February 22, 2016

Dear Dr. Margaret Leinen,

We, the undersigned members of AGU (and other concerned geoscientists), write to ask you to please reconsider ExxonMobil's sponsorship of the AGU Fall Meetings.

As Earth scientists, we are deeply troubled by the well-documented complicity of ExxonMobil in climate denial and misinformation. For example, recent investigative journalism has shed light on the fact that Exxon, informed by their in-house scientists, has known about the devastating global warming effects of fossil fuel burning since the late 1970s, but spent the next decades funding misinformation campaigns to confuse the public, slander scientists, and sabotage science - the very science conducted by thousands of AGU members. Even today, Exxon continues to fund the American Legislative Exchange Council, a lobbying group that routinely misrepresents climate science to US state legislators and attempts to block pro-renewable energy policies. Just last year, Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson downplayed the validity of climate models and the value of renewable energy policies.

The impacts of Exxon's tactics have been devastating. Thanks in part to Exxon, the American public remains confused and polarized about climate change. And thanks in part to Exxon, climate science-denying members of Congress and lobby groups operating at the state level remain a major obstacle to US efforts to mitigate climate change.

The research disciplines of Earth sciences conducted by AGU members are diverse, but they are united by their shared value of truthfulness. AGU states that its mission and core values are to "promote discovery in Earth science for the benefit of humanity" and for "a sustainable future." Indeed, AGU has established a long history of scientific excellence with its peer-reviewed publications and conferences, as well as a strong position statement on the urgency of climate action, and we're proud to be included among its members.

But by allowing Exxon to appropriate AGU's institutional social license to help legitimize the company's climate misinformation, AGU is undermining its stated values as well as the work of many of its own members. The Union's own Organizational Support Policy specifically states that "*AGU will not accept funding from organizational partners that promote and/or disseminate misinformation of science, or that fund organizations that publicly promote misinformation of science.*" We believe that in fully and transparently assessing sponsors on a case-by-case basis, AGU will determine that some, including ExxonMobil, do not meet the standards of this policy. **We therefore call on you as the President of AGU to protect the integrity of climate science by rejecting the sponsorship of future AGU conferences by corporations complicit in climate misinformation, starting with ExxonMobil.**

While we recognize that some of AGU's scientific disciplines are deeply tied to the fossil fuel industry, we are also increasingly aware of the tension within our community regarding how we should respond to the urgency of climate change as individual scientists and as institutions. It is time to bring this tension into the light and determine how an organization such as AGU should approach the major challenges of today to ensure that we truly are working for the benefit of humanity. In particular, as the world's largest organization of Earth scientists, if we do not take an active stand against climate misinformation now, when will we?

Yours respectfully,

Robert R. Bidigare, PhD, AGU Fellow, University of Hawaii
Cecilia Bitz, Professor, University of Washington
David Burdige, Professor and Eminent Scholar, Old Dominion University

