

**ethecon**

Foundation Ethics & Economy

Stiftung Ethik & Ökonomie Fundación Ética & Economía



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## **International ethecon Black Planet Award 2014/2015**

### **Justification**

**Andrew N. Liveris (CEO) and James M. Ringler (Member of the Board) as well as major shareholders of DOW CHEMICAL Company (USA) are named and shamed with the negative 2014/2015 International ethecon Black Planet Award.**

Since 2006 ethecon – Foundation Ethics & Economy has been presenting two annual awards: the International ethecon Blue Planet Award and the International ethecon Black Planet Award.

The International ethecon Blue Planet Award honours individuals who have shown extraordinary commitment in protecting and defending human ethics when faced with the conflicting priorities of ethics and economics, thus fighting to protect and save our Blue Planet.

The International ethecon Black Planet Award names and shames individuals who have trampled on human ethics in the most shocking ways when faced with the conflicting priorities of ethics and economics, thereby destroying our Blue Planet and turning it into a Black Planet.

The International ethecon Blue Planet Award and International ethecon Black Planet Award constitute two sides of the same coin. Together they reflect the state of our world, honouring the joint struggle for environmental protection, justice and peace, and outlawing recklessness, greed and exploitation, while calling for resistance, change and engagement. In both cases, the term Blue Planet encompasses the entire animate and inanimate world.

After finishing the identification and selection procedure for the 2014/2015 International ethecon Black Planet Award, the board and board of trustees of ethecon – Foundation Ethics & Economy can announce the following:



By awarding the International ethecon Black Planet Award, the foundation names and shames persons who, between the conflicting priorities of ethics and economics, act with total disregard for ethical principles and thereby endanger the Blue Planet. Persons who set a bad example in terms of profiteering from war, exploitation, human rights violations, environmental destruction and social deprivation and who – either intentionally or unintentionally – are driving force behind these devastating developments. These individuals risk turning our Blue Planet into a Black Planet.

In a world where increasingly profit is the only criterion on which any kind of decision and development is based, the individuals shamed by the International ethecon Black Planet Award are part of a powerful minority that dictates the living conditions of the majority and causes environmental destruction. The egomaniacal powerful minority acts only for personal gain, increasingly outside existing laws and jurisdictions.

The International ethecon Black Planet Award unmasks those individuals who trample on morality and ethics and willingly sacrifice the planet on the altar of profit and power.

They display what is generally called recklessness and egotism. It is they who disgrace and disregard that tender little plant called ethics.

These individuals and institutions are denounced with the International ethecon Black Planet Award as an example for all those who allow the Blue Planet to be doomed and turned into a Black Planet.

Accordingly, the annual International ethecon Black Planet Award is meant as a proclamation of peace, justice and environmental protection, and a mobilisation of resistance against warmongering, exploitation and environmental destruction. It is meant to create public awareness and attention, exposing the context and who is responsible as well as strengthening resistance against environmental destruction, war and injustice.

Every year in February, an international call to submit nominations for both awards is published. The winners are appointed by the foundation in August following a thorough selection procedure.

**Board members Andrew N. Liveris and James M. Ringler as well as major shareholders of DOW CHEMICAL Company are named and shamed with the awarding of the 2014/2015 International ethecon Black Planet Award.**



The trustees and the board of ethecon made this decision based on news reports and on facts, some of which have already been known to the public for years. We also considered information collected by journalists from all over the world, publicly available documents, discoveries made by government offices and environmental organizations in various countries and last but not least material released by DOW CHEMICAL. Presumably, we would have been able to make our decision in an even more systematic and thorough manner if all the information which has been kept secret, hushed up or even destroyed, internally or elsewhere, had been available.

Based on the information set out above, ethecon – Foundation Ethics & Economy awards the 2014/2015 International ethecon Black Planet Award to the President and Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee Andrew Liveris, to the Board member and member of the Auditing Committee James M. Ringler, as well as to major shareholders of DOW CHEMICAL Company (USA) in order to name and shame them as those responsible for countless abuses and crimes in the name of profit.

Here are a few examples of their practices:

Dow Chemical took over the pesticide manufacturer UNION CARBIDE in 2001. Hence, responsibility for the worst-ever chemical accident in the City of Bhopal (India) with millions of inhabitants was transferred to DOW CHEMICAL. James M. Ringler was a Board member of UNION CARBIDE when the disaster happened and therefore has immediate responsibility; he now has a mandate and a seat on the Board of DOW CHEMICAL. UNION CARBIDE's Bhopal pesticide factory exploded in 1984 causing a cloud of poisonous gas to drift across densely populated areas. Within the first few days 8,000 people died from the poison. Until today 20,000 people have died from the after-effects, and more than 150,000 are chronically ill. Even today, in the third generation, tens of thousands of people are poisoned and die. The toxic chemicals were never cleaned up. They have seeped into the soil across a vast area, polluting the groundwater. Even the hospitals caring for the victims had to be built by the people themselves, and they run on donations year after year. After UNION CARBIDE left people completely stranded after the disaster, never paying them adequate compensation nor rectifying the local situation, DOW CHEMICAL took over the their whole pesticide operation, but denied any legal responsibility; Dow did nothing to rectify the after-effects of the industrial disaster and left the people of Bhopal without any help and support.

