

# ExxonMobil Influences Energy & Environmental Policy

By Mary White

ExxonMobil, the world's largest company, has had undue influence over national energy and environmental policy. Shortly after Bush was elected in 2000, Cheney set up the Energy Transition Task Force in which Exxon played an important part.<sup>1</sup>

In 2001, at the behest of ExxonMobil, Phil Cooney, a lawyer and lobbyist from the American Petroleum Institute, was appointed Chief of Staff of the President's Council on Environmental Quality. Cooney was essentially a watchdog within the administration shaping policy for ExxonMobil. When the *New York Times* broke the story that he was heavily editing the Environmental Quality reports, Cooney resigned and took a position at ExxonMobil.

In 2002, the National Resources Defense Council attained a memo from ExxonMobil to President Bush on global warming policy that contained a hit list of people from the Clinton administration. At the top was Bob Watson, the chairman of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and an outspoken supporter of strong action against global warming. A vote was taken at the U.N. and Watson was replaced.

ExxonMobil has supported 29 groups generating fraudulent information about global warming. They demand that news media always present "both" sides of the global warming "debate," despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of scientists agree that human activity is a contributing factor as opposed to a well-paid handful claiming the opposite.

*The Wall Street Journal* reported on January 11, 2007 that with a Democratic-controlled Congress Exxon expects regulations on emissions. In response, they are busy pulling together meetings of industry leaders to assure themselves a role in determining what those regulations will be "so they escape with minimum economic pain." The debate

is whether to impose a tax on upstream producers or downstream users. Tufts University Economics Professor Gilbert Metcalf, argues that you can oversee the majority of emissions by controlling the large producers. He also notes that ExxonMobil, by contrast, wants the controls to be downstream and as broad based as possible—in other words, totally unmanageable. ExxonMobil also claims it is easier to replace electricity with alternative energy sources than it is to replace liquid fuel. In other words, control them not us.

Ross Gelbspan, author of the book on global warming, *Boiling Point*, says that the future of civilization is at stake, and ExxonMobil is only concerned about the return to their stockholders. He calls them "criminals against humanity."

So what can we do? The group Expose Exxon says: 1. Don't buy their products, 2. Ask candidates if they are taking money from Exxon, 3. Write all of your politicians—repeatedly.

<sup>1</sup> See The film *Out of Balance: ExxonMobil's Impact on Climate Change*, a Joe Public Film.

Mary White has coordinated the AfD national office, is a former AfD Council member and is on the North Bridge AfD Chapter steering committee.



## U.S. Department of Energy Peak Oil Report

The U.S. Department of Energy's report *Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation, & Risk Management* is an eye opener. While the report states that world peak oil will produce a crisis like we have never seen, it narrowly sees the crisis as a liquid fuels problem rather than an energy crisis. The recommended solution: replace liquid fuel with liquefied coal, oil derived from oil shale, and biomass—totally ignoring global warming!

The report recommends transitioning as a crash program in order to avoid "lengthy environmental reviews and lengthy public involvement." It states that starting sooner would waste resources! A chart shows scientists' predictions of the peak-oil onset ranging from 2008 to 2025. If the scientists are right, we don't have 20 years.

There is no mention of how other sectors of society, such as agriculture, will be affected. Nor does it suggest changing to locally based economies requiring less fuel; sustainable solutions; conservation; or preserving oil as the precious commodity it is. Of course, the lead author, Robert L. Hirsch, is a former ARCO executive.

The report can be found on the EPA website at: [http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/pdf/Oil\\_Peaking\\_NETL.pdf](http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/pdf/Oil_Peaking_NETL.pdf) with a summary on pages 64-67.

### An Editor in the White House

Handwritten revisions and comments by Philip A. Cooney, chief of staff for the White House Council on Environmental Quality, appear on two draft reports by the Climate Change Science Program and the Subcommittee on Global Change Research. Mr. Cooney's changes were incorporated into later versions of each document, shown below with revisions in bold.

"STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE U.S. CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE PROGRAM," DRAFT TEXT, OCT. 2002

- 14 wetlands will expand in areas where meltwater resulting from deeper and longer than
- 15 periods does not have a natural drainage path to the ocean.
- 16
- 17 Warming will also cause reductions in mountain glaciers and advance the timing of the melt
- 18 of mountain snow packs in polar regions. In turn, runoff rates will change and flood
- 19 potential will be altered in ways that are currently not well understood. There will be
- 20 significant shifts in the seasonality of runoff that will have serious impacts on native
- 21 populations that rely on fishing and hunting for their livelihood. These changes will be
- 22 further complicated by shifts in precipitation regimes and a possible intensification and
- 23 increased frequency of extreme hydrologic events. Reducing the uncertainties in current
- 24 understanding of the relationships between climate change and Arctic hydrology is critical

Handwritten note: *Stripping from research strategy with scientific findings pointing here.*

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT, NOV. 2002

Warming could also lead to changes in the water cycle in polar regions. Reducing the uncertainties ...

FINAL REPORT, JULY 2003

The paragraph does not appear in the final report.

graphic: math.ucr.edu