

Toolkit: May 2018 Nights of Action for Climate Justice

Thank you for participating in the May 2018 Nights of Action for Climate Justice!

2018 is a make-or-break year for the planet. One thing is clear: We're no longer just fighting to protect our future or our children's future; we're protecting our present as well. But we know it didn't have to be this way. The fossil fuel industry understood the dangers of climate change for decades. And for decades these Big Polluters' actions did not match the urgency of the crisis we now face. Instead of sounding the alarm, the likes of Exxon and Shell borrowed tactics straight from Big Tobacco's playbook to promote junk science, sow doubt about climate change, fund climate change denying politicians, and push policies that protect their profits.

Right now, government leaders from around the world are in Bonn, Germany, developing the road map the world will use to set climate policy for years to come. Big Polluters' lobbyists and front groups are in the room too, attempting to stall progress. Meanwhile, back in the U.S. these same Big Polluters' CEOs are preparing to trumpet their profitability—and their greenwashing—to the whole world during their corporate shareholders' meetings this week.

We won't let them get away with it. Now is a critical moment to expose the fossil fuel industry's interference on the global stage and on their home turf. By doing so, we'll empower the governments negotiating at the U.N. right now to reject Big Polluters' dangerous distractions and make sure the global response to this crisis reflects the needs of *people*—and truly advances climate justice. That's where you come in: We're counting on you to turn up the heat on these Big Polluters directly so they feel the power of people from the floors of their shareholders' meetings to the halls of the U.N.

This toolkit is designed to give you everything you need to be part of the Nights of Action happening across the country May 21-29 as four of the biggest oil corporations—Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP, and Shell—hold their annual shareholders' meetings. We are here to support you on questions, advice, materials, and anything else!

Just email actionleague@corporateaccountability.org or call 617-695-2525.

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Section 1: Steps for participating in the Night of Action.

The Night of Action is designed for anyone across the U.S. to be able to participate wherever you are. You can choose how big to make it. Our recommendation is: Aim high!

Step 1: Decide what kind of event you want to have. A few ideas (but get creative!):

- Host a Corporate Accountability house party to have friends and family get involved more deeply by taking action and joining the organization as members.
- Invite friends and neighbors over to take action over a potluck dinner.
- Host an after-dinner discussion and action over wine and cheese or dessert or a singalong.
- If another activist group you're a part of is meeting between May 21-29, spend 10 minutes of the agenda talking about the campaign and having everyone take action.
- Partner with a local group working on similar issues to host an event at the library, community center, or someone's home to brief people and take action on this campaign.
- Organize a gathering at your place of worship and invite members of your faith community to attend.
- Note: Unable to organize an event? See section 2 for how to participate on your own.

Step 2: Recruit people to attend.

- Set a goal for yourself: How many people do you want in the room?
- Remember the organizer's rule of halves: Half the people you invite will say yes. Half the yes RSVPs will make it in the door. So if you want 10 people over for a potluck, invite 40.
- Send out invitations via email but know that some people won't see it. Follow up a couple days later and then phone and/or text anyone you haven't heard from yet. Reach out to actionleague@corporateaccountability.org for a sample invitation email.

Step 3: Get your space ready!

- What do you want things to look like when people walk in? Where will you put the food? Where will people sit while you're explaining the action? Will you have multiple action stations for people to rotate around, or will you spread all the materials out on the dining room table? How can you make it fun and engaging (think music!)?

Step 4: Hold your Night of Action. See section 2 below for details.

Step 5: Report back to us.

- This is *super* important—we need to know the collective impact we had! Make sure to fill out [this form](#) before the night is over to let us know how it went.

Step 6: Report back to your attendees.

- Within a couple days of your Night of Action, email your attendees to thank them and share updates from around the country. Your point person from Corporate Accountability will make sure you get others' updates to include, and you can always email actionleague@corporateaccountability.org for more information.

Section 2: What to expect: Running a Night of Action event.

Here's a sample agenda for a typical Night of Action gathering in your home, assuming about 10 friends and family sharing a potluck or dessert. Adapt it to make it appropriate for your plan!

Remember, the bottom line is: Take action for climate justice!

6:30 - 7:30 Eat dinner and socialize.

7:30 - 7:45 Welcome & context.

Bonus points: Prep someone else to share some of this information!

