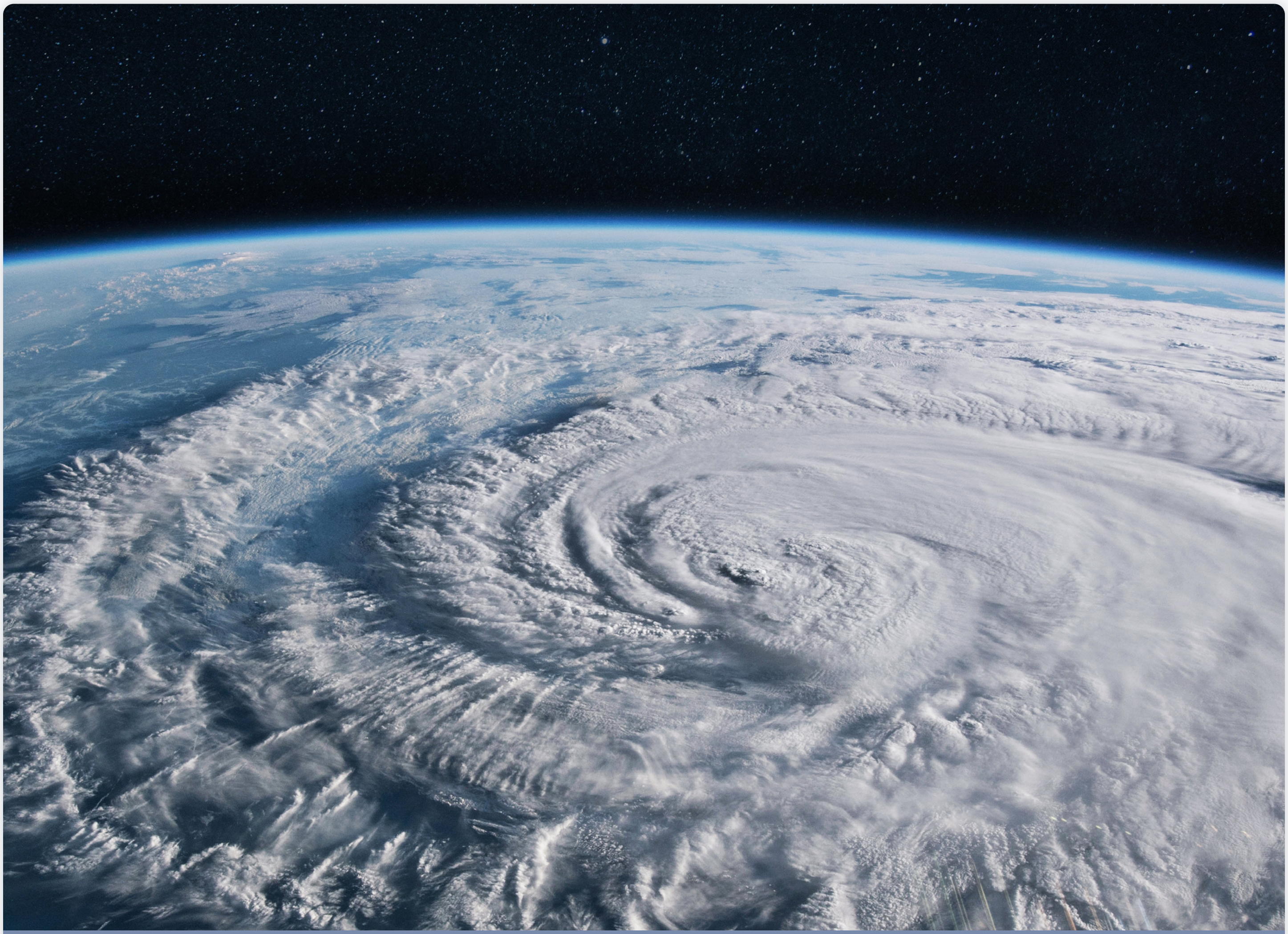
UNLEASH PROSPERITY



August 2026

# "Net Zero" Climate Change Movement Is Officially Dead

America's Biggest Financial Firms Are Renouncing Radical Anti-Fossil Fuel Mandates that Would Destroy the American Energy Industry, Eliminate Jobs, and Raise Prices

**By Jerry Bowyer, Stephen Soukup, and Stephen Moore**

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**The new trend in corporate America is "CLEXIT" – a climate extremism Exit policy.**

# Executive Summary

A new analysis from Unleash Prosperity has examined the once-formidable alliance of major U.S. financial institutions - banks and asset managers - with radical climate change environmental groups. These banks collectively manage more than $40 trillion of assets and accounts under management. Participation in NetZero fossil fuels initiatives - which would effectively phase-out oil, natural gas and coal usage - has fallen by nearly 90% over the past four years.

The Clexit study author, Jerry Bowyer of Bowyer Research and an expert on corporate policies related to ESG and climate change policies, finds that most of the once-formidable global climate-finance alliances have "collapsed, suspended operations, or been forced to restructure in the past two years." Examples:

> **The Net Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA)** suffered the most dramatic collapse. In November 2024, it had 140 member banks representing $75.5 trillion in combined assets. Over the following few months, all six major U.S. banks – JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Morgan Stanley, and Wells Fargo – withdrew from the alliance. In late 2025 the NZBA folded most operations.

> **Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance** lost roughly 80 signatories, including BlackRock, and survived only by gutting its requirements.

> **Climate Action 100+** lost 90 asset managers in a single year.

> European and Canadian firms have largely stayed in the climate change groups, keeping membership rolls nominally intact, but the financial weight, credibility, and coercive leverage of these alliances have been permanently diminished.

The report notes that one factor contributing to the rapid business withdrawal from climate change directives is that the doomsday predictions of ecological and environmental doom published by the UN and other groups have been recently discredited and/or renounced.

The "net zero" strategy of abolishing fossil fuels also has been exposed as economically devastating, especially to the American economy, with roughly 75% of energy consumption and generation coming from oil, natural gas and coal. The impact on the U.S. economy – and to our technology, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, mining, and transportation industries would be especially severe and disruptive. A Heritage

Foundation study has found that this dangerous Net Zero policy would reduce American GDP by between $3.9 and $7.7 trillion and cost up to 1.4 million jobs – with almost no environmental benefits because China and India are responsible for multiple times more emissions.

This study also identifies WHICH financial firms have successfully exited the Net Zero ordeal and which would put the American economy in danger.

> **Wells Fargo** has gone the furthest, not only leaving the major coalitions, but formally discontinuing its emissions targets and its net-zero-by-2050 goal, a rare instance of a major bank unwinding the substance of its climate commitments rather than merely exiting the groups that promoted them.

> **Blackrock**, once a leading advocate of climate policies, has withdrawn its participation in radical proposals like Net Zero.

> **JPMorgan Chase** was the last of the six banks to leave the Net Zero Banking Alliance and the first to drop outside proxy advisory services.

Among asset managers:

> **Capital Group** never meaningfully joined any major coalition, while Vanguard was the first large defector and is now legally bound by its February 2026 Texas settlement to refrain from any future climate-coalition participation.

There are still a few bad actors that have not severed their ties with Net Zero radicalism. These include: **Morgan Stanley**, **Bank of America**, **Citigroup**, **and PIMCO**.

Each of these companies maintain substantive ties to Ceres, a nonprofit climate advocacy group rooted in shareholder activism and anti-fossil-fuel organizing, and the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials, whose stated mission is to align lending and investment portfolios with the Paris Climate Agreement.

UP calls on ALL banks and asset managers to honor their fiduciary duty to shareholders and clients by completely disassociating with Net Zero and other radical environmental policies that put financial returns and the U.S economy in danger.

# Introduction: Measuring the Retreat from Climate Groups

This report systematically examines the participation of major banks and asset managers in climate-focused organizations. Our primary objective is to determine whether a retreat from these groups has taken place—and, if so, to assess the scale and significance of that shift. This investigation is set against the backdrop of a dramatic reversal in the fortunes of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investing—a movement that, after years of aggressive expansion and widespread adoption, now appears to be in decline.

