Barclays heads green ‘list of shame’

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Barclays, Citigroup and Société Générale attracted more criticism around their social and environmental records than any other financial institutions in 2008.

UK-based Barclays headed the “list of shame” released by Ecofact, a Zurich-based reputational risk monitor. It came under fire for investing in the weapons and coal industries, as well as for paying out large bonuses during the current financial crisis.

The areas where the financial industry attracted most criticism were for its impact on ecosystems and landscapes; impact on communities; and global pollution, including climate change.

The Ecofact list is based on the amount of negative press coverage a company received throughout the year, so Barclays also suffered because it is one of a number of businesses being sued in the US for having allegedly supported the South African apartheid system.

Deutsche Bank, which has been a leader in calling for investors to take climate change into account, was fifth on the list.

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