



The Union of Concerned Scientists Report on XOM: How Does It All Fit In?

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on January 8, 2007 - 8:39pm

Topic: [Alternative energy](#)

Tags: [climate change](#), [exxonmobil](#), [union of concerned scientists](#) [[list all tags](#)]

The ongoing tie between a plateauing oil supply and climate change continues to rear its ugly head. So, for your perusal this evening, I submit the following: A new report titled *Smoke, Mirrors & Hot Air* from the Union of Concerned Scientists asserts that ExxonMobil (XOM) has adopted the tobacco industry's disinformation tactics, as well as some of the same organizations and personnel, to cloud the scientific understanding of climate change and delay action on the issue.

A link to the report can be found [here](#). Hat tips are due to [James Fraser of The Energy Blog](#) and [Seeking Alpha](#). Their summary of the report is copied under the fold.

According to the report, ExxonMobil has funneled nearly \$16 million between 1998 and 2005 to a network of 43 advocacy organizations that seek to confuse the public on global warming science.

Seth Shulman, an investigative journalist, wrote in the UCS report:

When one looks closely, ExxonMobil's underhanded strategy is as clear and indisputable as the scientific research it's meant to discredit. The paper trail shows that, to serve its corporate interests, ExxonMobil has built a vast echo chamber of seemingly independent groups with the express purpose of spreading disinformation about global warming.

The report details how the oil company, like the tobacco industry in previous decades, has

- * raised doubts about even the most indisputable scientific evidence
- * funded an array of front organizations to create the appearance of a broad platform for a tight-knit group of vocal climate change contrarians who misrepresent peer-reviewed scientific findings
- * attempted to portray its opposition to action as a positive quest for "sound science" rather than business self-interest
- * used its access to the Bush administration to block federal policies and shape government communications on global warming

The report documents that, despite the scientific consensus about the fundamental understanding that global warming is caused by carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping emissions, Exxon- Mobil has funneled about \$16 million between 1998 and 2005 to a network of ideological and advocacy

organizations that manufacture uncertainty on the issue. Many of these organizations have an overlapping—sometimes identical— collection of spokespeople serving as staff, board members, and scientific advisors. By publishing and republishing the non-peer-reviewed works of a small group of scientific spokespeople, Exxon- Mobil-funded organizations have propped up and amplified work that has been discredited by reputable climate scientists.

"ExxonMobil needs to be held accountable for its cynical disinformation campaign on global warming," said Alden Meyer, the Union of Concerned Scientists' Director of Strategy and Policy. "Consumers, shareholders and Congress should let the company know loud and clear that its behavior on this issue is unacceptable and must change."



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/).