Increasingly, leading financial institutions are reevaluating their affiliations with climate coalitions and sustainability initiatives, with many choosing to withdraw or reduce their commitments.

By analyzing recent trends in group memberships, public statements, and available data, this report aims to provide a clear and objective account of the extent to which banks and asset managers have distanced themselves from climate organizations. Our findings will help illuminate the current landscape of politicized finance and offer a factual basis for understanding the magnitude of this retreat.

It is also worth noting in this context that some of the institutions examined in this report have recently officially distanced themselves from the leading proxy advisory services (Institutional Shareholder Services and Glass Lewis). It is inarguably the case that the proxy advisors are not the same as the climate organizations, in purpose or function. Nevertheless, proxy advisors have long been considered part of the larger problem with ESG and the incorporation of climate ideology into financial services. The firms' decisions to bring proxy in-house and to abandon ISS and Glass Lewis were undoubtedly precipitated by many factors, the proxy advisors' history of and reputation for bias being but one of them. Nevertheless, those decisions represent a tangible retreat from climate ideology.

# Key Findings

The report found a significant shift in the climate affiliations of major U.S. banks and asset managers. Earlier this decade, many firms responded to political pressures by aligning themselves with climate-focused entities and making commitments that were not always in the financial interests of their shareholders or clients. These decisions had broad impacts, particularly on state-level fiduciaries, which led to responses in several states.

Through detailed tables, the report tracks current financial services firm memberships in major climate organizations—including the Net Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA), Climate Action 100+, and the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative. As of October 2025, none of the major institutions covered in this report remains a member of NZBA, NZAMi, or Climate Action 100+, marking a clear and substantial withdrawal from these coalitions.

The report also examines indirect or reporting-based involvement. The purpose here is to demonstrate that while some firms continue to engage with organizations like the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), Ceres, and the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF), their participation is often limited, indirect, or focused on reporting rather than active membership.

A review of banks' public web presence reveals a trend toward downplaying sustainability and ESG messaging. For example, Wells Fargo's homepage now emphasizes "community" rather than sustainability, and the bank has discontinued its sector-specific climate targets and net-zero goals. JPMorgan Chase and Morgan Stanley, while still hosting sustainability content, have made it less prominent or shifted the tone to focus more on customer choice and fiduciary responsibility.

The report further explores the roles and reputations of climate organizations such as Ceres and PCAF, highlighting their activist origins and the reputational risks for financial institutions that remain affiliated. Overall, the findings indicate that the withdrawal from climate groups is both broad and significant, reflecting a larger trend of institutions to prioritize traditional financial objectives and distance themselves from at least some of the more radical elements of the ESG movement.

# Unfinished: Taking Financial Services out of the climate movement is easier than taking the climate movement out of financial services

This report finds much to commend in the recent actions of major banks and asset managers. The broad trend of exiting climate-focused alliances—such as the Net Zero Banking Alliance, Climate Action 100+, and the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative—represents a significant step toward restoring clarity and discipline in financial stewardship. By distancing themselves from external coalitions that often promoted politicized or non-fiduciary agendas, these institutions have demonstrated a renewed commitment to shareholder interests and market fundamentals.

However, the work of reform is not yet complete. While financial services firms have withdrawn from climate groups, many have retained internal policies, targets, and reporting frameworks that closely resemble those promoted by the very organizations they left. In other words, it's easier to take financial services out of the climate movement than to take the climate movement out of financial services.

To truly pivot away from ESG and climate ideology, the financial community must go further. This report calls upon banks and asset managers to adopt a zero-based budgeting approach to climate commitments: start with a clean slate, free from inherited policies and targets, and add new commitments only when rigorous analysis demonstrates that they are genuinely fiduciary to shareholders. Such an approach would ensure that every sustainability initiative is justified by clear financial benefit and aligned with the core purpose of financial institutions.

By completing this reform—moving beyond symbolic exits and addressing the substance of internal policy—banks and asset managers can restore trust, transparency, and discipline to the sector. The future of sustainable finance should be built not on inherited ideology, but on evidence, accountability, and the unwavering pursuit of shareholder value.

# The Data Say Clexit is Real

As the tables below demonstrate, large American banks and asset managers were initially quite eager to join and participate in global climate change alliances. Their eagerness, however, dissipated as the legal and shareholder-related repercussions of their action became clearer.

## MAJOR CLIMATE ORGANIZATIONS

### GFANZ

In early 2021, Mark Carney – now the Prime Minister of Canada – organized and convened several initiatives, intended to be "sub-alliances" under the umbrella of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero, which would be officially launched that November at COP26 (i.e., the 2021 United Nations Climate Conference) in Glasgow, Scotland. For the purposes of this document, the two relevant sub-alliances were the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA) and the Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative (NZAM).

At its height, NZBA had more than 150 members from 40 countries – although, notably, none from China or India, and only one from Russia. A key moment, portending NZBA's eventual fall from grace, came less than a year after the official launch of GFANZ, while NZBA was still busy gaining new members. On October 19, 2022, 19 state attorneys general, led by Missouri AG Eric Schmitt, announced an antitrust investigation into six large American banks – Bank of America, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley, and Wells Fargo – stemming from their membership in NZBA. In early 2025, JPMorgan Chase became the last of the Big Six American banks to leave NZBA, with the total exodus occurring over a matter of just a few months.

In October 2025, NZBA announced that it was ending operations as a membership organization and would continue only as a provider of voluntary climate change guidelines.

Like NZBA, the Net Zero Asset Managers Initiative was launched prior to COP26, and officially convened as a sub-alliance under GFANZ. Also like NZBA, NZAM was initially quite successful, amassing more than 300 members, with a total of nearly $60 trillion in assets under management. The state attorneys general likewise found NZAM to be problematic, under antitrust considerations, and from 2022 through 2024 launched a series of investigations of and actions against various asset managers for their participation in the alliance and other related organizations. Vanguard led the American asset manager defections from NZAM, leaving the group in 2022. Other major American asset managers, including JPMorgan Asset Management, left in 2024 and early 2025. The organization suspended its operations in January 2025, after BlackRock, the largest asset manager in the world, joined the other large asset managers in rescinding its membership. NZAM announced a relaunch in October 2025, as a guidance provider with greatly reduced membership requirements, although details remain unclear.

### Climate Action 100+

Climate Action 100+ was formed in 2017, as part of the One Planet Summit in Paris. As with the organizations mentioned above, CA 100+ – which caters primarily to investment-related businesses – gained members quickly, only to see numerous rapid departures in 2024. JPMorgan Asset Management left early in 2024 (along with State Street and BlackRock's American operations). Morgan Stanley Investment Management and its affiliates departed in July, with Goldman Sachs Asset Management and Mellon Investments following suit a month later.

### Science Based Targets Initiative

The Science Based Targets initiative describes itself as a "corporate climate action organization that enables companies and financial institutions worldwide to play their part in combating the climate crisis." In other words, it exists specifically to pressure businesses to align themselves with the political activism driving the Net-Zero movement by setting standards that it claims will enable those businesses to be carbon neutral "by 2050 at least."

SBTi is a registered charity in the UK. It operates in conjunction with partner organizations that have "facilitated SBTi's growth and development" since it was formed a decade ago. Those partners are CDP (formerly the Climate Disclosure Project), the United Nations Global Compact, the We Mean Business Coalition, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). As of September 26, 2025, SBTi **claims to have** some 11620 member companies (companies that have made commitments), including 9008 companies with "validated commitment" (validated through SBTi's wholly owned subsidiary, SBTi Services) and 2136 companies with net-zero commitments.

