



Science Museum urged to reject funds from oil giants

Adam Vaughan

Environment correspondent

The broadcaster Chris Packham and a former Nasa expert who led early warnings on climate change are among a group of scientists who have urged London's Science Museum to end its partnerships with the oil giants BP, Shell and Equinor.

Packham and James Hansen are among 30 signatories of a complaint to the museum, arguing it is undermining its scientific credibility by taking money from fossil fuel companies.

The group said the museum's internal reports on the oil firms, released under freedom of information rules and seen by the Guardian, show the Science Museum knew about the environmental track records of the companies but approved sponsorship deals anyway. They accuse the museum of breaching its own ethics policy, a charge the institution denies.

Packham said: "Climate change is upon us. We are feeling its teeth tighten and it's not just us - the world's wildlife is beginning to seriously struggle. So I particularly dislike the fact that petrochemical companies are trying to influence young people, and the idea that they have influenced the structure and shape of Science Museum

exhibitions is insidious."

Hansen, who is credited with bringing climate change awareness to the wider public, said: "I'm supporting this complaint because until fossil fuel companies support a rising carbon fee that means they will genuinely pay for the damage they are wreaking, museums of science have a duty not to promote their brands."

The complaint, organised by campaign group Culture Unstained, comes on the eve of Make the Future Live,

Shell's annual "festival" on energy, to be held in London's Olympic park.

Shell's contract with the museum has lapsed but its logo remains on the museum's site. Equinor, the Norwegian state oil firm formerly known as Statoil, sponsors the museum's Wonderlab gallery. BP sponsors a research project called Enterprising Science.

Ian Blatchford, director of the Science Museum Group, said: "I strongly believe we are making the right decisions to secure the long-term future of the museum for the public good, a stance agreed by the board of trustees."



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