Kerry Emanuel, Professor, MIT
Peter Frumhoff, PhD, Director of Science and Policy, Union of Concerned Scientists
Richard H. Gammon, Professor Emeritus, University of Washington
Charles Greene, Professor, Cornell University
James E. Hansen, Adjunct Professor, Columbia University
Charles Harvey, Professor, MIT
Roger Hooke, Research Professor, University of Maine
Mark Z. Jacobson, Professor, Stanford University
Dan Jaffe, Professor and Chair, University of Washington Bothell
Michael C. MacCracken, Chief Scientist for Climate Change Programs, Climate Institute
Michael E. Mann, Distinguished Professor, Penn State University
James J. McCarthy, Professor, Harvard University
James Murray, Professor, University of Washington
Naomi Oreskes, Professor, Harvard University
Nathan Phillips, Professor, Boston University
Christopher Rapley, CBE, Professor, University College London
Pattanun Achakulwisut, PhD Student, Harvard University
Becky Alexander, Associate Professor, University of Washington
Theodore Barnhart, PhD Student, University of Colorado/INSTAAR
Yanina Barrera, PhD Student, Harvard University
Dino Bellugi, PhD Candidate, University of California Berkeley
Jo Browse, Postdoctoral Research, University of Leeds, UK
Adam Campbell, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Otago
Chawalit Charoenpong, PhD Student, MIT/WHOI Joint Program
Sarah Crump, PhD Student, University of Colorado Boulder
Daniel Czizco, Associate Professor, MIT
Katherine Dagon, PhD Student, Harvard University
Suzane Simoes de Sá, PhD Student, Harvard University
Michael Diamond, PhD Student, University of Washington
Kyle Delwiche, PhD Student, MIT
Sarah Doherty, Associate Professor, University of Washington
Liz Drenkard, Postdoctoral Researcher, Rutgers University
Emily V. Fischer, Assistant Professor
Priya Ganguli, Postdoctoral Fellow
Gretchen Goldman, PhD, Lead Analyst, Union of Concerned Scientists
Meagan Gonneea, Postdoc
Jordon Hemingway, PhD Student, MIT/WHOI Joint Program
Hannah Horowitz, PhD Student, Harvard University
Irene Hu, PhD student, MIT
Lu Hu, Postdoctoral Researcher, Harvard University
Eric Leibensperger, Assistant Professor, State University of New York at Plattsburgh
Marena Lin, PhD Student, Harvard University
Simon J. Lock, PhD Student, Harvard University
Andrew McDonnell, Assistant Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks
Bruce Monger, Senior Lecturer, Cornell University
Daniel Ohnemus, Postdoctoral Researcher, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
Morgan O'Neill, Postdoctoral Fellow, Weizmann Institute of Science
Cruz Ortiz Jr., PhD Student, University of California Santa Barbara
Jonathan Petters, Research Fellow, University of California Santa Cruz
Allison Pfeiffer, PhD Student, University of California Santa Cruz
James L. Powell, PhD
Christina M. Richardson, MS Student, University of Hawaii Manoa
Ignatius Rigor, Senior Principal Research Scientist, University of Washington
Paul Richardson, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Oregon
Erica Rosenblum, PhD Student, Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Ben Scandella, PhD Student, MIT
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Amos P. K. Tai, Assistant Professor, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Robert Tardif, Research Scientist
Katherine Travis, PhD Student, Harvard University
Britta Voss, Postdoctoral Fellow
Andrew Wickert, Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota
Kyle Young, Graduate Student, University of California Santa Cruz
Xu Yue, Postdoctoral Associate, Yale University
Emily Zakem, PhD Student, MIT
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Other concerned geoscientists:

Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, CBE, Professor, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
Helen Amos, Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard University
Antara Banerjee, Postdoctoral Research Scientist
Emma Bertran, PhD Student, Harvard University
Skylar Bayer, PhD Student
Thomas Breider, Postdoctoral Researcher, Harvard University
Stella R. Brodzik, Software Engineer, University of Washington
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Gregory de Wet, PhD Student, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Christopher Fairless, PhD Student, University of Manchester, UK
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Wiebke Frey, Research Associate, University of Manchester, UK
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Sydney Gunnarson, PhD Student, University of Iceland/University of Colorado Boulder
Sam Hardy, PhD Student, University of Manchester, UK
David Harning, PhD Student, University of Colorado Boulder
Sophie Haslett, PhD Student, University of Manchester, UK
Richard Hogen, Aerospace Thermodynamic Engineer, United Launch Alliance
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Victoria Smith, PhD, Instrument Scientist, National Center for Atmospheric Science, University of
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Rachel White, Postdoctoral Associate, University of Washington
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Yanxu Zhang, Postdoctoral Researcher, Harvard University

Note: Institutional affiliations are for identification purposes only and do not imply endorsement.

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- If you are a geoscientist and would like to add your name to the letter, please fill out [this form](#).

- Press release available at [this link](#).