**According to SBTi**, the overwhelming majority of its funding (72.8% comes from "core" funding). Its current primary funders are Climate Arc (a left-leaning climate advocacy organization), IKEA Foundation (described as an "environmentalist, pro-immigration, and anti-poverty" charitable organization), and Laudes Foundation ("a left-of-center grantmaking organization with the stated goal of reducing inequality in fashion, construction, and other industries, associated with the European clothing store chain C&A"). Past funders include: Amazon, Arcelor Mittal, Bezos Earth Fund, Hewlett, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Danone, Lafarge Holcim, Moore Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and UPS Foundation.

Most of the remainder of SBTi's funding (24.6%) comes from validation services fees earned by SBTi Services.

Although SBTi boasts many large American corporations among its members, there is no evidence that any of the major banks or asset managers are or ever were members or use SBTi's standards.

### Ceres & PCAF

Ceres and the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) are inarguably the most successful of the major climate organizations – at least when it comes to attracting and retaining large banks and asset managers as members. They are, for this reason, addressed in detail in a later section of this report. For now, it should suffice to say that both have done remarkably well among the big banks and asset managers. It is worth noting here that, in addition to the three banks listed below that remain active members of the Ceres Company Network, JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo are former members. Among asset managers, State Street remains a member of the Company Network, while BlackRock was a member of the Ceres Investor Network for more than a decade. BlackRock's status today is somewhat murky and unverifiable. Franklin Templeton also has a muddled formal relationship with Ceres, although the asset manager does have institutional connections to the activist organization (which is detailed below).

## ASSET MANAGERS

### Overview

Across the ten largest U.S.-based asset management firms (not included in the banks section), three groupings emerge. The top-tier, which is to say, the asset managers least connected to the climate coalition architecture, are **Capital Group and Vanguard**. Capital Group never meaningfully joined any of the major coalitions or organizations (and therefore had no reason to leave them). Vanguard did join the mainstream groups but was also among the first to leave. Additionally, Vanguard is now legally bound by its February 2026 Texas settlement to refrain from any future climate-coalition participation.

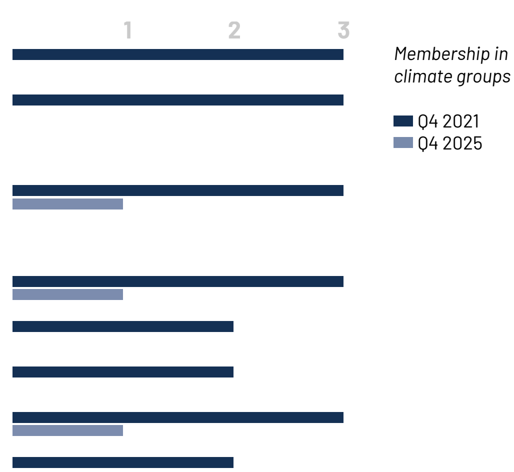
At the opposite end, **PIMCO stands alone** in retaining a substantive technical role in a climate-coalition organization. It is a core team member and working-group co-chair at PCAF, even after exiting CA100+.

The remaining seven — BlackRock, Fidelity, State Street, Invesco, T. Rowe Price, Franklin Templeton, and Northern Trust AM — all participated in the peak-ESG-era coalition-building exercise. All have now withdrawn from CA100+ and NZAM, but other affiliations persist. Some firms, most notably State Street and Franklin Templeton, maintain a relationship with Ceres, and most have kept the technical reporting standards (PCAF, TCFD) that underpin the disclosure component of climate activism.

All things considered, the pattern is largely the same across the board: most asset managers have shed political commitments but have retained technical infrastructure.

**Figure 1: Asset Manager Climate Group Participation, 2021 vs 2025**

| Asset Manager | Q4 2021 | Q4 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| BlackRock | 3 | 0 |
| Vanguard | 1 | 0 |
| Fidelity Investments (U.S.) | 0 | 0 |
| State Street Global Advisors | 3 | 1 |
| Capital Group | 0 | 0 |
| PIMCO | 3 | 1 |
| Invesco | 2 | 0 |
| T. Rowe Price* | 2 | 0 |
| Franklin Templeton | 3 | 1 |
| Northern Trust Asset Management | 2 | 0 |




**Counts active membership across five climate organizations: Climate Action 100+, Net Zero Asset Managers initiative, Ceres Investor Network, SBTi (Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard), and PCAF.*

***T. Rowe Price's European and UK entities rejoined the relaunched NZAM in early 2026; the U.S. parent did not.*

**BlackRock — AUM ~$14.0 trillion**

The world's largest asset manager and once the most prominent voice in sustainable investing, BlackRock joined CA100+ at its 2017 founding and NZAM in March 2021. In February 2024 it transferred its CA100+ membership from the U.S. parent to BlackRock International, a technical, if not total, withdrawal. On January 9, 2025, it fully exited NZAM, citing "legal inquiries from various public officials." CEO Larry Fink has publicly retired the term "ESG." BlackRock has not joined the relaunched NZAM, uses PCAF emissions accounting in its own reporting, and references SBTi only as a portfolio-research input rather than a firm-level commitment.

BlackRock joined the Ceres Investor Network in 2008 and was recognized by Ceres as a member through the peak-ESG period, culminating in a 2021 Ceres press release praising BlackRock's net-zero commitments. Since 2022, however, neither Ceres nor BlackRock has publicly affirmed the relationship. Ceres no longer maintains a publicly accessible firm-specific page for BlackRock, and BlackRock's own materials no longer reference the affiliation. Whether the membership technically persists is not publicly verifiable; what is verifiable is that both parties have stopped acknowledging it.

BlackRock remains a defendant in the Texas-led antitrust case that Vanguard recently settled.

**Vanguard — AUM ~$12.0 trillion**

The world's second-largest asset manager was the first major defector from the climate coalitions, exiting NZAM in December 2022 after 13 Republican AGs petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) over Vanguard's utility-stock acquisitions. Vanguard never joined CA100+. There is no record of Vanguard membership in Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF at the firm level. On February 26, 2026 Vanguard became the first of the "Big 3" to settle the Texas-led antitrust suit, paying $29.5 million and agreeing that its U.S. business will not join any group with "climate-focused investment or stewardship objectives" going forward. Vanguard is now the only U.S. asset manager legally bound to non-participation.

**Fidelity Investments — AUM ~$5.9 trillion**

Note: Fidelity Investments (the U.S. firm) is legally separate from Fidelity International (Bermuda-domiciled), and climate-coalition activities frequently attributed to "Fidelity" — CA100+ engagement, coal phase-out commitments, the Finance for Biodiversity Pledge — belong to Fidelity International. The U.S. parent never joined CA100+ or NZAM and does not claim signatory status with Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF at the firm level. The firm uses SBTi-validated targets only as a portfolio-research input. Fidelity's positioning has consistently emphasized client choice rather than coalition activism.

**State Street Global Advisors (SSGA) — AUM ~$4.7 trillion**

A charter participant in both CA100+ and NZAM, SSGA withdrew from CA100+ in February 2024, citing inconsistency with its "independent approach to proxy voting and portfolio company engagement." It withdrew U.S. operations from NZAM in October 2025 (as with BlackRock, a technical but incomplete withdrawal), removing $5.7 trillion in AUM, and has not rejoined the relaunched version. SSGA's 2024 Stewardship Report shows support for environmental shareholder proposals fell to 6%, from 14% the prior year. State Street Corp is prominently displayed on the Ceres Company Network member logo wall, though Ceres publishes no comparable display for the Investor Network. The firm uses the PCAF framework; it has no validated SBTi financial-institution net-zero target. SSGA remains a defendant in the Texas antitrust case.

**Capital Group — AUM ~$2.8 trillion**

The largest privately held U.S. asset manager has the lowest climate-coalition profile of the ten. Cap Group *never joined CA100+ or NZAM* at any meaningful level. It publishes Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)-aligned climate reporting and complies with California AB 1305 voluntary-carbon disclosure, but does not claim signatory status with Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF. Capital Group's absence from the coalition architecture during the peak-ESG era was an early signal that visible ESG commitment was largely a publicly traded firm phenomenon.

