THE ROYAL SOCIETY

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Dear Nick

Thank-you for your recent letter and accompanying copies of the 2005 ExxonMobil 'Corporate Citizenship Report' and the 'UK and Ireland Corporate Citizenship' brochure. I have read both with interest, but I am writing to express my disappointment at the inaccurate and misleading view of the science of climate change that these documents present.

In particular, I was very surprised to read the following passage from the section on Environmental performance under the sub-heading of 'Uncertainty and risk' (p.23) in the 'Corporate Citizenship Report':

"While assessments such as those of the IPCC have expressed growing confidence that recent warming can be attributed to increases in greenhouse gases, these conclusions rely on expert judgment rather than objective, reproducible statistical methods. Taken together, gaps in the scientific basis for theoretical climate models and the interplay of significant natural variability make it very difficult to determine objectively the extent to which recent climate changes might be the result of human actions."

These statements also appear, of course, in the ExxonMobil document on 'Tomorrow's Energy', which was published in February. As I mentioned during our meeting in July, these statements are very misleading. The "expert judgment" of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was actually based on objective and quantitative analyses and methods, including advanced statistical appraisals, which carefully accounted for the interplay of natural variability, and which have been independently reproduced.

Furthermore, these statements in your documents are not consistent with the scientific literature that has been published on this issue. For instance, Chapter 12 of the contribution of IPCC working group 1 to the Third Assessment Report provided an overview of scientific papers relating to the 'Detection of climate change and attribution of causes' that had been published up to the end of 2000. The chapter concluded: "In the light of new evidence and taking into account the remaining uncertainties, most of the observed warming over the last 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas

concentrations". The chapter gives a detailed overview of the evidence, citing 167 references, and points out that "The warming over the last 50 years due to anthropogenic greenhouse gases can be identified despite uncertainties in forcing due to anthropogenic sulphate aerosol and natural factors (volcanoes and solar irradiance)".

What is even more surprising about your documents' lack of consistency with the IPCC's assessment is that one of ExxonMobil's employees, Haroon Kheshgi, was one of the contributing authors on Chapter 12.

Since the publication of the IPCC Third Assessment Report in 2001, many other papers have been published which record new evidence about the causes of climate change. For instance, a major review article by the International Ad Hoc Detection and Attribution Group ('Detecting and attributing external influences on the climate system: a review of recent advances', published in the 1 May 2005 issue of the *Journal of Climate* – copy enclosed) concluded that "the recent research supports and strengthens the IPCC Third Assessment Report conclusion that 'most of the global warming over the past 50 years is likely due to the increase in greenhouse gases'". This review paper cites 147 references.

The IPCC's conclusions have been endorsed by the world's other leading scientific organisations. For example, the science academies of the G8 nations plus Brazil, China and India, in June 2005 published a joint statement on 'Global response to climate change'. This statement pointed out that "it is likely that most of the warming in recent decades can be attributed to human activities".

It is very disappointing that the ExxonMobil 2005 Corporate Citizenship Report, like 'Tomorrow's Energy', leaves readers with such an inaccurate and misleading impression of the evidence on the causes of climate change that is documented in the scientific literature. It is very difficult to reconcile the misrepresentations of climate change science in these documents with ExxonMobil's claim to be an industry leader.

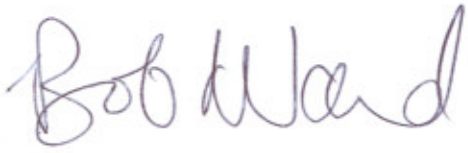
At our meeting in July, I also told you of my concerns about the support that ExxonMobil has been giving to organisations that have been misinforming the public about the science of climate change. You indicated that ExxonMobil would not be providing any further funding to these organisations. I would be grateful if you could let me know when ExxonMobil plans to carry out this pledge, and if you could provide me with a list of which organisations will no longer be receiving funding.

I have carried out an *ad hoc* survey on the websites of organisations that are listed in the ExxonMobil 2005 Worldwide Giving Report for 'public information and policy research', which is published on your website. Of those organisations whose websites feature information about climate change, I found that 25 offered views that are consistent with the scientific literature. However, some 39 organisations were featuring information on their websites that misrepresented the science of climate change, by outright denial of the evidence that greenhouse gases are driving climate change, or by overstating the amount and significance of uncertainty in knowledge, or by conveying a misleading impression of the potential impacts of anthropogenic climate change. My analysis indicates that ExxonMobil last year provided more than $2.9 million to organisations in the United States which misinformed the public about climate change through their websites.

As you know, the Worldwide Giving Report only lists organisations in the United States which have received support from ExxonMobil. I would be grateful if you could let me know which organisations in the UK and other European countries have been receiving funding from ExxonMobil so that I can work out which of these have been similarly providing inaccurate and misleading information to the public.

I appreciate that I have raised some substantial issues in this letter, but I would be grateful to receive a prompt response from you – I have shared the contents of your documents with some climate researchers who are Fellows of the Royal Society and it would be useful to update them about whether ExxonMobil will be continuing to express views that are inconsistent with the findings of their work.

Yours sincerely



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