

HIJACKING the World's Poor and the Environment: ExxonMobil and the Free Trade Area of the Americas

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ExxonMobil – Keeping America Running on Empty

ExxonMobil is one of the two largest corporations in the world since Exxon merged with Mobil in 1999. ExxonMobil wields its powers wherever it sees profits by hijacking political, environmental and trade agreements in their favor. In the 2000 election cycle, they were the second largest campaign contributors in the oil and gas sector after Enron, and contributed US\$1.2 million to Bush's presidential campaign. As a result, ExxonMobil has tremendous power in the political scene.

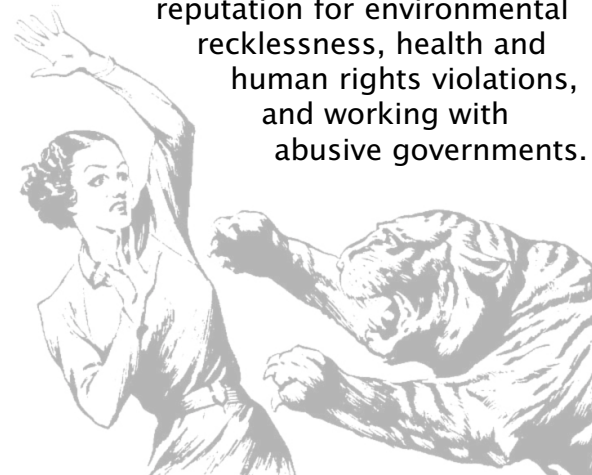
ExxonMobil still doesn't admit that global warming, caused by the burning of fossil fuels, is taking place. ExxonMobil openly funds climate skeptics to dodge responsibility for global warming. ExxonMobil has spent millions of dollars to campaign against the **Kyoto Protocol** and encouraged President Bush to sabotage the agreement. Leading conservative lobbyists – many funded by ExxonMobil – demanded that President Bush not attend the **World Summit on Sustainable Development** in Johannesburg and called on him to ensure that his negotiators prevent any progress on climate change. ExxonMobil fights participation in global climate accords, but when it comes to free trade accords, they are the biggest cheerleaders!

- In 1998, Exxon was fined up to \$4.7 million for nearly 200 violations of the Clean Air Act and (with another company Tosco) \$4.8 million following toxic discharges in San Francisco Bay. Exxon was fined for exceeding benzene limits in Louisiana and discharging chemicals above underground drinking water sources.
- In northern Colombia, the Cerrejon Norte coal mine is the largest mine in the world, and until February of this year, owned by the largest corporation in the world, ExxonMobil. Mining operations have devastated the environment in the surrounding area and caused severe respiratory diseases to indigenous communities. The mine's continued expansion threatens the security of numerous towns and villages near its borders, and in August, 2001 caused the displacement and destruction of the town of Tabaco.
- In central Africa, ExxonMobil is overseeing a Chad/Cameroon oil pipeline that cuts through fragile rainforest and indigenous communities. The Chadian government has an extensive record of indiscriminate human rights abuses, and the government has been criticized for systematic harassment and detention of local activists, journalists, and elected officials critical of the project.
- In Indonesia, villagers living near ExxonMobil's gas plant in Aceh have been victims of murder, torture, kidnapping, and rape by ExxonMobil's security forces. A lawsuit on behalf of the villagers is currently underway in US federal courts. Exxon's powerful political influence has won the Bush administration's intervention in this case, and the State Department is pushing to get the lawsuit dismissed.

ExxonMobil Around the World: Trampling Human Rights and the Environment Everywhere they Operate

ExxonMobil has operations in all corners of the world, including in countries with records of extreme human rights abuses and political instability, such as Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Chad, Indonesia, and Nigeria. Worldwide,

ExxonMobil has developed a reputation for environmental recklessness, health and human rights violations, and working with abusive governments.



FREE TRADE AREA OF THE AMERICAS: COSTING STANDARDS

The FTAA is a trade and investment agreement being negotiated between the governments of North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean, which builds upon the framework created by NAFTA and the WTO.

The FTAA, when implemented, aims to eliminate all barriers to trade and investment, including “non-tariff” barriers, such as laws and regulations to protect labor, human rights, and the environment! FTAA provisions will give unequaled powers to corporations by including provisions for “investor-to-state” lawsuits similar to Chapter 11 under the NAFTA agreement. These allow corporations to sue governments for compensation if they feel that any government action, including the enforcement of environmental, regulatory and public health and safety laws, cuts into their profits. Chapter 11 lawsuits have already succeeded in trampling health and environmental standards: in one case the Mexican government was ordered to pay damages to a company for not allowing a toxic waste disposal site in a residential area; in another, Canada was forced to pay a company \$13 million in damages and drop its ban on the dangerous gasoline additive MMT, a known toxin that attacks the human nervous system.

ExxonMobil and the FTAA: Tigers Don't Change their Stripes!

ExxonMobil vigorously advocates free trade agreements like NAFTA and the WTO and is feverishly supporting the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreements. The day before FTAA meetings were to be held in Quebec City last April, ExxonMobil ran major advertisements in the US press supporting the FTAA.

If the FTAA is implemented, corporations like ExxonMobil will have unrestricted powers to continue with their destructive policies in the name of profits.



What You Can Do:

1. Contact your representatives in Congress!

- Tell them that you are opposed to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and that they should oppose it, too.
- Cite Exxon Mobil as an example of how we are threatened by trade agreements that give corporations greater rights and freedoms at the expense of human rights and the environment.
- Tell them you want congressional hearings about the impact the FTAA will have on the environment and the 800 million people living in the Western Hemisphere.
- Demand that the information on the United States' negotiating position be made public before the trade ministerial in Quito, Ecuador (Oct. 29–Nov. 2). This ministerial will review second draft of the FTAA with the aim of resolving any disagreements.
- Demand that the US Government refrain from bullying and arm-twisting other countries to go along with their agenda.

2. Write to ExxonMobil's CEO Mr. Lee Raymond and tell him that the people and the planet are demanding the largest corporation in the world to respect the environment, human rights and democracy. Send it to: Mr. Lee R. Raymond, Chairman and CEO, ExxonMobil Corp., 5959 Las Colinas Blvd., Irving, Texas 75039-2298

3. Join the National Day of Action to stop ExxonMobil on Saturday, October 19th. For more information, visit www.stopexxonmobil.org and www.pressurepoint.org, a coalition of human rights, environmental, and pro-democracy activists, to learn how to organize against the ExxonMobil corporation and its unchecked corporate abuses.

4. Join the Movement to Stop the FTAA and stay informed about the FTAA and the ongoing negotiations at www.stopftaa.org and www.art-us.org. Get on the FTAA listserv so that you can receive regular updates on what is happening in the negotiations, and in the movement to stop the FTAA. To sign up send an email to: karen@art-us.org. Join the Corporate Campaign against the FTAA – for more information contact Severina Rivera at Severina.Rivera@clrlabor.org.