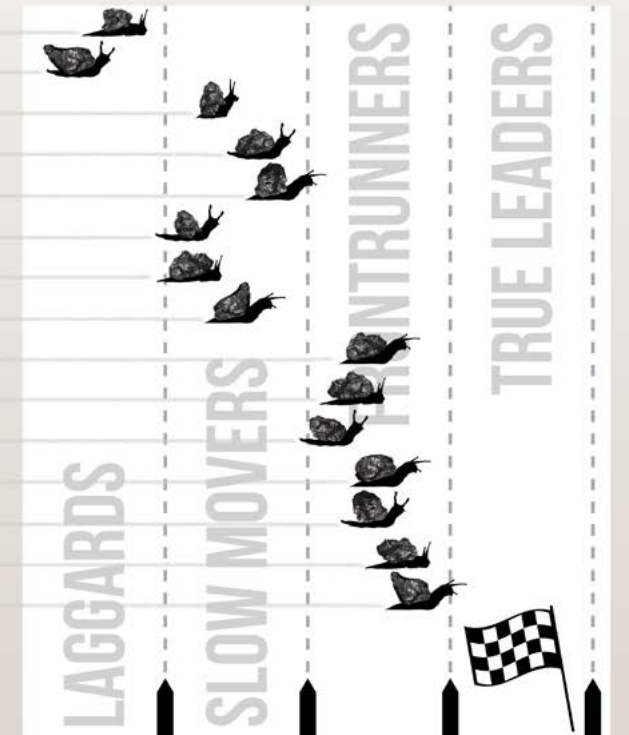
EQUATOR PRINCIPLES

BankTrack has followed the Equator Principles closely ever since their launch in 2003. The Principles - a set of voluntary commitments to take social and environmental impacts into account when providing loans to clients for large scale projects, signed by 83 financial institutions - were revised substantially in 2013. Part of this revision included new reporting requirements for Equator Principles Financial Institu-

WHO'S PASSING THE COAL TEST?

BANKS ARE MOVING AT A SNAIL'S PACE ON COAL:

After banking billions for coal since 2009, big banks have been slow to commit to phase out financing for coal mining and power in the leadup to COP 21. Figures refer to each bank's total financing for coal between 2009-2014. The snails are placed to the left or right within categories based on each bank's coal financing figure.



Infographic from "[The Coal Test](#)", released in December 2015 by BankTrack, Les Amis de la Terre, Rainforest Action Network and urgewald, capturing the snail's pace at which banks are reducing their support for coal.

tions (EPFIs), which included publicly reporting the names of the projects financed under the Principles on the initiative's website.

In October 2015, by the time of the annual conference of EPFIs in Washington D.C., this reporting of project names was still unavailable, although it was promised three months earlier. BankTrack wrote a letter to the EPA Chair making several

[recommendations](#) to the Principles prior to the annual conference, including finally publishing this information, aligning fully with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and establishing a complaints mechanism. This led to a meeting between the EPA and BankTrack and its civil society allies in January 2016, in which the EPA indicated that the new reporting would be available within weeks. We look forward to examining it in 2016.

GREEN BOND PRINCIPLES

In January 2014 a group of 13 commercial banks announced their support for the Green Bond Principles, a new set of guidelines for issuers of green bonds. The Principles are now signed by 109 organisations, including banks, bond issuers and investors, and have 60 observer organisations, including BankTrack. We gave a cautious welcome to the release of the Principles as an initiative to grow green finance, but were alarmed when GDF Suez issued one of the largest green bonds to date and used it to raise money for the Jirau Dam in Brazil, a mega-dam with severe impacts on freshwater ecology and nearby communities and a BankTrack Dodgy Deal.

In April 2015 we convened a coalition of 17 civil society groups and wrote an [open letter](#) to Green Bond Principles following their 2015 update, urging the Principles to take steps to ensure projects which come at the expense of human rights violations and significant negative social and environmental impacts are not financed by green bonds, and to require that green bond issuers place information on the projects they finance in the public domain. The Secretariat [responded](#) to say that these comments would be taken into account when the Principles are reviewed in 2016, and our letter was [published](#) on the Principles' website, although our request for further debate with the Principles secretariat was not met with a positive response.

FIVE VOLUNTARY PRINCIPLES FOR MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE ACTIONS WITHIN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

In December a group of 11 banks including the World Bank, European Investment Bank and Crédit Agricole held an event at the Paris climate change summit to launch the snappily-titled “Five Voluntary Principles for Mainstreaming Climate Action within Financial Institutions” (or 5VPfMCAwFIs for short). This new set of principles contrasted with the ambition of the climate summit, doing little more than setting out vague, incremental commitments which failed to even mention coal or other fossil fuels. BankTrack, Friends of the Earth France and Rainforest Action Network jointly issued a [response](#) challenging the Voluntary Principles as greenwash and urging banks to publicly commit to phase out financing for coal mining and coal-fired power worldwide, as the most urgently necessary Climate Action for financial institutions.

