

DRAFT

Significant differences of opinion

Another round of assaults from the anti-oil lobby has been directed at ExxonMobil, each pivoting off the journalistic malpractice served up by [HYPERLINK "http://www.exxonmobilperspectives.com/2015/11/19/more-backtracking-by-insideclimate-news/"], the [HYPERLINK "http://www.exxonmobilperspectives.com/2015/11/19/more-backtracking-by-insideclimate-news/"], the [HYPERLINK "http://www.exxonmobilperspectives.com/2015/12/01/fox-guarding-the-henhouse-at-columbia/"], and others last fall.

It would do no good to [HYPERLINK "http://thenaturalhistorymuseum.org/scientists-to-agu-drop-exxon-sponsorship/"] [HYPERLINK "http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bill-mckibben/exxons-neverending-big-dig_b_9262862.html"] individually, much less to go line-by-line through each diatribe.

Suffice to say that our critics' interpretation of "what we knew" about climate change in the 1970s and 1980s is way off the mark and misrepresents what we believe and what we have told the public. The documents in question have been publicly available and [HYPERLINK "http://corporate.exxonmobil.com/en/current-issues/climate-policy/climate-perspectives"]. I invite anyone to peruse them in their entirety and to make up their own minds.

That said, I do think it would be helpful to point out the deep, fundamental differences of opinion that exist between our critics and us, because they put some needed context around the charges made about ExxonMobil and our role in the world.

ExxonMobil believes that providing the energy sources that fuel modern life, enable progress, lift people out of poverty, and raise living standards are worthy and worthwhile endeavors.

That is especially critical considering that for the near future – certainly the next several decades by all reasonable estimates, including projections from the International Energy Agency – the [[HYPERLINK "http://www.exxonmobilperspectives.com/2014/11/06/more-on-divestment-a-letter-to-tim-wirth/"](http://www.exxonmobilperspectives.com/2014/11/06/more-on-divestment-a-letter-to-tim-wirth/)] will continue to be met by fossil fuels.

Many of our most pointed detractors would like for society to live very differently.

In [[HYPERLINK "http://www.amazon.com/Eaarth-Making-Life-Tough-Planet/dp/0312541198"](http://www.amazon.com/Eaarth-Making-Life-Tough-Planet/dp/0312541198)], one of the most prominent of these critics wrote that “we need to cut our fossil fuel use by a factor of 20 over the next few decades,” without suggesting any workable alternatives to replace the energy provided by fossil fuels. In that same book, he [[HYPERLINK "https://books.google.com/books?id=Xs73JePrKdUC&pg=PT254&lpg=PT254&dq=mckibben+and+%22controlled+decline%22&source=bl&ots=rfCp-BcLNG&sig=Q9Fy9HxNYs4tB9l6xczb5KJnFOg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjDqfbj_4vLAhWmsIMKHa3CDz0Q6AEINTAF"](https://books.google.com/books?id=Xs73JePrKdUC&pg=PT254&lpg=PT254&dq=mckibben+and+%22controlled+decline%22&source=bl&ots=rfCp-BcLNG&sig=Q9Fy9HxNYs4tB9l6xczb5KJnFOg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjDqfbj_4vLAhWmsIMKHa3CDz0Q6AEINTAF)] of

[HYPERLINK "https://books.google.com/books?id=Xs73JePrKdUC&pg=PT254&lpg=PT254&dq=mckibben+and+%22controlled+decline%22&source=bl&ots=rfCp-BcLNG&sig=Q9Fy9HxNYs4tB9l6xczb5KJnFOg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjDqfbj_4vLAhWmsIMKHa3CDz0Q6AEINTAF&v=onepage&q=mckibben%20and%20%22controlled%20decline%22&f=false"](https://books.google.com/books?id=Xs73JePrKdUC&pg=PT254&lpg=PT254&dq=mckibben+and+%22controlled+decline%22&source=bl&ots=rfCp-BcLNG&sig=Q9Fy9HxNYs4tB9l6xczb5KJnFOg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjDqfbj_4vLAhWmsIMKHa3CDz0Q6AEINTAF&v=onepage&q=mckibben%20and%20%22controlled%20decline%22&f=false)] of our economy that eschews notions of growth.

This same critic [[HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6ErZa1comw"](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6ErZa1comw)], “I don’t think everyone can live a middle class American lifestyle all over the world, including middle class Americans.”

We disagree, and strongly. Our vision of economic growth, societal progress, and rising living standards for billions more people clashes with ideals of controlled decline and no growth.

Those are significant differences of opinion and outlook, ones very much worth keeping in mind the next time hyperbolic charges are leveled against ExxonMobil and the work we do.

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