**PIMCO — AUM ~$2.0 trillion**

The Newport Beach-based fixed-income specialist (owned by Allianz) *withdrew from CA100+ in February 2024;* its NZAM membership was disrupted by the 2025 suspension, and PIMCO has not rejoined the newly launched NZAM. That said, PIMCO is the standout exception on technical climate infrastructure: it remains a *PCAF Core team member,* serving as *Sponsor of the Securitized Products / Covered Bonds working group* and *Co-chair of the Transition Finance working group*. PIMCO also remains a UN PRI signatory, UN Global Compact participant, and TCFD signatory.

**Invesco — AUM ~$1.8 trillion**

*Invesco withdrew from CA100+ in 2024;* its NZAM membership was disrupted by the 2025 suspension, although it has not joined the relaunched coalition. Invesco references SBTi-alignment in stewardship reporting but holds no formal signatory status with Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF. While it continues to offer ESG-themed products, Invesco's coalition-level engagement is materially reduced; public messaging has shifted to client choice and fiduciary framing.

**T. Rowe Price — AUM ~$1.6 trillion**

A CA100+ member and NZAM signatory at the height of the movement, T. Rowe exited CA100+ in 2024, while its NZAM membership was disrupted by the 2025 suspension. When NZAM relaunched in October 2025, only T. Rowe Price's European and UK entities rejoined (the U.S. parent did not). T. Rowe is a UN PRI signatory since 2010. Its 2024 Sustainability Report does not claim Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF signatory status at the firm level.

**Franklin Templeton — AUM ~$1.6 trillion**

FT withdrew from CA100+ in December 2024, near the end of the 2024 exit wave; its NZAM status disrupted by the 2025 suspension. The firm *liquidated seven ESG-focused ETFs* in 2025, a clear strategic retreat from sustainability-themed investing. FT has no SBTi or PCAF signatory status. (That said, it did receive a "D" rating on the Committee to Unleash Prosperity's 2025 scorecard because its voting patterns still leaned in favor of ESG-aligned resolutions.)

Franklin Templeton's affiliation with Ceres is substantive and ongoing. The firm signed onto Ceres' Valuing Water Finance Initiative when it was launched in August 2022, and it remained a signatory while that coalition grew to 101 investors by mid-2024. Franklin Templeton's Global Head of Sustainability, Anne Simpson, sits on Ceres' Board of Directors and is a founding member of the Climate Action 100+ Steering Committee. Simpson remains a member of that steering committee, despite the firm's December 2024 public exit from CA100+. The gap between Franklin Templeton's coalition-level public retreat and its leadership-level institutional continuity makes it a case study in the differences between visible and invisible affiliations.

**Northern Trust Asset Management (NTAM) — AUM ~$1.3 trillion**

NTAM exited both CA100+ and NZAM simultaneously in January 2025, alongside BlackRock in the early-2025 wave. It has not rejoined the relaunched NZAM. NTAM does not prominently claim Ceres, SBTi, or PCAF signatory status at the firm level. It did join the FAIRR investor network (factory-farming / food-system focus) in 2018.

## BANKS

In an interview with CNBC's Leslie Picker, recorded on July 31, 2025, JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon made a brief comment that should temper expectations for big banks on sustainability and the energy transition, particularly when assessing their public-facing web presences.

"You're the customer," Dimon said, "and I don't like to tell customers what they can and cannot do with their money." Although he was speaking about Bitcoin specifically and his company's recent foray into the Bitcoin market, his words can and should be applied as well to questions associated with the "sustainable" and environmentally sensitive services banks offer and promote.

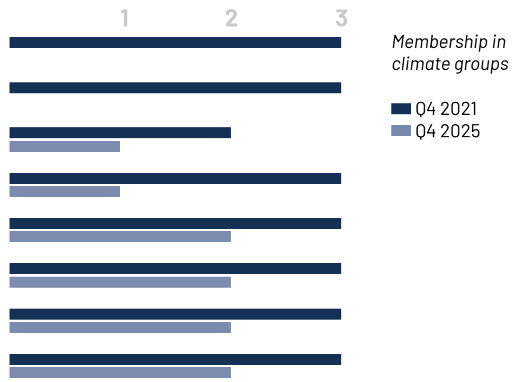
The big banks are, after all, like any other business, which is to say that they exist primarily to serve the interests of their shareholders, which, as the great Milton Friedman famously put it, "generally will be to make as much money as possible."

Or, to put it another way, it's important to remember, as a prelude to any examination of the sustainability information and claims the banks may make, that a market for sustainable banking and investment products exists, and the bankers would be unwise to ignore it. Dimon's comments may have been crafted purely for public consumption, and they may comprise little more than platitudes, but that doesn't mean he's wrong. If he meant what he said, and if he is willing to apply that principle across the board, then those comments represent the ideal attitude for a corporate fiduciary – from the perspective of both shareholders and customers. Banks that wish to make money by serving all customers and addressing all markets will offer sustainability-based products. It is, indeed, the customers' money, and banks should not be telling customers what they can and cannot do with it.

All of that said, however, web presences matter. They tell us a great deal about banks and their priorities, which is important, especially in this case, where the end goal is to assess and analyze banks' retreat from climate change orthodoxy and environmental supremacy. Although it is both permissible and understandable for banks to offer services to those who are inclined to sacrifice return on investment to align their values with the use of their wealth, it is also presumably good business to focus on the predominant views of customers. And in this moment, in this country, the predominant view of most people is that ESG and "sustainability" are contrary to their values and goals. Consequently, banks should, by most measures, be circumspect about making their sustainable products and endeavors the highlight of their marketing material, including their various websites.

Figure 2: Bank Climate Group Participation, 2021 vs 2025

| Bank | Q4 2021 | Q4 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| JPMorgan Chase | 3 | 0 |
| Goldman Sachs | 3 | 0 |
| Wells Fargo | 2 | 1 |
| Bank of NY Mellon | 3 | 1 |
| Morgan Stanley | 3 | 2 |
| Citigroup | 3 | 2 |
| Bank of America | 3 | 2 |
| PNC Financial | 3 | 2 |




## Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo's **home page** contains no references to sustainability, either in narrative or menu options. Rather, the story focuses on "community."

That said, if one searches for "sustainability in the home page search bar, the results include a variety of links, including one to the bank's **primary sustainability page**, located in the "About Us" section of the main website. That page, in turn, has a menu of topics, the first and most notable of which is a "**Statement on Wells Fargo's Climate Goals and Targets**," which was issued on February 28, 2025. That statement includes the following, which is notable in this context:

> *Wells Fargo can play a role in supporting our clients' climate-related efforts. However, when we set our financed emissions goal and targets, we said that achieving them was dependent on many factors outside our control. This included public policy, consumer behavior, and technology changes that would enable our clients to move quickly to lower-emitting operating models. Many of the conditions necessary to facilitate our clients' transitions have not occurred.*
>
> *We are adjusting our approach to focus on doing what banks do best – providing financing and expertise to help clients pursue their own objectives. As of today, we are discontinuing our sector-specific 2030 interim financed emissions targets and our goal to achieve net zero by 2050 for financed emissions.*

It is also worth noting that the Wells Fargo home page has six primary information tabs at the top of the page. Two of those – "**Investing & Wealth Management**" and "**Corporate and Investment Banking**" could be considered investment-related. Neither sub-page makes any reference whatsoever to "sustainability" or ESG.

As part of its sustainability mission, Wells Fargo operates the Institute for Sustainable Finance, which has its own dedicated website. That site is fairly well detailed, listing past projects and expenditures, as well as goals and current aims. Additionally, the ISF and the Wells Sustainable Finance & Advisory Team produce various reports highlighting the bank's efforts and listing its priorities.

