



Amazon

In addition to its reputation as one of the world's largest online retailers, through its Kindle e-readers and Fire tablets, Amazon is also the third-largest seller of tablet computers in the world.¹ With the recent success of the Amazon Echo, Amazon is leading the rapidly expanding smart speaker market as well. Unfortunately, Amazon remains one of the least transparent companies in the world in terms of its environmental performance, as it still refuses to report the greenhouse gas footprint of its own operations, a failure that is drawing the attention of its investors.² Amazon provides few details beyond what is legally required on its sourcing of materials that are going into its devices, nor does it publish any restrictions on hazardous chemicals in its devices or being used in its supply chain as other leading electronics brands provide. However, similar to its cloud computing division Amazon Web Services, Amazon has begun to purchase renewable energy at significant scale in the United States, and is deploying solar on its distribution centers. Amazon has also emerged as one of the leaders within the sector in pushing for stronger climate and renewable energy policy.

Renewable Energy & Climate Change

D

TRANSPARENCY. Amazon is one of only three companies in the Guide that publishes neither an accounting of its energy or GHG footprint at the corporate level, nor the supply chain energy footprint associated with manufacturing of its electronic devices. Amazon also does not report any product level energy performance data as Apple, HP, Dell, and many others do. While Amazon has recently begun to report details of its renewable energy procurement and claim the percentage of its operations that are renewably powered, it remains impossible to properly assess its efforts and trajectory of its emissions growth as there is no indication of the energy demand tied to its facilities.

F

COMMITMENT. Amazon has not established any GHG for its own operations, although it recently committed to deploy solar across its fulfillment centers worldwide.³ Amazon has not set any public reduction targets for its supply chain emissions, nor has it indicated whether its suppliers have begun to report their emissions or set any reduction targets.

D

PERFORMANCE. Separate from the renewable energy purchased on behalf of AWS for its data centers, Amazon has deployed renewable energy on the rooftops of some of its distribution facilities and purchased a significant amount of renewable energy in Texas. However, due to Amazon's lack of transparency, it is impossible to know whether these renewable energy purchases are keeping pace with Amazon's growth in those regions. Amazon does not appear to be measuring or attempting to manage its product supply chain footprint.

C

ADVOCACY. A significant bright spot is Amazon's increased willingness to support policies that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support the deployment of renewable energy. Amazon was one of several IT companies who publicly urged President Trump to keep the US in the Paris Climate Agreement, and Amazon also joined Google, Microsoft, and Apple in filing an amicus brief in support of federal legislation that would limit carbon emissions from the US power sector.

B

Sustainable Design & Resource Reduction	D-
<p>TRANSPARENCY. Amazon does not publish any data on the material composition of its products, including whether it utilizes any recycled inputs or the scale of take-back efforts, with the exception of where this is legally required (e.g. Virginia). Amazon does publish a conflict minerals report as required under the US Dodd-Frank Act, though with very little detail or analysis of its efforts.⁴</p>	D
<p>COMMITMENT. Unlike Apple and Fairphone, Amazon has not announced any commitments to use recycled or closed-loop inputs in its branded electronic devices, nor has it established any benchmarks for the performance of its take-back and recycling program.</p>	F
<p>PERFORMANCE: CIRCULAR PRODUCTION. Amazon publishes only basic data on its suppliers of conflict minerals as required under US law, and does not publish any additional information on whether the other materials that go into the Amazon devices are from sustainable sources. Amazon does publish detail on how to return devices for recycling to Amazon.⁵</p>	D
<p>PERFORMANCE: PRODUCT LIFE EXTENSION. Amazon does not publish any evidence that it is seeking to transition the material inputs for its devices to secondary and recycled sources. Amazon does offer free take-back programs in the US and India, providing free shipping to return devices for recycling, and for still functioning devices in the US. Amazon also offers exchange program across a range of device manufacturers.⁶</p>	D
<p>ADVOCACY. Amazon is a member of ITI, which has been lobbying to block Right to Repair legislation in several US states. If passed, this would provide important rights to customers in their ability to access affordable repair services, and in turn encourage customers to repair devices, extending the useful life of their device.</p>	D

Hazardous Chemical Elimination: Products & Supply Chain	F
<p>TRANSPARENCY. While Amazon highlights the importance it places on responsible sourcing,⁷ it provides little information beyond its broad supply chain standards.⁸ Amazon does not publish details on whether it has placed restrictions or eliminated hazardous materials not covered by the current Rohs standard, such as PVC, brominated flame retardants, or phthalates, as many leading companies have done. Similarly, Amazon does not publish an RSL to indicate how it is identifying and prioritizing the elimination of hazardous chemicals in its supply chain.</p>	F
<p>COMMITMENT. Amazon has not made any commitment to eliminate hazardous chemicals from its products or the manufacturing process of its supply chain. As an EICC member, Amazon has adopted a Supplier Code of Conduct that follows the EICC model standard.⁹</p>	F
<p>PERFORMANCE. Amazon does not report any voluntary elimination of hazardous chemicals from its products.</p>	F
<p>ADVOCACY. No evidence found of positive or negative advocacy.</p>	-

ENDNOTES

- 1 <http://www.zdnet.com/article/amazon-tablet-shipments-grew-by-99-4-percent-in-2016/>
- 2 <http://phx.corporate-ir.net/External.File?item=UGFyZW50SUQ9Njl4NTg-zfENoaWxkSUQ9MzI5NTMyfFR5cGU9MQ==&t=1>
- 3 <https://www.amazon.com/p/feature/3g9pdpvmnx3f9rf>
- 4 <http://services.corporate-ir.net/SEC/Document.Service?id=P3Vybd1hS-FlwY0RvdkwyRndhUzUwWlc1cmQybDZZWEprTG1OdmJTOWtiM2R1Yk-c5aFpDNXdhSEEvWVdOMGFQXVQVkJFUmlacGNHRm5aVDB4TVRZe-U9UTTVOQ1p6ZFdKemFXUTIOVGM9JnR5cGU9MiZmbj1BTUFaT05DT-01JTkNfU0RfMjAxNzA1MzEucGRm>
- 5 <https://amazonrecycling-us.re-teck.com/recycling/home>
- 6 <https://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=200197550>
- 7 <https://www.amazon.com/p/feature/uknj5z35m3ev8as>
- 8 https://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html/ref=hp_left_cn?ie=UTF8&nodeId=200885140
- 9 https://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html/ref=hp_left_cn?ie=UTF8&nodeId=200885140