

Press Release March 13, 2012

The OECD Contact Point rejects the case against Statoil ASA

**The OECD Contact Point rejects the complaint against Statoil's oil sands operations on formal grounds, but also wishes to call attention to the challenges that oil sands operations may present to the climate and environment.**

The complaint has been submitted by the Norwegian Climate Network and Concerned Scientists Norway. The complainants claim that Statoil, by way of its investments in the oil sands of Alberta, has contributed to Canada's violation of its international obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the period from 2008 to 2012, and that Canada's oil sands must remain unexploited if the world is to have a chance of stabilising the climate.

- The complaint concerns some of today's most pressing issues – greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. The risks of major greenhouse gas emissions and the cumulative environmental impacts from oil sand extraction are serious. In this particular case, however, the complaint is directed more towards Canada's policy of allowing oil sands development than it is towards the manner in which Statoil has operated in the context of this policy. The complaint does not concern the issue of whether Statoil, in its activities, has breached international standards or national rules that are covered by the OECD Guidelines. In order for the OECD Contact Point to be mandated to process a complaint, it must concern specified violations of the Guidelines that can be attributable to the company in question, says Hans Petter Graver, head of the Norwegian Contact Point.

The complaint highlights that a Norwegian state-owned company has a particular responsibility to ensure that both Norway and other states, such as Canada, comply with their international agreements, including climate commitments. The Kyoto Protocol has its own compliance body.<sup>1</sup>

**The OECDs Contact Point**

As a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Norway is obliged to have a national contact point to handle complaints against companies for violations of the OECD's guidelines for responsible business. The OECD Contact Point is not a legal body, but may seek to facilitate dialogue and investigate complaints on ethical grounds.

The Norwegian Contact Point is administratively under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but is in substance independent of the government and led by Professor and Dean Hans Petter Graver of the University of Oslo.

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