Petition to Elsevier and RELX on fossil fuel industry engagement

Elsevier and its parent company RELX (the Company) have publicly pledged to minimize their contributions to climate change to be aligned with the scale of action necessary to limit warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures and with global efforts to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. [1] The Company’s pledges include membership in the UN Race to Zero campaign, [2] which has set a deadline of June 15, 2023 for members to halt the facilitation of new fossil fuel assets and to ensure that all external engagement activities are aligned with reaching the global net zero goal.

We the undersigned, many of us users and authors of Elsevier publications, call on the Company to meet its Race to Zero commitments and to align its business practices as well as the products and services it offers with its publicly stated values and goals. To do so, the Company must cease engaging in business activities that are demonstrably antithetical to conceivably meeting these climate goals, including:

- Providing fossil fuel industry-oriented R&D and data services that are being used by most top oil, gas, and coal companies; [3]
- Lobbying and financially supporting US politicians who block climate action; [4]
- Disseminating content that reveals exploration areas, informs exploration practices and techniques, provides the industry with legal resources for expansion, and promotes R&D for new technologies needed for deep-water, Arctic, and non-conventional exploration; [5]
- Removing barriers to exploring and operating in emerging markets through Lexis Nexis Risk Solutions for oil and gas; [6i]
- Hosting coal, offshore drilling, and other industry exhibitions that enable participants to grow their businesses and boost fossil fuel production. [7]

The undersigned request a formal response from the Company by April 21, 2023 that describes the changes that will be implemented by the UN’s June 15, 2023 deadline, including but not limited to the areas described above. This response must:

- Include a pledge to cease providing goods or services that inform new fossil fuel projects;
- Meet the standards of business conduct established under accords the Company publicly claims to uphold, including the following:
  - UN Race to Zero campaign
  - UN Global Compact
  - UN Sustainable Development Goals
  - UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
  - Any other accords that the Company publicly claims to uphold

If no response is provided, or if the Company’s response does not sufficiently meet the above criteria, stakeholders reserve the right to participate in operational-level grievance mechanisms for individuals and communities adversely impacted by Company activities and its business relationships. These mechanisms are outlined in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights guidelines, which stipulate that formal judgement, if needed, is to be provided by a legitimate, independent third-party mechanism. [8]
Citations

2. RELX Signs the Climate Pledge; 'Race to Zero' campaign updates criteria to raise the bar on net zero delivery: https://www.relx.com/media/press-releases/year-2021/net-zero
3. Revealed: leading climate research publisher helps fuel oil and gas drilling: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/feb/24/elsevier-publishing-climate-science-fossil-fuels
7. E.g., Queensland Mining and Engineering Exhibition: https://www.queenslandminingexpo.com.au
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