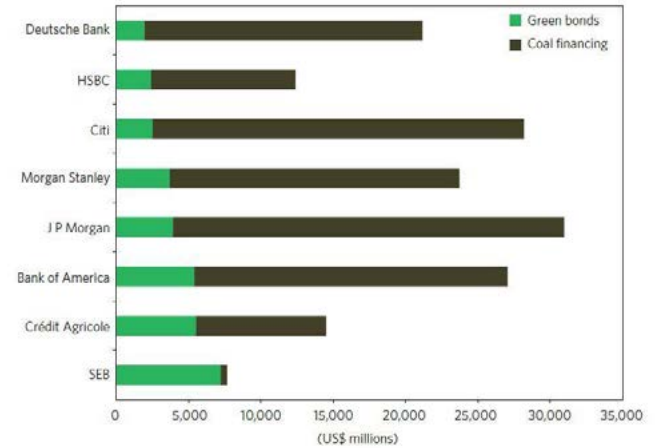


Figure 1 | Coal financing versus green bonds. Coal financing includes corporate loans, share issues and bond issues, and is cumulative from 2005 to April 2014¹⁰. The green bonds value refers to the cumulative green bonds that the banks have underwritten since the beginning of the green bond market in 2007 through to October 2014¹¹.

An article in the journal Nature Climate Change looks at the biggest bank underwriters of Green Bonds and compares the size of the green bonds portfolios to BankTrack data on their finance for coal.

TRACKING DODGY DEALS

While better bank policies and commitments are positive steps, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and our on-line library of over 140 “Dodgy Deal” companies and projects is our effort to track what banks actually finance. Each Dodgy Deal profile gives a platform to community campaigns aiming to stop or significantly reform projects or companies by putting pressure on the banks financing them.

It does not aim to be comprehensive, and its focus is limited by the resources and priorities of campaigners, but nonetheless each profile represents a deal that the banks would rather you didn't know about, and together the profiles stand as a stark corrective to the even more partial picture presented by bank sustainability reports. As a result, it is a well visited resource for journalists and analysts trying to get the complete picture on how banks fare on sustainability.

We label as a “Dodgy Deal” any bank deal to finance a company or project with serious negative impacts on the environment or the rights of local people. These are deals which in our opinion should have no place in the portfolios of socially and environmentally responsible banks, yet all large banks continue to finance them.



Children playing by the beach near the Tanjung Jati B coal power plant in Jepara, Central Java, oblivious to the possible threats to their health – 26 December 2012.

BANKTRACK'S COAL DODGY DEAL WORK IN 2015

Throughout 2015 BankTrack issued a number of briefings and alerts aimed at banks and investors, warning them of the dangers of facilitating specific coal deals or analysing their impacts on bank policies.

RAMPAL COAL POWER PLANT, BANGLADESH: The Sundarbans is the world's largest mangrove forest, a world heritage site and an important tiger habitat – what could go wrong with planning a major coal plant right on the edge of this sensitive ecosystem? Yet that is the plan for Bangladesh's **Rampal plant**. In May, France's three largest banks, BNP Paribas, Crédit Agricole and Société Générale, **disclosed** that they will not finance the project due to incompatibility with their policies, and in June BankTrack released a **study** revealing that the environmental damage threatened by the plant project means that it would breach many provisions of the Equator Principles. Ensuring private banks stay away from this project, and ultimately trying to stop it in its tracks, will be a major focus of our campaigning work in 2016.

CARMICHAEL COAL MINE, AUSTRALIA: By July 2015, ten of the world's 20 largest coal banks had already refused to finance the proposed **Carmichael** mega-mine in Australia or the Abbot Point terminal on which it would depend. Standard Chartered, the leading financial adviser to the companies planning the project, remained one of the main banks in the running. BankTrack contributed to the international campaign to stop the mine going ahead with a **briefing** on how finance for the mine would contravene Standard Chartered's own guidelines. Greenpeace **drew on this research** in its own lobbying, and in August the bank **confirmed** it too was pulling out of the project. These moves led climate activist Bill McKibben to wonder, "**is any bank dumb enough to fund this coalapoloosa**?"

