

Koch Industries Has Now Spent \$55 Million Funding Climate Denial

by Brian Merchant, Brooklyn, New York on 04.21.11



Photo courtesy of [Greenpeace USA](#)

Koch Industries rose out of the shadows last year to take on the mantle of **corporate villain numero uno**. Its unmas **an eye-opening investigation from Greenpeace** that revealed the company was sinking astronomical amounts of money to undermine existing environmental laws or prevent new ones from being passed. Combined with a number of other reports, a portrait emerged of a massive, uber-polluting corporation -- the second largest private company in the world -- with the resources to support policies and politicians that would help shield its bottom line. Perhaps the key plank of Greenpeace's report is that Koch Industries spent over \$48 million funding various outlets dedicated to denying climate change. However, it looks like it's not just 'Kochtopus' to change its ways -- **Greenpeace has just released the 2011 update** to last year's report, and it's not just

The **updated report reveals** that "In 2009 Koch family foundations gave **\$6.4 million to organizations** that are paralyzing the total sum given to these groups since 1997 to \$55.2 million." And of that rather impressive sum, "\$31.6 million in the last five years for which financial data is available (2005-2009)."

That "denial machine" is a network of think tanks and front groups, many of which receive funding from other fossil fuel companies dedicated themselves in part to convincing the public (and the public officials it elects) that climate change isn't real. Organizations like the Cato Institute and organizations like the Heritage foundation, which have strong ties to media outlets and, of course, conservative politicians. And the Koch brothers -- each of whom are tied for fifth wealthiest man in America -- fund them.

Of course they do: they call for the elimination of environment-protecting laws that are a pain in the Kochs' ass. As Brad Johnson at the Wonk Room comes to mind, the Kochs' operations are as pollution-heavy as you can imagine -- refining, coal power plants, industrial manufacturing, etc -- these are its most profitable undertakings. It makes perfect sense to shut them down. Unfortunately, while doing so may save them some cash (as if they need it), it screws over the public: polluted air, drink contaminated water, live in a warmer world, and so on.

Another way the Kochs use their money to buy influence is by funding the Americans for Prosperity -- it's the primary organization that founded it. They were major supporters in the movement **to overturn California's clean energy and climate law**, a national politics. And, unsurprisingly, one of their chief goals is to prevent climate action. For proof, check out the Greenpeace report.

Of the eleven freshman Senators who publicly question settled climate science, ten received funding from Koch Industries.

them signed the Americans for Prosperity "No Climate Tax Pledge" to obstruct policy solutions to climate change
Representatives who deny climate science, 22 received Koch PAC funding in 2010, and all 38 signed the AFP pl

All this goes even further to reveal the extent of the Kochs' influence on the national political process, and illustrates
power serve as a major obstruction to climate action.