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European Parliament
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It is not long ago that we didn't know that cigarettes cause cancer. Through a broad lobbying campaign and by withholding crucial science, the tobacco industry belittled the effects of smoking for decades. Thousands of European citizens were misled and many had to pay with their health, or even with their lives.

The case of ExxonMobil's climate cover-up in the US shows a similar approach: ExxonMobil knew that it fuelled climate change for decades and paid millions for a misinformation campaign¹ - to the detriment of people and the global climate.

In the early 1980s, ExxonMobil's in-house scientists informed the company of the impact of its actions on climate change. But instead of telling the concerned public about the dangerous effects of fossil fuel extraction, they carefully kept the studies of their science advisors secret. And what's more, since 1998, ExxonMobil has spent \$31 million to fund climate denier think tanks and politicians in an effort to tell Americans the opposite of what they knew about our climate².

Attorney Generals of several US states have now started investigations against ExxonMobil regarding its climate deception.³

ExxonMobil, a big spender in EU lobbying⁴, is also active in Europe and is pushing for fracking there - an extreme form of fossil fuel extraction that is not only aggravating global warming because of previously grossly underestimated rates of leaking methane, but also affects our air and drinking water, destroys our environment, and can cause earthquakes.⁵

A leaked document published in December 2015 reveals that ExxonMobil also lobbied against decarbonisation and electrification of EU transport⁶. Research showed in May 2016 that the forerunners of ExxonMobil patented technologies for electric cars and low-emission vehicles as early as 1963,⁷ while the fossil giant itself tried to block government efforts to fight climate change.

¹<http://graphics.latimes.com/exxon-arctic/>

²<http://www.desmogblog.com/exxonmobil-funding-climate-science-denial>

³http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/30/science/new-york-climate-change-inquiry-into-exxon-adds-prosecutors.html?_r=0

⁴<http://www.desmog.uk/2016/01/20/exxonmobil-spent-least-8m-european-lobbying-and-corporate-donations-2014>

⁵e.g. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969712001933> or <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1307732/> or <http://psehealthyenergy.org/site/view/1233> and <http://frack-free.rocks/contribution-of-oil-and-natural-gas-production-to-renewed-increase-in-atmospheric-methane/>

⁶<http://energydesk.greenpeace.org/2015/12/07/exxon-lobbies-against-decarbonisation-and-electrification-of-eu-transport/>

⁷<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/may/20/oil-company-records-exxon-co2-emission-reduction-patents>

European citizens are more and more aware of the effects that fossil fuel extraction and combustion, being the primary source of worldwide anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, has had on their lives. ExxonMobil has been and is still now contributing to European greenhouse gas emissions that lead to ever-faster rising global temperatures, increasing sea levels and higher amounts of extreme weather events such as droughts, floods and storms⁸.

Climate change will have multiple adverse effects on Europe's ecosystems, agriculture, water cycles, energy system and tourism. Also the health of EU-citizens will be affected in many ways: Climate change worsens air pollution that is already reducing the life expectancy of each European by an average of about nine months. Global warming is also connected to an increase of respiratory allergic diseases and a higher risk for climate sensitive diseases (including malaria, dengue and lyme borreliosis) as well as food and water borne diseases (e.g. salmonella infections).⁹ It is the European taxpayer who will have to clean up the mess ExxonMobil causes in its unbridled drive for profit.

The European Union has signed the universal, binding Paris agreement, which obliges us to keep the rise of global temperature "well below 2 degrees" above pre-industrial levels.¹⁰ The Lisbon treaty further underlines the protection of the environment and public health and points to preventive action as well as the "polluter pays" principle.¹¹ Having also binding EU-wide greenhouse gas emission targets¹², the EU should closely monitor activities of oil and gas companies operating in its territory.

European citizens want to know what ExxonMobil knew about the consequences of its actions here in Europe and hold it accountable for its climate crimes. We urge you to take action to uncover what the company hid from the European population. Please make sure to do everything in your power to protect the European public and make sure that ExxonMobil can no longer hold up climate denial and misinformation campaigns with impunity.

Sincerely,



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⁸ http://impact2c.hzg.de/imperia/md/content/csc/projekte/impact2c_final.pdf p 12ff

⁹ <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/Climate-change/data-and-statistics>

¹⁰ <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09.pdf.p2>

¹¹ <http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-the-functioning-of-the-european-union-and-comments/part-3-union-policies-and-internal-actions/title-xx-environment-climate-change/479-article-191.html>

¹² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009D0406>