PLOMIN C, CROATIA: In September, we joined Friends of the Earth France and Croatia, Zelena Istra and CEE Bankwatch Network to produce a **study** showing that Crédit Agricole's support for the proposed Plomin C coal plant project in Croatia is inconsistent with the bank's climate ambitions and its own sector policy on coal-fired power plants. Weeks later, the bank **published new criteria** which ruled out finance for coal power plants in high-income countries - including Croatia. While the policy must go further, this presented a major blow for the plant, for which Crédit Agricole was the advisor. Changes in the political mood in Croatia since then make it unlikely that the project will proceed.

COAL INDIA, INDIA: In September, we issued an **investor alert** prior to a share offering for **Coal India** Limited, one of the world's largest coal miners, warning that the company has been implicated in serious environmental destruction and human rights abuses and has shown no willingness to address these issues. The alert highlighted forced displacement of communities to enable mine expansions, broken commitments on biodiversity and forest impacts, and failure to carry out promised engagements with civil society.

DTEK, UKRAINE: In October, we joined the National Ecological Center of Ukraine and sent an **investor alert** to financial institutions, bringing to their attention a number of issues related to the operations of Ukrainian coal giant **DTEK**, including its inability to comply with common EU environmental and business standards and its adverse environmental impacts. The alert asked the financial institutions to consider these factors when engaging with the company on a debt restructuring proposal.



Action highlighting the potential health impacts of Plomin C.

NEW DODGY DEALS IN 2015

We worked with various campaign groups to develop Dodgy Deal profiles on the following companies and projects in 2015, highlighting the banks involved where possible as well as the environmental and social risks and the governance standards that should be applied. If you would like to work with BankTrack to profile a Dodgy Deal, get in touch.

PATENTS ON CHIMPANZEES AND OTHER ANIMALS: The European Patent Office has, since 2010, granted five patents on chimpanzees to the companies Bionomics, Intrexon and Altor BioScience. The animals have been genetically engineered to, for example, develop cancer or epilepsy and are intended for use in animal experiments for pharmaceutical research. Our profile in collaboration with German campaign group TestBioTec, launched in July, examined links between banks and companies filing such patents.

TAMAR VALLEY PULP MILL, TASMANIA: The long fight against the Gunns paper mill in Tasmania was resurrected following

the collapse of Gunns Ltd in 2013, as land and permits for the mill – now known as the Tamar Valley Pulp Mill - went on sale in the summer of 2015. The pulp mill remains the subject of strong community opposition. We worked with Markets for Change of Australia to launch a profile of the deal in July, warning prospective investors and banks that they should undertake comprehensive due diligence and examine the risks associated with investing in this project.

INDOMET COAL PROJECT, INDONESIA: BHP Billiton's IndoMet Coal Project, initially referred to as the Maruwai coal project, covers five potential coal deposits in East and Central Kalimantan in Indonesia. The project threatens severe impacts to an area known globally for its biodiversity, and has occupied land without the informed consent of the community. The profile was launched in January 2015 with Global Justice Now, and advised commercial banks to refuse any financial transaction with BHP Billiton as long as proceeds might be used for the project.

WOODLARK ISLAND KULA GOLD PROJECT, PAPUA NEW GUINEA: In May 2015 we launched a profile on this proposed and approved open-cut mine in the centre of Woodlark Island, PNG, with Mineral Policy Institute of Australia. The profile highlighted concerns around the project's potential environmental and social impact, which are amplified by poor consultation practices, a lack of transparency and the inexperience and small size of the company compared to the size of the project.

CHINA TUNA INDUSTRY GROUP, CHINA: China Tuna Industry Group Holdings Ltd applied for an initial public offering (IPO) of its shares on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange in June 2014. The sole sponsor of the IPO was Deutsche Bank subsidiary Deutsche Securities Asia. Our profile of the company was launched in January 2015 with Greenpeace, and advised banks not to finance or assist in financing the company until it is able to address the environmental, social and governance issues of its tuna longline operations.



IndoMet coal mine in Borneo, Indonesia



Protest against the proposed Tamar Valley pulp mill.

CAMPAIGNING

BANKS: QUIT COAL!

The year saw many victories and important breakthrough moments for BankTrack's "Banks: Quit Coal!" campaign as it entered its fifth year. Momentum gathered as we targeted the AGMs of various European coal banks, and then increased as we launched the campaign for banks to "**DO THE PARIS PLEDGE TO QUIT COAL**" in preparation for the Paris climate summit in December.