- Set the context: Remind everyone why they're here. (Think: Why do you personally care about climate change? What gets you riled up when you think about our current political climate?)
 - Here are a few creative ideas for how you can kick it off:
 - Hold a candlelight vigil in memory of millions of people affected in the past year by climate-change-intensified disasters like Hurricanes Maria and Harvey.
 - Share an inspiring video. [Here's one of our favorites](#) by Marshallese poet Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner.
 - Share an excerpt from a recent news article on climate change.
 - Share information about Corporate Accountability. You can find our mission and campaigns at www.corporateaccountability.org. You should also share a little bit about how you heard about us and why you decided to get involved.
 - Share information about the climate campaign and the action. Here are a few points that can help you. You can also reach out to us at actionleague@corporateaccountability.org for more:
 - 2018 is a make-or-break year for the planet. Over the next few months, governments across the world will finalize the guidelines for implementing the Paris Agreement. This is how we turn this historic agreement into tangible climate action. And the first of three meetings where they'll do so just wrapped up in Bonn, Germany.
 - Yet even as these governments are attending these meetings, the fossil fuel industry and its cronies, in lockstep with the Trump administration, are working tirelessly to block and weaken global climate policy.
 - It didn't have to be this way. The fossil fuel industry—and especially the largest oil corporations like Exxon, Chevron, BP, and Shell—all knew about climate change for decades. And for decades, these Big Polluters' actions did not match the urgency of the crisis we now face. Instead of sounding the alarm, the like of Exxon and Shell borrowed tactics straight from Big Tobacco's playbook to promote junk science, sow doubt about climate change, fund climate-denying politicians, and push policies that protect their profits.

- And right now, these very same corporations are holding their annual shareholders' meeting where their CEOs will trumpet their profitability—and greenwashing—to the whole world.
- We can't let Big Polluters get away with this. That's why Corporate Accountability has been organizing to kick Big Polluters out of the international climate talks. And as we build a movement internationally at the U.N. to kick Big Polluters out, we need to make sure they feel the pressure back home. So we're taking it right to their front door.
- This week, four of the biggest oil corporations in the world—Exxon Mobil, BP, Shell and Chevron—are holding their annual shareholders' meetings.
- Now is a critical moment to expose the industry's interference because the world is watching. With a growing spotlight on their practices, including from their own investors, Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP, and Shell are increasingly turning these into tightly controlled dog and pony shows where they aim to control the narrative and silence the voices of people concerned about their practices.
- We must speak truth to power to these corporations and hold them accountable. By generating phone calls into their headquarters as they're preparing for their most important days of the year, generating letters to the editor in local newspapers, and amplifying the call on social media, we'll make sure Big Polluter CEOs hear our call—and even more importantly, that governments around the world see the growing movement to kick Big Polluters out.
- By participating in the Night of Action tonight, you're joining with people across the country challenging the Big Polluters that have brought us to the brink of climate crisis. And you are standing with people and government leaders around the world who know a different kind of climate policy is possible.

7:45 - 7:50 Action set-up.

Explain the different actions for people to take (samples in sections 3 to 6 below):

- Everyone should make a phone call to Chevron, Exxon Mobil, Shell, and BP (in that priority order) before they leave tonight! (This is the top-priority action.)
- Email the links to the petition and calling script to friends and family asking them to add their voices to the campaign.
- Post on social media to ask followers to make the phone call.
- Write a letter to the editor to the local newspaper to raise visibility for the campaign.
- Become a monthly donor to Corporate Accountability to help power this work on an ongoing basis.

7:50 - 8:30 Lights, camera, action! (And more food and socializing.)

Once everyone is gone... Remember to fill out [this form](#) so we can track our collective impact.

Section 3: How-to: Making a Phone call

Tips:

1. Keep it short and simple. The script is a great guide!
2. Speak from the heart.
 - a. Personalize it. Let people know why you are calling and why you care about this issue. Just **make sure you say the part in bold.**
3. Be persistent: If someone picks up, they may tell you you're calling the wrong place or that they can't take your message. Be polite but firm and insist that they either give you the correct number to call or that they take down your message and pass it to the relevant people.

How-to:

1. Call Chevron, Exxon Mobil, Shell, and BP. (We will send you the best numbers to call before your Night of Action.)
2. Use the script below (leave a voicemail if no one answers).
3. If you're close to a computer, track the call using [this form](#) right away.

Call script:

Hello, my name is XX, and I live in CITY, STATE.

