

## Shareholders slam Apple for going green

Apple tried to go green at this week's shareholders meeting but the meeting erupted into a debate about climate change, stalling progress.

By Karl Burkart  
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The Apple shareholder meeting on Thursday was a telling example of just how difficult it is for a public company to go green, even if it really wants to.

Apple currently has a much greener reputation than it deserves according to the recent [New Scientist study](#). Consumers rank Apple #3 in sustainability, even though the scientists rank them at #19. Yes, they have made efforts to reduce toxicity in their products and created an e-waste recycling program, but both of these green initiatives came as a response to activist campaigns led by NGO's like Greenpeace.

The good news is that the a discussion of the company's environmental impacts occupied more than an hour of the meeting, a dramatic break from meetings past which gave no more than a 2-minute sustainability sound bite, according to Conrad MacKerron of [Greenbiz](#).

Two different environmental initiatives were proposed at the meeting. The first was by sustainability consultancy [As you Sow](#), which laid out a [greenhouse gas reduction plan](#). The second proposal recommended setting up a permanent board on sustainability.

Both proposals were roundly rejected by Apple investors, one of whom decried that glaciers aren't really melting and that climate change is a hoax... proof that intelligence and wealth do not necessarily go hand and hand. Jobs himself agreed that the value of environmental reporting is overblown especially considering that the company is already taking strides to reduce the life cycle impacts of their products.

Jobs and Apple shareholders should be forewarned, however. As consumers get more and more savvy about green claims, a greenwashing backlash could occur for ANY company making a green claim without objective, 3rd party accounting systems in place.