Among BankTrack's most memorable coal campaign successes in 2015 were:

- The three largest French banks – BNP Paribas, Crédit Agricole and Société Générale – [committed to not finance any of the coal projects which are still being recklessly promoted in Australia's Galilee coal basin region](#), dubbed the world's second largest 'carbon bomb'. Over several years BankTrack and our partner Friends of the Earth France have consistently pressed these banks to steer clear of these projects.
- Also in Australia, Standard Chartered and Commonwealth Bank both withdrew from financing the Carmichael 'mega mine' project, bringing to 14 the number of major international banks which have said 'No' to financing Adani's ecocidal plans there. A BankTrack [analysis](#) published just weeks before an announcement from Standard Chartered, revealing that it could only involve itself in the financing of the mega mine by contravening its own guidelines, helped to pile the pressure on the bank. Greenpeace, Market Forces and many other Australian NGOs were instrumental in notching up these successes.

- Bank money for highly destructive mountaintop removal (MTR) coal exploitation in the US continued to dry up in 2015 as many more banks, including [Barclays](#), [ING](#), [PNC Bank](#) and [Natixis](#), announced they were cutting their MTR finance, notably around bank AGM season in May, when BankTrack and our partners mobilised to advocate directly to bank shareholders and officials.
- The second half of the year saw a sudden spike in big banks adopting new policies which completely exclude both the direct financing of coal projects and, in some cases, coal companies. [Crédit Agricole](#), [Société Générale](#) and [BNP Paribas](#) announced that they will no longer finance coal mining projects. [Natixis](#) and [ING](#) went further by also ending their direct financing of new coal plants as well as their general financing of pure player coal companies. In similar good moves, [Bank of America](#), [Citi](#), [Wells Fargo](#) and [Morgan Stanley](#) also committed to reduce their lending exposure to global coal mining.



The proposed expansion to the Abbot Point coal terminal on the north Queensland coast is being resisted by campaigners due to the project's expected harmful impacts on the Great Barrier Reef.

THE PARIS PLEDGE CAMPAIGN

Driving our coal bank campaigning in the run up to COP 21 in Paris was the campaign for banks to “**DO THE PARIS PLEDGE TO QUIT COAL**”, which BankTrack officially launched together with our coal campaign partners in July.

The campaign asked all private sector banks to make a public commitment before the start of the Paris summit to phase out their financing of both coal power and coal mining. Banks which had already committed to quit financing coal were invited to support the campaign by pledging to continue to avoid coal finance, and to instead finance the transition to a low or no-carbon economy.

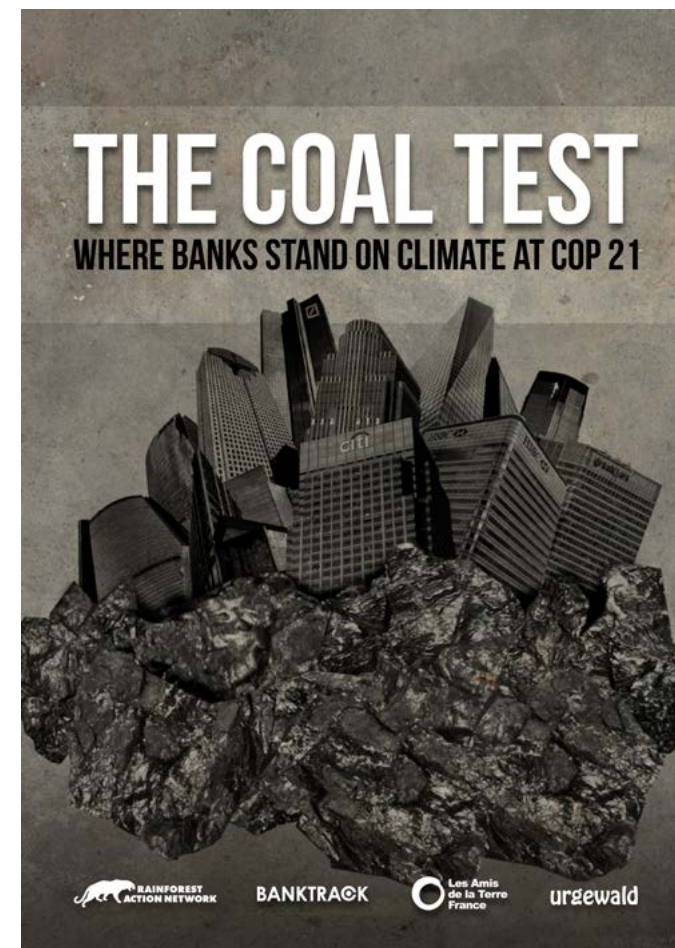
By the time BankTrack arrived in the French capital in late November, the campaign had resulted in:

