



Stord, April 17th 2012

Open letter to

the Board of Statoil ASA,
by chair Svein Rennemo,
Drammensveien 264
0283 Oslo

The Board of Statoil must withdraw the company from Canadian tar sand.

In 2007 Statoil bought the rights to extract oil from tar sand in the fragile boreal forest of Alberta, Canada. Statoil's area is approximately the size of the Norwegian National Park of Jotunheimen. The devastating effects this extraction has on the indigenous communities, the environment and the climate, keep mounting. Simultaneously, the national and international opposition to tar sands exploitation is growing, amongst experts, the civil society and general public.

Current climate science leaves no doubt that extraction of unconventional resources, such as tar sand and shale gas, is incompatible with the attempts to limit the global warming to 2 degrees. Thus Statoil's ambitions of reducing their CO2 emissions with 40 % by 2050 from their tar sand plant will have no consequence.

We, the undersigned organisations and political parties, have long demanded that Statoil must terminate their tar sand project in Canada. We have implored the government, being the major shareholder, to use their right to instruct Statoil to withdraw, and we have urged parliament to instruct the government to this end. So far to no avail.

Our proposals have been met with references to the government's policies on ownership, where, apparently, the board of a state-owned company is responsible for making such decisions. Nevertheless, we believe that the exploitation of tar sand is a strategic question that should be decided by Statoil's general assembly.

Therefore, in recognition of the substantial public responsibility that the board of Statoil has, we will strongly urge the board to withdraw the company from the tar sand production in Canada, for, among other reasons, the following:

1. Extraction of oil from tar sand has huge negative effects on the climate, the environment, as well as on the local First Nation communities.
2. Tar sands exploitation is not compatible with Statoil's own guidelines for sustainable development and environment.

*Grandparents Climate Campaign
Leader Halfdan Wiik, Øvre Kyvik 94, 5414 Stord, Norway*

3. Extraction of oil from Canadian tar sand and other unconventional oil resources is incompatible with the aim of keeping the increase of global temperature below 2 degrees.

4. As the Norwegian government is the major shareholder of the company, all Norwegian citizens are shareholders of Statoil. We therefore firmly believe that Statoil's continued exploitation of tar sands is contradictory to the long-term interest of Norway and the shareholders.

Both at home and abroad Statoil has been recognized as an environmentally and security-conscious company. But Statoil's unwavering engagement in the Canadian tar sand industry, along with its decision in 2011 to get involved in American shale oil - another dirty and unsustainable project, has damaged the company's former sound reputation.

Highly questionable is also Statoil's membership in the American so-called *Consumer Energy Alliance*, a lobby that is sponsored by industries with the aim of influencing USA's climate policies in favour of the oil industry.

Statoil's involvement in tar sand exploitation undermines Norway and Statoil's credibility as a nation and a company that takes climate change, environmental protection and the rights of indigenous peoples seriously. Therefore we will urge the board of Statoil and the government as the major shareholder to engage in a constructive dialogue aiming to find the best solution for Statoil's withdrawal from the tar sand of Canada and from similar non-sustainable unconventional energy sources.

At Statoil's general assembly on May 15th, we expect that board members and representatives of the committee on health, environment, security and ethics issues, will be present and available for questions from shareholders regarding the above-mentioned matters.

We look forward to your reply to our letter.

With regards,

Halfdan Wiik, leader,
Grandparents Climate Campaign, Norway,

Concerned Scientists Norway, chair Beate Sjøfjell
Greenpeace Norway, leader Truls Gulowsen
WWF-Norway, secretary-general Nina Jensen

Attac Norway, leader Benedikte Pryneid Hansen
Changemaker Norway, leader Markus Nilsen Rotevatn
Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations,
secretary-general Berit Hagen Agøy
Friends of the Earth Norway, leader Lars Haltbrekken
Green Living, secretary-general Tone Granaas
Green Youth, spokesperson Hallvard Surlien

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Nature and Youth, leader Silje Lundberg
Norwegian Green Party, spokesperson Hanna Markussen
Norwegian network on climate and health, leader Lars Thore Fadnes
Norwegian Young Christian Democrats, leader Elisabeth Løland
Red Youth, leader Iver Astebøl
Sami Church Council, secretary-general Tore Johnsen
Spire – the Development Fund's youth organization, leader Julia Dahr
The Norwegian Christian Democratic Party, leader Knut Arild Hareide
The Future in our hands - FIOH, leader Arild Hermstad
The Liberal Party of Norway, leader Trine Skei Grande
The Norwegian Climate Network, chair Camilla Moneta
The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development (ForUM),
secretary-general Andrew Preston
The Red Party, leader Turid Thomassen
The Socialist Youth League of Norway, leader Olav Magnus Linge
The young liberals of Norway, leader Sveinung Rotevatn
Unio, Confederation of unions for professionals, leader Anders Folkestad
YWCA-YMCA Global, head of international affairs, Fredrik Glad-Gjernes

Copy: The government, by prime minister Jens Stoltenberg
The Parliament, by represented political parties

See relevant link to Stavanger Aftenblads commentary on feature article written by former chair of Statoil's board, Inge Johansen, and former UN director, Svein Tveitdal:

<http://www.aftenbladet.no/energi/aenergy/Norway-government-must-stop-Statoil-oil-sands-2932323.html>