

How is the green transition going now?

Not so good. Multiple climate agreements have been broken, the initial goal of a maximum of 1.5 °C of global warming is not attainable anymore. The science is clear. The world is in a state of climate emergency, and we need to shift into emergency gear. Humanity's burning of fossil fuels has emitted enough greenhouse gases to significantly alter the composition of the atmosphere and average world temperature has risen between 1.3 and 1.4°C. And for every degree in rising temperatures, the cost of adaptation will rise exponentially.

This is not a left or right wing issue: it is a long-term survival issue, an intergenerational justice and equity issues.

What are fossil companies doing?

Whereas Shell's profits grew by 209 per cent, at BP, TotalEnergies, ExxonMobil and Chevron up by 216, 226, 243 and a whopping 562 per cent respectively. Last year, Shell posted a net profit of a whopping \$42.3 billion (€37.4 billion).

Shell's claim that 30 per cent of spending last year went on energy transition is false: its spending last year on the energy transition only goes up to 3 percent. How can that be? "Shell appears to include spending on marketing, lubricants, chemicals and retail under this heading. In other words, even the croquette sandwich you buy at a petrol station while filling up your car is part of the 'energy transition', according to Shell." ([Follow the Money](#))

What will EUR get in return, if it commits to a campus where the fossil industry cannot influence it?

The fossil industry is characterized by decades of (very sophisticated) forms of greenwashing and juggling sustainability figures. This continues through 2023 and will not stop in the coming time. This has been demonstrated several times by [major research institutes](#), their own academics and sound scientists. A university provides knowledge to companies like this, through research and future employees. That knowledge is power - especially if it is not deployed in the right way. Fossil fuel companies may use it to cover up their own pollution - or simply let the sustainability knowledge gained go to waste.

However, if the EUR decides to break off the collaborations step by step, there will be more room for other partners who are genuinely willing to work with the excellent knowledge of EUR alumni. It also sends a clear signal that EUR takes its own researchers, climate scientists and institutes seriously - who have been warning for years about the effects of greenwashing. In the long run, this will increase the impact and above all benefit the university's image. Then all that knowledge will really lead to a positive impact - which will also be pleasing for the graduate, who will then have become a true 'Erasmian' and make 'positive societal impact'.

Action plan: 'Erasmus-fossil-free'

Now:

- Declare climate emergency. (check)
- Start a path of full transparency: what collaborations with industry are there, and how can this be made easily transparent?
- Like the University of Amsterdam, promise not to enter into new collaborations with Shell. The same applies to sponsorship money, subsidies or donations from fossil fuel companies. Fossil fuel is thereby defined as thermal coal, shale, tar sands and (Arctic) oil and gas.
- Remove the names of fossil fuel companies from EUR buildings, institutes and from positions named after these companies.
- Pull out of the partnership with Vopak, Shell, Finco Fuel Group and Schiphol at the Energy Transition Fund. Examine the sustainable strategy of the other partners at the fund. Reconsider their participation following the results.
- Commit to stop investing in fossil industries, through the Erasmus Trust Fund, as soon as the investment term allows.
- Ban fossil fuel companies from campus career weeks and events. Prohibit sharing job vacancies internally with students or staff. In doing so, set a policy identical to the one EUR has set for the tobacco industry.
- Make a commitment to sever 'other' ties immediately after the investigation into them is completed. In doing so, start with the companies whose main business is fossil fuel - gas and oil. Then review ties with companies indirectly but inherently linked to the fossil industry.

In the short term (the next two years):

- Reform the Donations and Research Funding Review Committee to create a more robust ethics policy (in line with the existing protocol on the tobacco industry) and to show more transparency regarding the decision-making process.
- End all research that directly or knowingly contributes to fossil fuel extraction, especially when conducted on behalf of, or in collaboration with, fossil fuel companies.
- Establish a multidisciplinary council to refine the code of conduct based on scientific evidence from the climate community.
- Actively seek partnerships with sustainable companies and organizations that can advance the university by taking academics and future employees seriously. Their knowledge can thus contribute to a more sustainable world (instead of greenwashing).
- Ban individuals from simultaneously holding positions of authority at the university and in a fossil fuel company, where there are demonstrable conflicts of interest.

Longer term (the next five years):

- Eliminate all existing links with the fossil fuel industry.