- 21 ethical banks signing up to the Paris Pledge, all affirming their commitment to stay away from coal financing in any shape or form
- Support for the call from 168 organisations, including Greenpeace, 350.org and Oxfam International, and more than 10,000 individuals around the world, all sending one simple message to banks that it is time to quit coal
- Friends of the Earth in France, urgewald in Germany, Rainforest Action Network in the US and Market Forces in Australia using the Pledge as part of their own campaigns targeting specific banks
- The regularly updated, dedicated [Paris Pledge website](#) featuring a number of resources for campaigners and the public, including the “[21 reasons why banks must quit coal](#)” blog which was updated daily and promoted on social media in the days before the summit began

21 BANKS SIGNED THE PARIS PLEDGE TO QUIT COAL



- The launch of the report “[The Coal Test ... Where Banks Stand on Climate at COP21](#)” in Paris in the first week of the COP, analysing recent bank commitments to reduce their coal financing and identifying the laggards, slow movers and frontrunners among the big banks, as well as revealing recent coal financing figures.



While none of the large international banks stepped forward to actually sign the Paris Pledge, the momentum built up by the campaign and the support it received from across civil society contributed to nine international banks taking their first steps, albeit at a variety of speeds, away from financing coal.

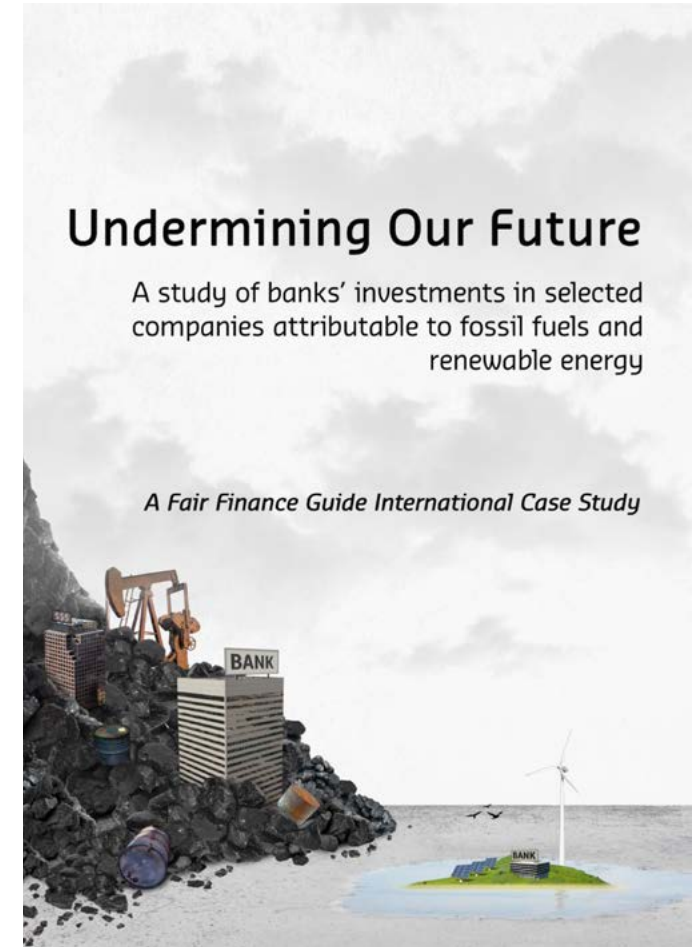
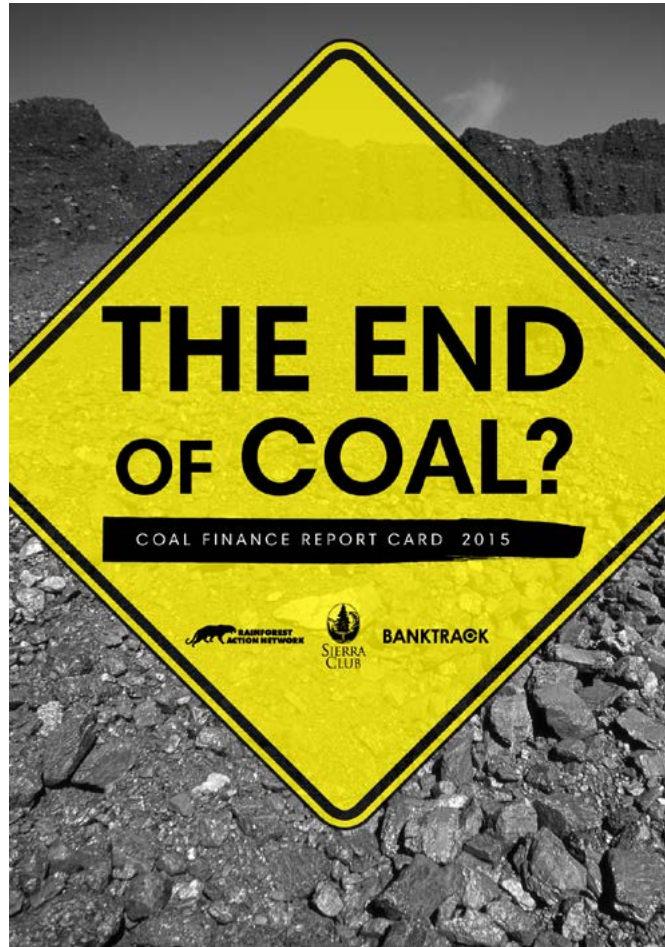
CAPTURING THE CHALLENGE: THE COAL FINANCE REPORT CARD 2015