On January 28, Wells Fargo became the second large financial services firm to end its asset management arm's use of the major proxy advisory services (following JPMorgan Chase). Representatives from Wells said that the firm would make its proxy voting decisions internally, using custom voting guidelines that it has developed specifically to eliminate the need to use ISS or Glass Lewis. Additionally, the bank also said that its platform would be backed by Broadridge Financial Solutions, a financial technology company that also provides specific investors with access to other custom proxy voting guidelines, notably the first-of-their-kind Bowyer Research ESG-skeptic voting guidelines.

**JP Morgan Chase**

JP Morgan Chase, the bank helmed by the aforementioned champion of letting customers do what they want with their money, has a web presence that might be characterized as assertive in touting its sustainability and social justice bona fides. As with Wells Fargo, the JPM Chase **home page** does not contain explicit references to sustainability or DEI, although explicit references are a mere click or two away. For example, the upper right corner of the JPM Chase home page has a text bubble "join our team" and an associated drop-down menu. Among the links in that menu is one that reads "Impact," and which contains subtopics that include "**Environmental Sustainability.**" This link leads to a page that is rife with environmental and sustainability initiatives, highlighted by reports, interviews, and other features touting the bank's green credentials. Additionally, near the bottom of the home page (and every page, in turn), there sits a permanent menu, which prominently features an "About Us" section and includes a sub-tab titled "**Diversity, Opportunity and Inclusion.**" That link leads to a page that lists the various offices JPM Chase maintains to ensure its diversity efforts are maintained, including: "Black Affairs," "Hispanic and Latino Affairs," "Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs," "Women's Affairs," and "LGBTQ+ Affairs."

The bank's Environmental Sustainability page contains a link to a sub-page titled "**Sustainability Initiatives**," which, unsurprisingly, lists, details, and links to various environmental undertakings in which the bank is involved.

The JP Morgan (financial services) **website** does not mention sustainability directly, but, as with the parent home page, it is only a click away. In the page's main top menu, there is an "Insights" tab that, among other things, leads to a "**Sustainability**" page. Additionally, the tab for Investment Banking contains its own **sustainability link and page,** which contains sub-pages touting the IB's, "**Products and services**," "**Solutions**," and "**Case Studies**."

The **JPMorgan Asset Management page** contains a menu item called "Investment Strategies," which includes a strategy (and a **page**) titled "Sustainable Investing." Likewise, the Chase **website** features a main menu that has a tab labeled "Personal," which, among other things, provides a link to wealth management services, including a separate page for **sustainable investing**.

In short, while sustainability information is available on the Wells Fargo website, it is much more readily available – in various forms and locations – on the various JP Morgan Chase sites. JPM Chase's touting of its ESG and DEI credentials is quite assertive and might easily be characterized as going beyond merely providing customers with the opportunity to do what they want with their money. The bank's web presence is saturated with sustainability information and pages, albeit pages that require looking beyond home pages.

On January 7, JPMorgan Chase became the last of the major financial players to announce the termination of its use of outside proxy advisors. Going forward, the firm said, it would be making all proxy advisory decisions itself, using an artificial-intelligence-powered platform called Proxy IQ. To reiterate, JPMorgan Chase and its CEO Jamie Dimon have a long history of antipathy for the proxy advisory services and made their decision based on multiple factors. Still, in practice, this is a blow against the infiltration of climate ideology into capital markets.

**Morgan Stanley**

The investigation of the respective web presences of the financial services companies featured in this document originated with a chance visit to the Morgan Stanley Investment Management home page (in service of another project). At the time (early July), that home page featured an integrated, well-produced graphic-feature identifying the firm as a leader in sustainable investing and highlighting its efforts in significant detail. That feature is no longer integrated into the MS Investment Management home page, which is an unexpected bit of good news about the company's willingness to highlight and tout its sustainability credentials. Unfortunately, it may be the only good news about Morgan Stanley's web presence and its desire to burnish and exhibit those credentials. If JP Morgan's efforts are "assertive," Morgan Stanley's might reasonably be called "aggressive."

The Morgan Stanley **home page** contains a main menu with five items: "Our Insights," "What We Do," "About Us," "Why Us," and "Careers." Of those five, three – each of the first three (both on the site and listed above) contain links to Sustainability and Diversity & Inclusion (or, in the case of the "What We Do" tab, links to "Sustainable Investing" and "Inclusive and Sustainable Ventures"). Note, with two exceptions, these are not links to the same pages. Each link leads to a different page with different information and different projects/details. Or to put it more bluntly: from the main menu on the Morgan Stanley home page, there are links to five different ESG- or DEI-related pages. By comparison, the "assertive" JP Morgan Chase home site linked to one page each for ESG and DEI, found in different menus on different parts of the page.

Additionally, it should be noted that all of the above sites/links are different from the website that exists to tout Morgan Stanley's Institute for Sustainable Investing. That site is extensive and detailed and contains links and features, including a section dedicated specifically to sustainable investing conferences and competitions that Morgan Stanley sponsors. Included among these is the Morgan Stanley Sustainable Finance Summit, about which the firm notes, "We convene policymakers, economists, scientists, entrepreneurs, and investors devoted to tackling some of the more complex and pressing issues we now face." There is no mention of fiduciaries or other principals who might want to be involved in such a summit.

As one might expect, the Institute's page includes a link to its Advisory Board. Among those on said board are Jessica Alsford, the firm's Chief Sustainability Officer; Clara Barby, the Senior Partner of Just Climate; Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance at London Business School; Mindy Lubber, President of Ceres and the Investor Network on Climate Risk; Mary Schapiro, Vice Chair for Global Public Policy of Bloomberg and the vice chair of the Climate Finance Leadership Initiative; and Laura Tyson, erstwhile chair of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Bill Clinton. With the exception of Edmans, all of the above are politically active (and politically compromised) advocates of ESG and stakeholderism. And even Edmans is an advocate of ESG and DEI, albeit with caveats and demands for solid and replicable research in support of claims about both.

All things considered, the Morgan Stanley web presence is filled with information about, references to, and proclamations of the firm's dedication to sustainability and (to a nominally lesser extent) diversity and inclusion.

**Citi**

It should be noted that "Citi" has two primary websites. The first, **citi.com** is retail-facing, focusing on individual banking clients, credit-card holders or applicants, and small, do-it-yourself investors. This site is largely free of anything that might be described as political, either sustainability or DEI-focused. It is straightforward consumer banking: how to open an account, apply for a loan, etc. Search results yield only one result for "sustainability," which links to an account sign-in page.

The second website, **Citigroup.com**, is more akin to the sites detailed above and below, a broader overview of the company, its business lines, practices, endeavors, and results. A menu at the top of this page includes the tab "**Our Impact**," which is dedicated exclusively to environmental and social efforts and leads with a statement positing that "We're helping build more sustainable, economically vibrant communities around the world."

There are two primary categories in the "Our Impact" drop-down menu. The first is "**Sustainability**," which addresses the bank's efforts to "help transition to a low-carbon economy," and features the sub-pages "**Our Commitment**," "**Net-Zero**," and "**Environmental and Social Policies**." Each sub-page contains several descriptions of efforts and plans, different categories that fall under the sub-heading, and links to other Citigroup pages explaining these endeavors in even greater detail. The same is true of the second primary category under the "Our Impact" heading, "**Strengthening Community**," which includes sub-pages for the "**Citi Impact Fund**" (created in response to the George Floyd riots), "**Volunteers**," and the "**Citi Foundation**." The foundation, in turn, focuses on Community Solutions, Financial Inclusion, and Youth Economic Opportunities. Its board is comprised exclusively of Citi employees.

**Bank of America**

With the exception of BlackRock and its omnipresent CEO, Larry Fink, likely no financial services firm is more defined by its chief executive's work in the sustainability space than Bank of America. Although the bank's web presence places it in the mainstream of its peers, CEO Brian Moynihan's web presence and his external affiliations push him and his bank well outside of that mainstream and define them both as activists.

As with Citi and other high-profile retail banks, Bank of America's **website homepage** primarily features retail banking information: locations, credit card deals, mortgage information, etc. Unlike Citi, however, BofA's sustainability activism is not relegated to a separate site and is, indeed, only a click away.

