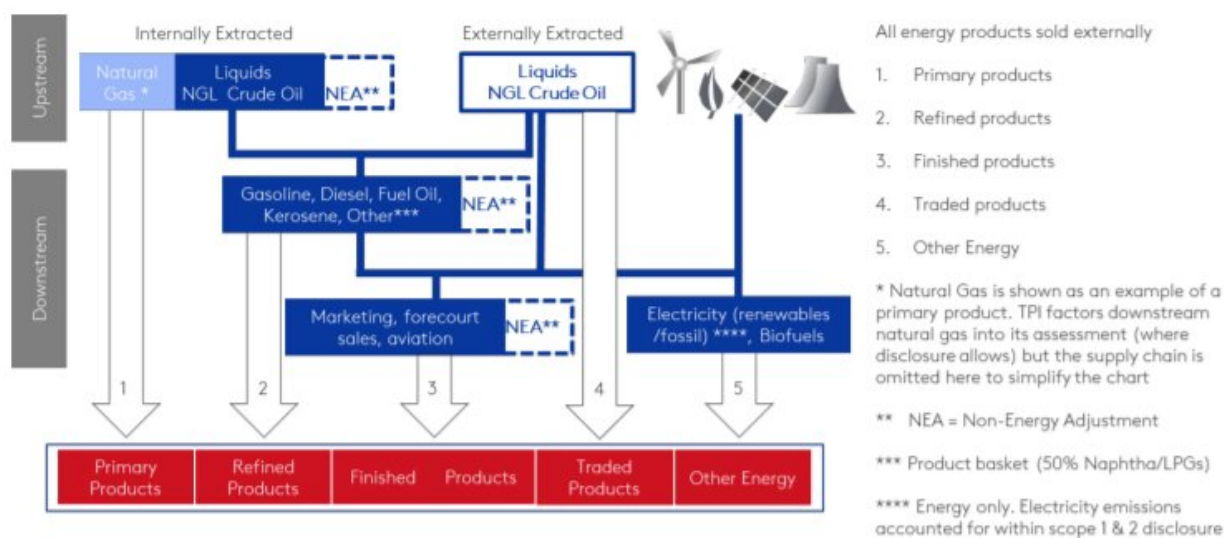


Data suggests oil giants are not looking very hard to find ways to reduce their carbon footprint

October 22 2021, by Bob Yirka



Schematic representation of how assessed product is calculated based on different categories of energy product and their relationship with the value chain. Credit: DOI: 10.1126/science.abh0687

A small team of environmentalists from the London School of Economics and the Political Science Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has published a Policy Forum piece in the journal *Science* highlighting the lack of effort by the world's largest oil and gas companies to reduce their carbon footprint. In their paper, the

authors claim that of 52 companies they looked at, just two of them have established science-based climate targets.

One of the biggest contributors of greenhouse gas emissions is the gasoline-burning vehicle. Cars and trucks the world over spew billions of tons of carbon into the atmosphere every day. And most of that gasoline is provided by oil and gas giants such as BP and Exxon Mobil. In recent years, these companies have been pushed by consumers and government alike to come up with plans to reduce their carbon footprints by reducing the amount of carbon-based product they sell to consumers. In this new effort, the authors suggest that the oil and gas giants have not responded to pressure as might be expected, and instead appear to be mostly turning a deaf ear.

To learn more about how the big oil and gas companies have been responding to calls for a response to global warming issues, the authors obtained and analyzed data from 52 of the largest companies looking for evidence of a response. They found that just two of the companies had made any public announcements regarding plans to help reduce emissions to meet the goals of the Paris Climate Accord. Occidental Petroleum announced it had plans to help reduce emissions to meet the 1.5 degree Celsius benchmark, and Royal Dutch Shell announced it had plans to help prevent reaching the 2 degree Celsius limit.

The authors also looked at emission intensities, the CO₂ emissions from operations and use by customers, noting that only 23 of the companies listed numbers for customer use, which is, of course, the biggest contributor to emissions. They also looked at future [emission](#) intensity projections for all of the companies and found that just over half had released estimates. Those that did list them had unambitious goals, say the authors.

Overall, the authors found that the vast majority of large oil and [gas](#)

[companies](#) are doing little to assist the effort to reduce [greenhouse gas emissions](#), which in the end could be their undoing. As the world moves to alternative fuel sources, these giants could find themselves without customers.

More information: Simon Dietz et al, How ambitious are oil and gas companies' climate goals? *Science* (2021). [DOI: 10.1126/science.abh0687](#)

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