If 2015 did bring a variety of meaningful and positive moves by banks on coal, at the same time, and given the climate urgency we find ourselves in, some perspective on these bank moves is required. Providing this perspective was “[The End of Coal?](#)”, the latest in the series of annual coal bank report cards which BankTrack co-publishes with Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club, and which extended its focus in 2015 beyond US banks to also rate the coal policies and lending activities of top European and Asian banks.

As the Paris agreement has now emphasised, the world needs to come off coal, oil and gas, making it an imperative and a social responsibility for the banks to not only stop bankrolling these twentieth century fuels but to do so rapidly. The “End of Coal?” report card presented many interesting findings, but one stood out: global coal bank financing for mining and power companies in 2014 totalled \$141 billion, a drop of only \$4 billion from the 2013 figure. There remains much work to be done to get the banks off coal for good.

UNDERMINING OUR FUTURE: BANK FINANCE FOR RENEWABLES FALLS BEHIND

In November the Fair Finance Guide Coalition and BankTrack released a study, ‘[Undermining Our Future](#)’, comparing bank finance for renewables and fossil fuels. It found that the world’s 25 largest private sector banks channelled at least \$931 billion into fossil fuel companies in the period 2009-2014, while over the same period, financing of renewable energy totalled only \$98 billion. This is the first international study to compare private sector bank financing of fossil fuels and renewable energy.



BANKS AND FORESTS

BankTrack's forest campaign focuses on the financiers of two major drivers of deforestation: the **palm oil** and **pulp and paper** sectors. Our aim is to stop banks financing the most destructive companies in these sectors and to encourage banks to develop robust investment policies that protect the world's remaining forests.

BUILDING PRESSURE ON APRIL TO STOP RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION

A main focus of our campaign in 2015 was Royal Golden Eagle Group and its subsidiary Asia Pacific Resources International Limited (APRIL), the second largest pulp and paper company in Indonesia. The company is considered the main driver of deforestation for paper pulp in Indonesia, and civil society groups have documented its track record of illegal

deforestation and causing social conflict.

In 2014 BankTrack and the Environmental Paper Network wrote to nine large banks financing APRIL – six Chinese and three European - asking them to refuse new loans until the company made significant improvements in its policy and its practices. Following this, Greenpeace launched a major campaign in early 2015 targeting Santander's finance for APRIL. The campaign **proved successful**, with first Santander and then ABN AMRO – also a major financier of the company - agreeing to cease financing APRIL until it has addressed its involvement in deforestation. This left Credit Suisse as the largest remaining European funder of the company.

In March 2015 a BankTrack briefing paper **showed** that Credit Suisse was breaching every one of the six exclusion criteria it

set out in its Forestry and Agribusiness Policy in its finance for APRIL. At the same time, Greenpeace launched a petition calling on the bank to cut its ties with the company, which attracted over 25,000 signatures. BankTrack then visited the bank's AGM in Zurich together with two Indonesian activists, Woro Supartinah and Isnadi Esman, as well as friends from Greenpeace, Environmental Paper Network and Bruno Manser Fonds, presenting the bank with the petition and meeting representatives to discuss the bank's finance for the company.

Our campaign efforts were rewarded in June 2015 when APRIL **announced** a new Sustainable Forest Management Policy which included an immediate stop to logging in natural forests. The new policy is a big improvement, but changes must be seen on the ground before it can be judged successful.

WARNING INVESTORS OF PALM OIL RISKS

In April 2015 a BankTrack-led **investor briefing** warned prospective investors of the risks of investing in a \$400 million bond offer by Singapore based palm oil grower Golden Agri-Resources (GAR). Credit Suisse, Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC) and Mitsubishi UFJ Securities acted for the company. While the company has strong commitments in place, there were serious concerns from local communities about the extent to which the company was living up to its policies, with poor community consultation and failure to obtain free, prior and informed consent before developing new plantations. Investors were urged to require the company to halt operations in disputed land and strengthen its processes.