Clicking on the "About Us" tab in the upper menu of the home page leads to a page that contains all of the usual information – who we are, what we do, who runs the show – but is also filled with information about and further links to sustainability information and the bank's efforts to that end. The first tab in the menu on this page, "**Our Company,**" contains three sections, the first of which covers "**Responsible Growth**" and addresses the importance of growing "sustainably." The second tab, "Making an Impact," contains five sections, two of which – "**Sustainable Finance**" and "**Environmental Sustainability**" – can be described as ESG-aligned. The latter of the two begins with the following note (emphasis added):

> *Building on our longstanding support for the Paris Climate Agreement, we have a goal to achieve net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in our financing activities, operations and supply chain before 2050.*

The "About Us" page of the Bank of America website also contains links to various reports and studies the bank has done or in which it has participated that address and explain its focus on environmental issues. Among the more interesting of these is a 2023 report titled "**Managing Our Transition to a Sustainable Future**," which focuses on the banks' efforts to meet the sustainability standards set out by the Task Force on Climate-Related

Financial Disclosures (TCFD). The TCFD no longer technically exists, having been subsumed by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB). It is worth noting that, as the **Chairman of the World Economic Forum's Task International Business Council Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics Initiative**, Brian Moynihan both helped create the standards now employed by the ISSB (and previously employed by the TCFD) and has been one of the Board's most vociferous **public cheerleaders**:

> *Bank of America Chief Executive Brian Moynihan said Wednesday that current efforts to produce a set of official global standards on ESG issues were vital to "align capitalism with what society wants from it."*
>
> *In 2020, Moynihan — who is also chair of WEF's International Business Council — and WEF founder and chair Klaus Schwab worked with the big four accountants to create a set of* ***common stakeholder metrics*** *for companies to follow.*
>
> *He said it was now important to "go to the official side" and was supporting the new International Sustainability Standards Board set up by non-profit the IFRS....*
>
> *Moynihan also said it was crucial that sustainability and ethical standards became official and global.*
>
> *He said informal standards-setting meant companies could hide poor sustainability practices "further down the stream" of their supply chains or divest certain assets, or else claim they are too small to carry out checks.*

It is also worth noting that Bank of America partners with Britain's King Charles in something called the Sustainable Markets Initiative, which, according to the bank's **own website**, "places sustainability on par with profitability." The Sustainable Markets Initiative has its own **web presence**, which notes that the operation is dedicated to "Nature, People, and the Planet."

**Goldman Sachs**

The author and social critic Matt Taibbi once described Goldman Sachs as the most powerful and most threatening financial institution in the world:

> *The first thing you need to know about Goldman Sachs is that it's everywhere. The world's most powerful investment bank is a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money.*

In the decade-and-a-half since Taibbi wrote those words, Goldman has both given up the title of "most powerful" investment bank and changed its perception as a "great vampire squid." One presumes, however, that it still relentlessly jams its blood funnel into anything that smells like money – which suggests that the firm does not see sustainability and ESG as a huge part of its business going forward.

Sustainability and social issues appear relatively sparsely on the Goldman Sachs **website**. The "Our Firm" tab on the main menu contains seven sections, one of which is "**Our Focus on Sustainability**." In the introduction to this section, Goldman describes its mission as "deploying $750 billion across investing, financing and advisory activities by 2030 and bringing our commercial expertise to help our clients accelerate climate transition and advance inclusive growth." Couching its commitment in terms of its clients' goals, rather than its own purpose-driven agenda distinguishes Goldman from most of the other institutions in this report. Further down the page, the bank does state that "Sustainability is a firmwide mandate," but it then proceeds to state that its climate change agenda is "helping industries transition operations and business models to help usher in a low-carbon economy." Note, it does not claim the mission as its own.

The Goldman Sachs Asset Management site contains a **page** addressing "global climate and environmental equity," while its **private wealth management site** mostly steers clear of sustainability and related matters.

Additionally, the home page (again under "Our Firm") has a link to a **Diversity and Inclusion page**. It also has a link (in the "investor Relations") tab that links to the firm's "**Sustainability and other Reporting**," although it looks as if either the page or the reporting has not been updated in a couple of years.

**BNY Mellon**

BNY Mellon's web presence is interesting, to say the least. Its main website contains one link – under its "About Us" heading – to a **page on sustainability**. That page is sparse and lacks much information. One suspects, however, that this is not because the bank is uninterested in ESG and sustainability but because its entire website is sparse and lacks much information. Indeed, searching for "sustainability" on the home pages produces results, largely from the bank's public relations/media operations, **touting its sustainability-related commitments, partnerships, and awards,** suggesting that BNY cares about the issue, just not about web optimization. One of the most significant such partnership is with **Arjuna Capital**. Arjuna is a well-known, left-leaning activist investment firm **focused on environmental and social justice.**

BNY Mellon Investment Adviser was fined $1.5 million by the SEC in 2022 for making **misleading statements or omissions** about the environmental friendliness of its ESG mutual funds – i.e., "greenwashing."

**PNC Financial**

By way of background, on January 20, 2022, PNC Financial put out a **press release** announcing its new partnership for "green energy." Among other things, the release noted:

> *PNC holds longstanding commitments to reduce its environmental impact, finance the transition to a low carbon economy and leverage its resources to move all forward financially. In August the company pledged $20 billion in support of environmental finance and earlier this year joined the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials. The company also released its first* ***Task Force for Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) report*** *in Aug. 2021, which focuses on PNC's climate risk management strategy.*

The partnership was with the Biden Administration's Environmental Protection Agency, which said, in response, that it "applauds PNC Bank for its leadership position in the green power marketplace" and noted that "PNC is an excellent example for other organizations in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through green power investment and use."

Today. PNC's website contains a host of pages detailing the bank's ongoing commitment to green finance and the energy transition. The PNC homepage is, like many banks', a retail-facing site. Under the "**About**" tab, however, there is a link to "Corporate Responsibility" – which describes the bank's efforts to "Do Right by Our Stakeholders." Those stakeholders, in turn, include (in this order): **Customers**, **Communities**, **Employees**, and **Shareholders**. The Corporate Responsibility section also includes links to pages on **Sustainable Finance**, the bank's **Climate Action Strategy**, **Climate Risk**, and **Sustainable Operations**. It also provides a **link** to all of PNC's most recent climate and sustainability-related reports.

In short, PNC appears quite pleased with and readily touts its green bona fides throughout its main website.

# Climate Organizations Are Highly Politicized

The three best-known and most prominent climate-change organizations for financial institutions (banks and asset managers) are Climate Action 100+ and the two United Nations-affiliated groups: the Net- Zero- Banking Alliance and the Net-Zero Asset Managers Initiative. None of the firms covered here currently participate in any of these organizations. Most were members of the relevant UN organization at one point, but all have left the organization.

More to the point, neither of the UN-affiliated groups still functions as a meaningful member organization with meaningful member requirements. In October 2025, after a series of defections that left the organization with no large U.S. banks as members and losing members quickly among British and EU banks, NZBA ended its existence as a member organization. It still technically exists as a guidance provider, but it is nowhere near as prominent as it once was. This followed the NZAMi's dissolution nine months earlier (after BlackRock's defection) and its decision to suspend operations and reintroduce itself as a guidance provider in its own right.

By contrast, the additional groups highlighted below remain heavily involved in the effort to force financial services firms to reduce their carbon footprints, in their everyday operations, in their lending portfolios, and in their investments. Of the two, Ceres is the better-known and most aggressive at pushing its agenda. Of the banks highlighted above, three of them, Bank of America, Citi, and PNC are members of the Ceres Company Network. Ceres does not release the names of the members of its investor network. While it appears that JPMorgan Chase is not officially partnered with Ceres in any way, Morgan Stanley is affiliated somehow – a least according to its own web presence. On the asset management side, State Street is a member of the Ceres Company Network, Franklin Templeton is connected to the organization in other ways, and BlackRock's current status is indeterminate.