As someone concerned about my [family's/community's] future and the future of the planet, **I am calling to demand [NAME OF CORPORATION] and its associated trade associations stand down and stay out of the U.N. climate talks.**

We face a planetary emergency, one which [CORPORATION]'s actions have directly contributed to and exacerbated. You have understood the dangerous climate impacts of burning fossil fuels for decades, and for decades your actions have not matched the urgency of the crisis.

Today, even as the urgency of the crisis is more apparent than ever, [CORPORATION] and its front groups are pushing dangerous distractions like carbon markets.

Enough is enough. The world needs real climate solutions, not more dangerous distractions and greenwashing. Again: Stop interfering in climate policy.

Thank you for your time.

Section 4: How-to: Writing letters to the editor.

Letters to the editor (LTEs) to your local newspaper are a great way to raise the visibility of critical issues and upcoming or recent events, and educate members of your own community. They're also important to local elected officials, who monitor them to see what issues their community members are concerned about.

Instructions:

- 1) Search online for how to submit LTEs to your local paper.
 - Usually it's via a simple form on the paper's webpage or an email to the editor.
- 2) Keep it short (150-175 words maximum).
- 3) Make one point and one point only.
- 4) Personalize it.
 - For instance, mention your role as a parent or teacher, your role in your community, or simply why you are concerned about climate change.
- 5) Respond to a recently published piece!
 - LTEs are more likely to be published when they're responding explicitly to a previously published article in the news outlet you're submitting to. For instance, you could cite a recent story about climate change, extreme weather, or U.S. environmental policy.
- 6) End your letter with a call to action.
- 7) Call the paper to confirm that they received your letter and ask when it's likely to be printed (best done one day after you submit your letter).
- 8) Monitor your news outlet until your letter is printed and email a copy of it to actionleague@corporateaccountability.org.

Sample points to include:

- This week, four of the largest fossil fuel corporations in the world are holding their annual shareholders' meetings, one of their most important days of the year.
- As a _____, I'm extremely concerned about climate change, because _____.
- It's well-documented that these corporations have known for decades about the impacts of burning fossil fuels on our planet. And for decades they worked tirelessly to weaken and delay action.
- Now it's increasingly clear that we're no longer just fighting to protect our future or our children's future; we're protecting our present as well.
- Earlier this month, government leaders from around the world met in Bonn, Germany, to negotiate the road map the world will use to set climate policy for years to come as part of the U.N. climate treaty.
- And Big Polluters' lobbyists were right beside them at these climate talks, attempting to stall progress.
- Enough is enough. As the shareholders' meetings of BP, Exxon Mobil, Chevron, and Shell kick off, it's long past time to demand that Big Polluters stay out of climate policy, and that governments around the world must take action to kick Big Polluters out too.

Section 5: Sample social media posts.

Here are some sample social media posts you and your guests can use during the Night of Action. Feel free to make them your own! Make sure to tag us:

Facebook: @Corporate Accountability

Twitter: @StopCorpAbuse

Instagram: @CorporateAccountability

Facebook/Instagram

[With a photo of your group gathered or a photo of someone making a phone call]

Right now, I'm with [X number] other people on the eve of Chevron's shareholders' meeting participating in @Corporate Accountability's Night of Action calling on Big Polluters like Chevron to stay out of climate policy. Join me in taking action! <https://bit.ly/2wyN1yH>

Twitter

[With a photo of your group gathered, or a photo of someone making a phone call]

RIGHT NOW: Join me & @StopCorpAbuse in calling on Big Polluters like @Chevron and @ExxonMobil to stay out of climate policy #PollutersOut #ExxonKnew <https://bit.ly/2wyN1yH>


[PRINTABLE PETITIONS]

Tell Big Polluters: Butt Out of climate policy!

We face a planetary emergency. One which your corporations' actions have directly contributed to and exacerbated. You have understood the dangerous climate impacts of burning fossil fuels for decades. And for decades, your actions have not matched the urgency of the crisis.

Enough is enough. We need real climate solutions, and we have no time to waste with dangerous distractions and greenwashing designed to buy polluting corporations more time to keep burning fossil fuels.

We call on you to stay out of climate policy and stop pushing dangerous distractions.

Name	Phone	Address	Email	Please call me! I'd like to help!
<i>Jennifer Garcia</i>	<i>617-695-2525</i>	<i>10 Milk Street. Boston, MA 02108</i>	<i>jgarcia@stopcorporateabuse.org</i>	

Please return to Corporate Accountability campaign headquarters: 10 Milk St., Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

For more information visit: CorporateAccountability.org or call (617) 695-2525