



"Development for All and by the Participation of All"

P. O. Box AN 12126 Accra - North, Ghana
Tel: +233 (0) 30 393 8058 / +233 (0) 30 222 4217
Fax: +233 (0) 30 222 4217
Loc: No. 1 Hamilton Street, Oyarifa.
Off Adenta - Aburi Road. Accra, Ghana
E-mail: info@valdghana.org

www.valdghana.org

28th June, 2021

The Honourable Minister
Ministry of Environment Science, Technology and Innovation - MESTI
Accra

Attn:
Executive Director, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Petition: How Big Polluters are advancing a “net zero” climate agenda to delay and deceive

Stand with us against Big Polluters

The Vision for Alternative Development (VALD) humbly appreciates this audience given us to present our petition.

The world is waking up to the fact that fossil fuel industry knowingly jeopardizes the safety and security of millions of people around the world for their own parochial and short term interests. It is an industry composed of the world’s largest and richest companies who rake in profits, while the poorest and most vulnerable communities reel from super typhoons and droughts made worse by climate change, and suffer from loss of lives and livelihoods in a world degraded by the impacts.

We are therefore calling on government to adopt the newly launched report “The Big Con” as it develops climate plans aim at addressing the climate crises.

The report was released in a press briefing on 9th June, 2021 during the virtual discussions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The report explains among others how Big Polluters are advancing a “net zero” climate agenda to delay, deceive, and deny,” after a year packed with record announcements of “net zero” pledges from corporations and governments, and builds on a growing body of research that calls the integrity of “net zero” as a political goal into serious question. As more and more “net zero” plans have been rolled out, the scientific, academic, and activist communities have all raised grave concerns about the inability of these plans to achieve the commitments of the Paris Agreement and keep global temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Increasingly, the concept of “net zero” is being misconstrued in political spaces as well as by individual actors to evade action and avoid responsibility. The idea behind Big Polluters’ use of “net zero” is that an entity can continue to pollute as usual—or even increase its emissions—and seek to compensate for those emissions in a number of ways. These schemes are being used to mask inaction, foist the burden of emissions cuts and pollution avoidance on historically exploited communities, and bet our collective future through ensuring long-term, destructive impact on land and forests, oceans, and through advancing geoengineering technologies.

It is time for decision-makers to prioritize people over polluters.” “It is time for our government to reject net zero scam and big polluters’ and their false solutions, to protect and save this present and the future of our environment for generations to come” and encourage other colleague government to do same. Communities across the African continent, on the frontlines of the climate crisis, are demanding real action and an end to Shell’s and other polluter’s green-washing and abuses.

They must be held accountable for the climate crimes. We cannot afford to fall for the same tricks that Shell and the rest of the fossil fuel industry have been playing for decades with their deceptive green-washing schemes, now taking the shape of their meaningless “Net Zero” climate pledges.

The evidences are clear now as communities across Africa know what the real solutions are and we are calling for our governments to stand with people and communities, not Big Polluters. That’s why today we are demanding that our governments Reject Net Zero and Make Big Polluters Pay.

Regardless of the avenue decision-makers pursue to make big polluters pay, the effort must be grounded in principles including:

- Protect the rights of local communities, Indigenous peoples, peasants, fisher folk, pastoralists, nomadic and rural peoples, and women as stewards of nature.
- Shift the costs of climate change from people and communities to the entities responsible for both global greenhouse gas emissions and the intentional deceit that has inexcusably delayed climate action.
- Help communities fund a just transition that protects workers' rights and livelihoods.

Honorable Minister, by holding polluting industries liable, we can end their abuses, unlock the finance needed to advance real solutions, and justly address the climate crisis as stipulated in the “Liability Roadmap”.

With the emergence of oil fields in some part of Ghana, it behooves on us as a nation to begin to follow and adhere to global Best Practices to ensure we protect our present and future generations from the devastating effects of big polluters.

Honorable Minister, sadly, UN Secretary General and the COP presidency, who are organizers of the next milestone in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process COP26, have already made “net zero” a primary focus despite a number of recent controversies including the recent backlash against Mark Carney’s initiative.

However the climate justice community will continue to demand accountability for the world vulnerable populations.

We are by this statement urging the government to ensure public health is placed above profit.

We also wish to present to you the “Liability Road Map and the “The Big Con” for your consideration and action when developing national policies and programmes or attending international meetings particularly the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Thank you



Labram M. Musah

Director, Vision for Alternative Development

0243 211854

labrammusah@valdghana.org