Activists at Credit Suisse AGM in 2016

BANKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Since the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights were adopted in 2011, BankTrack's human rights campaign has focussed on demanding that banks to fully take up their responsibilities under the Principles. This stems from our conviction that, while the Principles are not perfect, their full adoption by banks will go a long way towards eliminating human rights abuses taking place as a result of bank-financed business activities.

ENGAGING WITH THE OECD

BankTrack joined the Advisory Group for the OECD's Proactive Agenda Project on Responsible Business Conduct in the Finance Sector in July 2015. This is a multi-stakeholder project which aims "to elaborate practical and relevant approaches" for the finance sector to implement the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. As the OECD Guidelines were substantially revised to be consistent with the UN Guiding Principles in 2011, the OECD's project may be influential in setting minimum expectations for the finance sector's approach to managing human rights impacts in particular.

We attended the OECD's expert panel Expert Working Session on Responsible Business Conduct and Investment in London in October 2015, and made a submission in response to draft guidance shared at the panel. Further panels are scheduled in 2016 investigating responsible business conduct in project finance and other commercial banking relationships respectively. Our engagement aims to ensure that the expectations set by the OECD project contribute to significant improvements in bank practice.

TRACKING THE THUN GROUP

An informal grouping of banks known as the Thun Group formed in 2012, and in 2013 produced a paper detailing rec-

ommendations for the banking sector on how to implement the UN Guiding Principles. BankTrack raised a number of criticisms of the paper, including that it omitted consideration of access to remedy. Following pressure from BankTrack, the Thun Group **announced** in August 2014 that it would "explore options for addressing ... access to remedy." We welcomed this commitment, however no further word has emerged from the Thun Group (on this topic or any other) during 2015.

CALLING FOR REMEDY AT THE UN

One striking finding of BankTrack's 2014 report on the state of bank implementation of the UN Guiding Principles, "**Banking with Principles?**", was that banks were not fulfilling their responsibilities to remedy human rights impacts which they cause or contribute to through their finance.

This finding was one of the reasons cited by the UN when it included a **panel** on the subject of "Sector-specific challenges: Providing access to effective remedy in the financial sector" on the agenda of the 2015 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights. The fact that this issue merited a panel on the official agenda of the Forum – an event established by the Human Rights Council and attended by some 2,300 representatives of business, government and civil society - itself sends a strong message to the finance sector that there is an urgent need for the finance sector to make progress on providing access to remedy. This was a point that panelists from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the OECD and academia were in broad agreement on. Disappointingly, no representatives of the commercial banking sector were able to make themselves available for the panel. We hope to see an adequate response from the banking sector during 2016.



BankTrack at the 2015 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva

NGO SUPPORT

With twelve years of experience in bank campaigning, a well-developed campaign tool box at our disposal and a network of strong relationships across civil society, BankTrack is well placed to support groups that wish to start engaging with or otherwise targeting banks as part of their own campaign work. In addition we stand ready to assist communities seeking help in dealing with banks involved in activities that impact their rights and interests. This is what we had on offer to fellow civil society groups:

TRAINING: BANKTEACH

BankTrack has in place a well-developed online training facility, BankTeach, including a “Finance for campaigners” training course which we make widely available to our work partners. In March we gave a training session on finance for coal campaigners at the IEEFA Energy Finance conference in New York, attended by campaigners from India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, South Africa and Turkey.

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Through our long-standing cooperation with the Dutch economic research consultancy Profundo we assist NGOs in researching the financial architecture of specific deals and companies sectors, identifying how they are financed, where they are in the financing process, and advising on the best campaign interventions. In 2015 we conducted research with Profundo on the [Rampal](#) coal power plant project in Bangladesh; the [Tata Mundra](#) coal power plant in India; the Adani [Carmichael](#) coal mine project in Australia; and the coal company Drummond in Colombia.

DEVELOPING PROFILES

Each profile on the BankTrack website represents a live campaign platform, raising the visibility of civil society campaigns and linking Dodgy Deals with the records of the banks financing them. We support communities and NGOs to create these profiles and provide advice on how to best make use of this campaign tool in bank advocacy work. In 2015 we created new Dodgy Deals on [patents on chimpanzees](#); the [Tamar Valley Pulp Mill in Tasmania](#); the [Woodlark Island Kula Gold Project in Papua New Guinea](#); the [China Tuna Industry Group IPO](#) and the [IndoMet Coal Project in Indonesia](#), and we worked extensively on Dodgy Deal focussed campaigns, including Indonesian pulp and paper company [APRIL](#), the [Carmichael](#) coal mine project in Australia and the planned [Rampal](#) coal plant in Bangladesh. See more details on these examples in “Tracking Banks” on page 5 and throughout this report.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

We help campaigners spread the word about bank-focused campaign work using our website and our targeted mailing list, which reaches some 2,600 people including journalists, analysts, campaigners and bankers. We distributed 56 news releases for 20 civil society groups and coalitions in 2015, including the National Ecological Center of Ukraine, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), Fair Finance Guide International and TuK Indonesia as well as core work partners such as national Friends of the Earth groups, Rainforest Action Network, *urgewald* and Market Forces.