Likewise, DOW CHEMICAL's top management denies any responsibility for the ongoing suffering of the Vietnamese civilian population as a result of poisons sprayed during the

Vietnam War. DOW CHEMICAL was one of the companies producing the defoliant Agent Orange and the petrol mixture Napalm. Napalm bombs and Agent Orange covered large areas without regard to the civilian population. DOW CHEMICAL supplied 4,550 tons of Napalm until 1966. From 1961 until 1971, the US Army sprayed 90 million litres of Agent Orange all over Vietnam as well as over parts of Laos and Cambodia. It contains the super toxin dioxin, which has led to cancer in three million people so far, and caused birth defects, now in the third generation.

To this day the activities of the chemical company are geared exclusively to profit maximisation. The highly toxic substance Asbestos has been outlawed internationally a long time ago. However, the US company DOW CHEMICAL still uses this substance in the production in Europe's biggest chloride factory in the German town of Stade. DOW is the only plant in the EU still using asbestos with a special exemption expiring in 2017. But DOW CHEMICAL has demanded an extension until 2025. So they knowingly accept the risk of possible damage to health and the environment.

From sponsoring parties in election campaigns, tax dodging, destruction of the environment and supporting genetic engineering to radioactive contamination, falsifying measurements, manipulation of prices or bribery – DOW CHEMICAL is involved in countless crimes against humanity and the environment. From its inception in 1897, with the extraction of the extremely poisonous bleaching agent bromine from brine, the corporation has been synonymous with structural threats. To name just a few of the known crimes committed by this company: radioactive pollution near Denver between 1953 and 1975, dioxin pollution of Tittibawasee River in Michigan since the 1980s, careless handling of field trials with genetically engineered plants and seeds, e.g. in Kaua'i (Hawaii), production of asbestos in Stade (Germany) and being the greatest water polluter in Texas. The company has been in the top ranks ever since the Top Toxic 100 Air Polluters were named in 2004 in a risk assessment of chronic health hazards in the USA. The economic cooperation of DOW and the US Army symbolizes the company's warmongering. At the same time, DOW CHEMICAL deceived public opinion by sponsoring the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in a bid to present itself as a company that cares about social and ecological concerns.

In their decision to single out board members Andrew Liveris and James Ringler as well as the major shareholders of DOW Chemical, the trustees and the board of ethecon expressly refer



to the 1994 Charter of Health, Safety and Environmental Rights of Workers and Communities put forward and adopted by the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT), as well as to the United Nation Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>[AR2]</sup>.

The trustees and the board of ethecon make the following declaration:

Andrew Liveris, chairman of the board and the executive committee, as well as James M. Ringler, member of the board and of the auditing committee, and major shareholders are chiefly responsible for the decisions and actions of the DOW CHEMICAL company (USA). They own and run the company. They are to be held accountable for the large scale ruin of human health and the destruction of the environment, and even for many deaths. They constitute a danger not only for peace and human rights but also for democracy, ecology and humanity as a whole. They act only for personal gain and power. To this end, they trample on morality and ethics, even if it means the destruction of Mother Earth.

ethecon regards the actions of Andrew Liveris, James M. Ringler and the major shareholders of DOW CHEMICAL company (USA) as a shocking contribution to the ruin and destruction of our Blue Planet. It is because of this appalling disrespect for and violation of human ethics that ethecon – Foundation Ethics & Economy denounce those responsible for DOW CHEMICAL with the 2014 International ethecon Black Planet Award.

**The 2014 International ethecon Black Planet Award will be presented to Andrew N. Liveris, James M. Ringler and major shareholders of DOW CHEMICAL company, along with the 2014/2015 International ethecon Blue Planet Award to Tomo Kriznar, at a public ceremony in Berlin on 21 November 2015.**

Berlin, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015<sup>1</sup>, International Day of Peace

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<sup>1</sup> The 21st of November has been deliberately chosen by ethecon as the date to announce the awardees of the two annual ethecon Awards: The 21st of September is the International Day of Peace.



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Only if we develop and implement environmentally friendly and humane economic and societal models can we ward off the threat of ecological and social disasters. ethecon – Foundation Ethics & Economy takes the long, inter-generational view and campaigns with vision and perspective.

Donations to:

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