

## The Most Sustainable Co-operatives in the World Ranking released

TORONTO, Canada, April 11, 2013 – Today Corporate Knights, the company for clean capitalism, unveiled the preeminent list on sustainability performance at large co-operative businesses, the 2013 Most Sustainable Co-operatives in the World. The research team analyzed data on environmental, social and governance factors for the 35 largest co-operatives throughout the G7, which span a range of industry groups from insurance to food and staples retailing.

The top performing company in the ranking is Canada's The Co-operators Group, the Guelph-based insurance provider owned by 45 members that include credit union centrals and co-ops.

Some of the factors that helped The Co-operators earn the top spot are employee turnover remaining quite low, along with a portion of executive compensation being tied to improvements in sustainability performance. The organization continues to maintain significant percentages of women in executive management and in the boardroom.

Other top-ranked companies include The Co-operative Group Limited, the British consumer cooperative that has over 6 million members. A long-time advocate for clean energy, it now powers over 5000 branches from renewable energy sources. The Desjardins Group, the largest association of credit unions in North America, also performed well. Desjardins has moved to expand its roster of socially responsible investment products, with over \$550 million in assets now under management.

Beyond these top performing companies, however, Corporate Knights encountered a significant lack of disclosure. Only 10 of the 35 coops disclosed any data on resource productivity, and information on such social indicators as employee turnover and workplace injuries were even more scarce. "Co-operatives are beginning to improve sustainability disclosure practices, but continue to lag well behind public corporations," says Corporate Knights researcher Brian Lee.

The full methodology of the 2013 Most Sustainable Co-operatives in the World Ranking is detailed online, and will be summarized in the Summer 2013 issue of Corporate Knights, found as an insert in the Globe and Mail on June 7th.