BankTrack staff and other activists at the ‘Ende Gelände’ action against the Garzweiler open-pit lignite mine in the German Rheinland, organised by 350.org, August 2015.

ABOUT BANKTRACK

BankTrack is the international tracking, campaigning and NGO support organisation focused on private sector commercial banks and the activities they finance. We view ourselves as an integral part of a global community of NGOs focused on the financial sector as a whole, including multi-lateral and national development banks, export credit agencies, private and institutional investors.

Our mission is to promote fundamental changes in the operations of banks so that, while conducting their business in a fully transparent and accountable manner, they contribute to the ecological wellbeing of the planet and to offering a decent life free of poverty for all people.

STAFF AND BOARD

The BankTrack team in 2015 consisted of:

JOHAN FRIJNS: BankTrack Director and coordinator since 2003. Johan helped cofound the worldwide A SEED campaigners network, and in 1998 became coordinator of the International Financial Institutions programme of Friends of the Earth International. *Work Focus: organization and personnel management, fundraising, Equator Principles, climate, forests.*

YANN LOUVEL: Climate and Energy Campaign Coordinator since 2010, Yann previously worked as private finance campaigner for Friends of the Earth France. *Work Focus: Climate, energy, coal.*

RAYMON VAN VUGHT: Graphic Designer, Financial Manager and Office Manager, Raymon has been working for BankTrack since September 2009. *Work Focus: financial management, design, office management.*



The BankTrack team at our January 2016 Strategy meeting in the Director's kitchen. From Left to right: Greig Aitken, Catalina von Hildebrand, Raymon van Vught, Ryan Brightwell, Johan Frijns, Yann Louvel and Karen Vermeer.

RYAN BRIGHTWELL: Researcher and Editor since 2012, and coordinator of BankTrack's campaigning work on human rights. Previously he worked at The Co-operative Group as a specialist in ethical finance. *Work Focus: Human rights, Green bonds, editing, research.*

CATALINA VON HILDEBRAND: Paris Pledge Campaign Coordinator, Catalina joined BankTrack in June 2015 and is also active in the Fossil Free campaign at the University of Amsterdam. *Work Focus: Paris Pledge, climate, coal.*

GREIG AITKEN: Coal Campaigner, Greig joined BankTrack in August 2014 to help strengthen our global coal campaign's research and outreach impacts. He previously worked with CEE Bankwatch Network and has written reports for civil society organisations on a range of topics. *Work Focus: Coal, climate, energy.*

KAREN VERMEER: Volunteer, joined BankTrack in November, assisting with the preparations for the launch of the Equator

Principles Track and Chase project in 2016. Karen is about to get a Master's degree in Global Criminology at Utrecht University. *Work focus: Equator Principles.*

CHRISTINE VOET: Intern, joined BankTrack in early 2015 as part of her studies in International Public management. Throughout the year she played a crucial support role for the Paris Pledge campaign and helped revamp our website. *Work Focus: Paris Pledge, website.*

THE BANKTRACK FOUNDATION IS GOVERNED BY A THREE-PERSON BOARD CONSISTING OF:

- **MICHELLE CHAN**, Friends of the Earth US (Chair)
- **ANDREAS MISSBACH**, Berne Declaration (Secretary)
- **AMANDA STARBUCK**, Rainforest Action Network (Treasurer)

RECEIVED IN 2015 (IN EURO)

Grants

Oxfam Novib	176,982
JMG Foundation	23,680
European Climate Foundation	97,080
VK Rasmussen Foundation	65,765
RAN / EEPN	15,316
Total grants	378,823

Interest earnings	2,847
Donations	790
Other income	874
Total other income	4,511

Total income 2015	383,334
Total income 2014	289,176

EXPENDITURES IN 2015 (IN EURO)

Staff	291,991
Office & overhead	39,711
Work streams	49,115

Total Expenditures 2015	380,817
Total expenses 2014	267,540

Added to reserves	1,788
Added to reserves 2014	23,819

THE FULL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2015 CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE



BankTrack

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facebook.com/banktrack

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