

For immediate release

25 scientists from Scientist Rebellion protested in the VW Autostadt against the corporation's influence on politics

Wolfsburg, October 19, 2022. As part of their two-week protest, about 25 scientists* from Scientist Rebellion protested on Wednesday at 14:45 in the Autostadt Wolfsburg against VW's climate-damaging influence on politics. The academics, who came from 12 European countries, pasted large-format scientific articles about the climate crisis and delayed transformation of transport policy on the facade of the entrance hall of the Autostadt. Large banners, which the scientists dressed in lab coats brought with them, displayed: "Lobbyism = Corruption = Climate Crisis" and "Unite against Climate Failure" as well as "1.5°C = Political Fiction". They also attracted attention by spilling fake blood in the entrance area. Moreover, 14 scientists entered the Porsche Pavilion. Some of them glued themselves in front of various luxury cars, in front of which they spread a white cloth showing a speed limit of 100 km/h, while others pasted large-format scientific articles on the walls.

"VW has the most lobby representatives of all car companies in Brussels. They let this cost them over 3 million euros a year. This is how legislative processes are influenced at the European level, and thus lobbyism is just another word for corruption. This form of democracy loss contributes significantly to the escalation of the climate crisis," says Dr. Sébastien Triquenaux, engineer at Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS).

"Lobby representatives of car companies have the cell phone numbers of politicians and thus a constant means of exchange. Meanwhile, people who are most affected by the climate crisis, like children, young people and people from the Global South, cannot influence political processes in Germany at all. This enormous injustice must stop," says Dr. Nana-Maria Grüning, molecular biologist at Charité, University Clinic Berlin, Germany.

"VW has lied to us about the actual emission levels of its diesel engines and continues to lie when they claim they will be carbon neutral by 2050. VW relies on carbon offsetting programs whose effectiveness is highly dubious. VW must stop their greenwashing and their lobbying, which delay urgent climate action," adds Dr. Gianluca Grimalda, social psychologist at the Kiel Institute for the World Economy.

VW spends over 6.5 million on lobbying in Berlin and thereby opposes climate protection measures such as a 100 km/h speed limit and the 9€ ticket for transport. In doing so, VW is contributing to the failure of the Paris climate agreement. The public must be informed about the urgency of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as there is a real possibility of a global catastrophe.

Through its actions of civil resistance, Scientist Rebellion, a coalition of international scientists founded in 2021, demands immediate action to limit the escalating impacts of the climate crisis – nationally and internationally. Traditional science communication and policy advocacy are no longer enough in the face of planetary emergency. As part of the coalition "Unite Against Climate Failure", the academics had set off the fire alarm last Sunday at the World Health Summit taking place in Berlin and pasted scientific publications on the conference building. On Monday, they protested together with "Debt for Climate" at the

Ministry of Finance, calling for debt cancellation for the Global South. On Tuesday, together with "Parents Against the Fossil Industry", they protested in front of the Ministry of Transport for a speed limit and the reintroduction of the 9€ ticket for public transportation.

In addition to Scientist Rebellion, coalition partners of the civil resistance campaign – which has been ongoing since mid-October 2022 – include Letzte Generation, Debt for Climate, End Fossil Occupy, and Jetzt oder Nie - Eltern gegen die Fossilindustrie.

Climate Emergency Fund supports Scientist Rebellion's recruitment, training, capacity-building, and educational efforts.

Photos / videos authorised for immediate use:

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