Morgan Stanley, Bank of America, and Citi are all full members of the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF), while Goldman Sachs and PNC use PCAF reporting or methodologies, respectively. BlackRock and State Street also use methodologies only, while PIMCO is likely the most deeply integrated of all financial services firms with PCAF.

## Ceres

Ceres is sometimes portrayed as a "centrist" or "reasonable" alternative to other, more radical climate change activists or associations, albeit usually by those with a vested interest in portraying it as such. In reality, it is not. Indeed, its connections to other global associations make it indistinguishable from many of them, while its history, funding sources, and ongoing conduct make it potentially much more problematic than most, especially given that so many of the banks highlighted in this report remain members.

Ceres is a large, complex organization with a history that predates the ESG/sustainability movement. Founded in 1989, following the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Ceres has long been at the forefront of the anti-fossil fuel movement, even before global warming/climate change became a cause célèbre on the political Left. Given its history and complexity, a full accounting of the operation would require a lengthy and detailed report. Fortunately, many such documents have been produced (see here, here, and here, for example). For our purposes today, it should suffice to summarize a few of the most important points about Ceres, focusing briefly on its purpose, funding, actions, and affiliations.

Ceres was co-founded in 1989 as a 501(c)(3)by Joan Bavaria, who was also the founder of Trillium Asset

Management and, thus, one of the founding "mothers" of ESG[1]. Since its founding, Ceres has focused not only on reducing (and eventually eliminating) the use of fossil fuels but also on shareholder activism as one of the primary means to that end. Ceres maintains a database of shareholder proposals/engagements on its website[2] and actively encourages its members to push corporations, in any way they can, to reduce their carbon footprints. Ceres proclaims that "'sustainability' is the bottom line," while also noting, just below, that its vision of a sustainable future has an overtly political component (emphasis added): "Ceres is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to accelerate the transition to a cleaner, more just, and resilient world."[3]

Ceres is a massive operation that raises funds prolifically. In 2021, for example, Ceres raised more than $44 million, up more than 80% from the previous year[4]. Ceres does not disclose its donor list, although reports show that it has received significant funding from the New Venture Fund, including over $3 million in 2021 alone.[5] The New Venture Fund is "a grantmaking and fiscal sponsorship organization managed by consulting firm Arabella Advisors."[6] According to Influence Watch, Arabella "has been described as the "mothership" of a "massive progressive dark-money group" by the Atlantic and as "a Washington consulting firm […] that has funneled hundreds of millions of dollars through a daisy chain of groups supporting Democrats and progressive causes" and "a leading vehicle for [dark money] on the left" by the New York Times."[7]

Among other things, Ceres is deeply involved in the production and filing of shareholder proposals, as well as influencing proxy votes on those proposals. Although Ceres does not file shareholder proposals on its own behalf, it does, by its own admission, dominate the environmental/climate shareholder proposal process behind the scenes by urging members of its network to get involved in the process and push aggressively for environmental change at American corporations. According to the Capital Research Center. "The 2022 Proxy Preview noted that the Ceres investor network coordinated most of the climate change shareholder resolutions that were profiled in that year's report, while in 2021 the network was said to have coordinated 'nearly all' of them."[8] Additionally, Ceres staffers provide written material for the ESG-friendly Proxy Preview every year, and the organization works closely with that publication's producers, the far more radical environmental group, As You Sow.

Ceres is a founding partner of Climate Action 100+, Paris Aligned Asset Owners, and the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative.[9] Ceres' CEO Mindy Lubber is a member of the Climate Action 100+ steering committee.[10] Additionally, Ceres board members include passionate climate advocates, including executives from other climate-focused nonprofits and union pension funds.[11]

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1 https://americanenergyinstitute.com/docs/aeiceres_report.pdf, p. 14

2 https://engagements.ceres.org/

3 https://www.ceres.org/

4 https://americanenergyinstitute.com/docs/aei_ceres_report.pdf, p.1

5 *ibid.*

6 https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/ceres/

7 https://www.influencewatch.org/for-profit/arabella-advisors/

8 https://capitalresearch.org/article/progressive-esg-shareholder-activism-part-1/

9 https://www.ceres.org/climate

10 https://americanenergyinstitute.com/docs/aei_ceres_report.pdf, p.1

11 *ibid.*

## The Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF)

### What is PCAF?

The Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials – PCAF – is a relatively new non-profit organization, or rather, it's a new independent non-profit organization. Officially granted 501(c)(3) status on March 4, 2024, the letter granting PCAF that status (Letter 947) is the only public document available from the IRS.

PCAF was originally formed in 2015 as the joint project of 14 Dutch financial institutions, led by ASN Bank. The organization was founded in anticipation of the Paris Climate Summit of that same year, based on the institution's collective desire "**to take ambitious steps…in delivering an essential shift to a low carbon economy, starting with measuring and disclosing the GHG emissions of their loans and investments.**" Even today, a decade after its founding and a decade since Paris, PCAF explicitly states that its mission is to "provide financial institutions with the starting point required to set science-based targets and align their portfolio with the Paris Climate Agreement."

PCAF expanded its reach to North America in 2018, incorporating an additional 12 financial institutions into its coalition. This coalition of 12, which adopted PCAF's methodologies and purposes, was led by **Amalgamated Bank**, a union-owned, Certified B Corp. that proudly proclaims that it was "**born pushing progress.**" Among the organizations that Amalgamated highlights on its website as "partners and clients" are **Color for Change**, **Mijente**, and the **Sierra Club Foundation** (which recently and very publicly **dropped BlackRock as its asset manager,** claiming Larry Fink, et al. are not dedicated enough to fighting climate change).

In 2019, the 28 members of the Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV) adopted PCAF's accounting methodologies, setting the stage for the launch of the organization's official global initiative later that year. GABV states that its purpose is to take "a values-driven approach to banking…put people first, support the real economy, and respond to their communities' needs —while caring for the planet."

### Who are PCAF's Partners?

Among the organizations that PCAF lists as its "strategic and accredited partners" are:

- **The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)**
- **Carbon Risk Real Estate Monitor (CRREM)**
- **The Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC)**
- **The Net-Zero Asset Owners Alliance (NZAOA)**
- **The Science-Based Targets initiative (SBCTi)**, *which specifically partners with PCAF to "enable financial institutions to align their lending and investment portfolios with the Paris Agreement's mitigation goals."*

## What Does PCAF Advocate?

Given its founding, its members, its partners, and its stated purpose, it should come as no surprise that PCAF continues to focus overtly and aggressively on the goals articulated at the Paris Climate Summit. The following brief excerpts are from a report titled "**Strategic Framework for Paris Alignment,**" which was published by PCAF in 2021 and which remains its guiding document. These excerpts explain the purpose and strategic plan employed and advocated by PCAF:

> *The level of ambition to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and steer global emissions towards net zero in 2050 is enormous and differs per sector. Financial institutions play a crucial role in facilitating this transition by steering their financed emissions towards net-zero goals: one of the three key goals of the Paris Agreement is to direct the scale and speed of global financial flows to match the required path to very low-emission, climate-resilient development. Buy-in from the financial industry is of critical importance because its power to reallocate capital and finance the transition can catalyze rapid decarbonization across all sectors. Monitoring an FIs' financed emissions plays an essential role in holding FIs accountable in a consistent and transparent way, ensuring that the actions taken by the financial sector result in real impact.*
>
> *The process of aligning a financial portfolio with these emissions reductions set forth by the Paris Agreement consists of seven discrete technical elements which combined are referred to as the Strategic Framework for Paris Alignment.*
>
> ***Aligning with Paris***
>
> *The process by which financial institutions reorient their financial flows away from activities inconsistent with the Paris Agreement and scale up consistent decarbonization activities in line with the required speed and volume established by climate science. Key steps to achieve alignment include: High-level commitment to action, Target Setting, Scenario Analysis, Strategy Development and Taking Actions, including through Measuring (through KPIs) and Disclosing.*
>
> ***Measuring Emissions***
>
> *"Emissions" refer to Scope 3, Category 15 emissions as defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol6 and the PCAF Global GHG Accounting and Reporting Standard for the Financial Industry. At portfolio level: The process of determining the absolute greenhouse gas emissions that financial institutions finance through their loans and investments and monitoring the trajectory of these emissions over time. At sector level: The process of determining the absolute greenhouse gas emissions and/or emissions intensity (CO2 e/physical output) that financial institutions finance through their loans and investments and monitoring the trajectory of these emissions over time. At action level: The process of determining the absolute greenhouse gas emissions reduction and/or emissions intensity reduction that financial institutions finance through their specific actions, products and services focused on emissions reductions.*
>
> ***Steering***
>
> *The process of orienting a financial portfolio or instrument so that it adheres to an established trajectory [for Paris alignment]*
>
> ***Target Setting***
>
> *A strategic process to establish goals that are in line with what the latest climate science says is necessary to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.9 A net zero commitment is an example of a high-level, long-term target*

