

## Sustainable Energy Access ExxonMobil 2019

WHEREAS, roughly 3 billion people lack access to modern energy services for heating and cooking, including nearly 1 billion people without access to electricity.<sup>1</sup> Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 calls for access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030; the world is not on track to meet this goal.<sup>2</sup> Meeting SDG 7 is essential for the achievement of all the SDGs, addressing inequality, and ending global poverty.

According to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), corporations have a responsibility to respect human rights and should seek to mitigate human rights impacts associated with their operations, business relationships, and products or services. This may include actual and potential adverse impacts linked to climate change, which ExxonMobil may cause, contribute to, or be directly linked to through its carbon-intensive business model. As the fifth largest emitter of greenhouse gases among global fossil fuel producers, ExxonMobil's contribution to climate change may interfere with its human rights responsibilities.<sup>3</sup> Initiatives to increase energy access must align with limiting warming to below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

Over 95% of people who lack access to electricity live in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.<sup>4</sup> ExxonMobil has profited greatly from exploration and production in these resource-rich regions, without adequate contribution to economic growth and infrastructure development. ExxonMobil has long spoken of the "dual challenge" of increasing energy access while mitigating climate change. However, the company's efforts have focused disproportionately on carbon-intensive energy development, rather than increasing access to clean energy and maximizing efficiency in areas most affected by energy poverty and adverse climate impacts.

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for energy-poor populations presents a strategic business opportunity for ExxonMobil. Peers Total and Enel are partnering with Sustainable Energy for All, a multi-stakeholder initiative working to achieve quantifiable results in energy access, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

While ExxonMobil's Energy Outlook proposes that oil and gas will remain the primary energy sources through 2040, this conflicts with the rapid decarbonization necessary to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/energy>

<sup>2</sup> [https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/data/files/download-documents/tracking\\_sdg7-the\\_energy\\_progress\\_report\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/data/files/download-documents/tracking_sdg7-the_energy_progress_report_full_report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2017/jul/10/100-fossil-fuel-companies-investors-responsible-71-global-emissions-cdp-study-climate-change>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.iea.org/energyaccess/database/>

prevent the worst impacts of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advises that limiting warming to 1.5°C instead of 2°C could significantly reduce the severity of climate change impacts, including water scarcity, extreme heat, food shortages, and natural disasters, which disparately affect vulnerable populations.

RESOLVED: Shareholders request that ExxonMobil issue a report, at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, on how ExxonMobil's business activities contribute to the provision of affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy to alleviate energy poverty, in alignment with the Paris Climate Agreement goal to limit global average temperature increases to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

#### SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Both prongs of the "dual challenge" can and must be addressed simultaneously by integrating SDG 7 into business activities. Collaboration is essential, and ExxonMobil has a role to play, given its expertise, and resources, as well as its human rights responsibilities.