Which are the world's most controversial companies?

Environmental disasters, corporate negligence, and shady business practices placed business giants like Volkswagen, Uber, and FIFA at the top of business advisory firm RepRisk's list of the world's most controversial companies. On-demand ride service Uber, along with the firm behind one of China's worst industrial disasters and the Brazilian miner linked to a fatal dam collapse in November were the three most controversial companies in the world last year, according to a recent report.

The ranking draws on a database of ESG risks and incidents for over 60,000 public and private companies which RepRisk maintains. The company's scores on the index were calculated based on the number of "risk incidents" - or violation of ESG principles - that a company accumulated in a year, as well as their severity. Banks, financiers, and insurers can then use this information to check how exposed an organization is to reputational risks.

In the report's foreword, RepRisk chief executive officer Philipp Aeby noted that the report aimed to show how companies might suffer an unexpected crisis, and how this could lead to a major fall in stock prices, product recalls, or hefty fines. "How a company manages environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues is now seen as directly linked to its operational excellence and social license to operate," the report added.

Source: Eco-Business