*that financial institutions may translate into interim targets and timelines relevant for executing financial decisions today, and which can also be broken down by financial asset class and/or sectors. Targets may also be set independent of a net zero commitment.*

***Scenario Analysis***

*A process for identifying and assessing a potential range of outcomes of future decarbonization pathways under conditions of uncertainty, using forward-looking data.10 Scenario analysis informs the level of the target ambition during Target Setting and the degree of alignment with scientific net-zero trajectories. It can also provide insight into the performance and ambition of companies in a portfolio of a financial institution and thus provide input for the development of a climate transition strategy at company level.*

***Taking Actions***

*To deliberately implement measures designed to align a financial portfolio or investment decision with the goals of the Paris Agreement. Actions should be proactive whenever possible. Examples include engaging the world's emitters to set science-based emissions reduction targets and financing and enabling the technologies and business models of the future through new types of financial products and services. While recognizing the value of "passive" sustainable finance strategies, such as disclosure of climate-related financial risks and portfolio restructuring (by e.g., increasing investment in sustainable activities and divesting from unsustainable activities), actions should go beyond to include active interventions that result in actual emissions reductions in the real economy.*

***Disclosing***

*The process of formal reporting of [measurements and results], including the quality of data used to achieve them and verifications or lack thereof, according to predetermined formats and according to established standard.*

Some members of PCAF – which include Morgan Stanley, Citi, US Bank, and Bank of America – present the organization as a mere tool, an instrument that enables them to measure and disclose the carbon emissions they create and finance. This is, however, somewhat misleading. By the nature of its founding and given its explicit and ongoing purpose and methodologies, it is largely inarguable that PCAF is a radical climate change-focused organization. The Paris Accords are its true North Star, and everything it does is designed to achieve its goals. Although membership in PCAF is not the equivalent of membership in other climate organizations (CERES, Climate Action 100+, etc.), it is nevertheless at least marginally problematic, especially in the context of this report, which tries to document financial organizations distancing themselves from net-zero agreements, including the Paris Accords. PCAF is, by and large, the means to an end that is relatively anodyne (carbon accounting fundamentals), but it is affiliated with radical organizations, does push radical goals, and was born of radical origins. All of this, at the very least, creates reputational risk for its members who wish to be seen as fiduciarily focused.

# Conclusion: A Lot of Winning, But Not Too Much

The purpose of this report is to answer two important and timely questions: Have major banks and asset managers truly retreated from the climate crusade, especially as measured by their participation in global climate organizations?

If so, how significant is this shift? The evidence presented here clearly shows that the answer to the first question is unequivocally yes—there has been a broad and well-documented exodus from prominent climate alliances such as the Net Zero Banking Alliance, the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative, and Climate Action 100+, the first two of which have been so profoundly abandoned that they have altered their missions significantly. The scale of this withdrawal is inarguably substantial, marking a decisive break from the coalition-driven approach that defined the ESG-era's peak.

That said, the analysis also reveals that this retreat is incomplete. While banks and asset managers have distanced themselves from external climate groups, some have retained internal policies, targets, and reporting frameworks that closely mirror those promoted by the very organizations they abandoned. In other words, it is easier to take financial services out of the climate movement than to take the climate movement out of financial services.

This partial reform, while commendable as a first step, leaves the financial sector at a crossroads. If the goal is to restore clarity, discipline, and genuine fiduciary responsibility, then the process must continue. This report calls upon the financial community to adopt a zero-based budgeting approach to climate commitments: start with a clean slate, free of inherited policies and targets, and add new commitments only when rigorous analysis demonstrates that they are genuinely fiduciary to shareholders. Only by moving beyond symbolic exits and addressing the substance of internal policy can banks and asset managers rebuild trust, enhance transparency, and realign with their core mission of serving shareholders and clients.

The future of sustainable finance should not be built on inherited ideology, but on evidence, accountability, and the unwavering pursuit of shareholder value. The path forward is clear: complete the reform, ensure every commitment is justified, and let the discipline of the market—not the pressure of coalitions—guide the stewardship of capital.

When it comes to anti-fossil fuel commitments in finance, we have seen a lot of winning, although we're not tired of winning yet.

# Appendix: Tables

✓ Active member or validated alignment

✗ No longer a member or no direct evidence

⚠ Partial involvement, indirect reporting, or unclear status

— No known affiliation

Table 1: Bank Memberships in Climate Organizations

| Bank | NZBA | Climate Action 100+ | Net Zero Asset Managers |
|---|---|---|---|
| JPMorgan Chase | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| Goldman Sachs | ✗ | ✗ | — |
| Wells Fargo | ✗ | ✗ | — |
| Bank of NY Mellon | — | ✗ | ⚠ |
| Morgan Stanley | ✗ | ✗ | — |
| Citigroup | ✗ | ✗ | — |
| Bank of America | ✗ | ✗ | — |
| PNC Financial | ✗ | ✗ | — |

*Updated October 2025.*

Table 2: Bank Indirect or Reporting-Based Involvement

| Bank | SBTI | Ceres | PCAF |
|---|---|---|---|
| JPMorgan Chase | ✗ | ⚠ | ✗ |
| Goldman Sachs | ✗ | ⚠ | ⚠ |
| Wells Fargo | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Bank of NY Mellon | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ |
| Morgan Stanley | ✗ | ⚠ | ✓ |
| Citigroup | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Bank of America | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ |
| PNC Financial | ✗ | ✓ | ⚠ |

*Updated October 2025.*

✓ Active member or validated alignment

✗ No longer a member or no direct evidence

⚠ Partial involvement, indirect reporting, or unclear status

— No known affiliation

**Table 3: Asset Manager Climate Group Participation, 2021 vs 2025**

| Asset Manager | Climate Action 100+ | Net Zero Asset Managers |
|---|---|---|
| BlackRock | ✗ | ✗ |
| Vanguard | — | ✗ |
| Fidelity Investments (U.S.) | — | ✗ |
| State Street Global Advisors | ✗ | ✗ |
| Capital Group | — | ✗ |
| PIMCO | ✗ | ✗ |
| Invesco | ✗ | ✗ |
| T. Rowe Price* | ✗ | ✗ |

*Updated May 2026.*

**Table 4: Asset Manager Climate Group Participation, 2021 vs 2025**

| Asset Manager | SBTi (Financial Institutions) | Ceres | PCAF |
|---|---|---|---|
| BlackRock | ✗ | ⚠ | ⚠ |
| Vanguard | ✗ | — | — |
| Fidelity Investments (U.S.) | ✗ | — | — |
| State Street Global Advisors | ✗ | ✓ | ⚠ |
| Capital Group | ✗ | — | — |
| PIMCO | ✗ | — | ✓ |
| Invesco | ✗ | — | — |
| T. Rowe Price* | ✗ | — | — |
| Franklin Templeton | ✗ | ✓ | — |
| Northern Trust Asset Management | ✗ | — | — |

*Updated May 2026.*