

14 members of Scientist Rebellion, who occupied the Porsche Pavilion at the Autostadt in Wolfsburg, Germany, for 42 hours and demanded that Volkswagen's CEO advocate for a speed limit, were removed by police

Wolfsburg (Germany), 21 October 2022 - Following a climate protest by 25 academics from Scientist Rebellion which began Wednesday 19th October at the Autostadt in Wolfsburg Germany at around 2:45pm, 14 continued to occupy the Porsche Pavilion for 42 hours. 9 of the academics protesting against VW's damaging influence on politics in addressing climate breakdown had already glued themselves to the ground in front of various luxury car models on Wednesday afternoon and unfurled a banner displaying a speed limit sign for 100 km/h. They demanded that the CEO of Volkswagen, Oliver Blume, engage in a dialogue with them and immediately advocate for a speed limit of 100 km/h throughout Germany. On Friday at 07:30 in the morning, all members of Scientist Rebellion occupying the Porsche Pavilion were removed and arrested by about 40 police in riot gear. One protester had left the action earlier this morning due to a medical emergency and was not permitted to go to hospital until 4 hours later due to the police action.

"As the largest car manufacturer in Europe, Volkswagen emits enormous amounts of carbon dioxide, leading to global climate catastrophe. People are dying, yet Volkswagen continues to lobby to delay climate protection. This must stop immediately. Because scientific reports are not enough, I have glued myself to the Porsche Pavilion to draw attention to the seriousness of the situation," said Dr Marta Matos, a computational biologist who was removed by police this morning.

"The peaceful protest of my fellow scientists asks a simple question: how do the car industry and the German government intend to meet the agreed targets of the Paris Agreement? This requires drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions now and long overdue measures like a speed limit must be implemented. We need a serious dialogue on how the transport sector and especially VW as the largest car manufacturer in Europe – can finally contribute to stopping worsening global heating," said Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Cramer, ecologist and lead author of the IPCC WGII report at the CNRS in France.

"Introducing 100 km/h speed limits on motorways is the order of the day. It significantly reduces the number of accidents as well as fuel consumption and it improves traffic flow. Every day of delay costs lives," adds Prof. Dr. Andreas Knie, mobility and traffic researcher at the Social Science Research Center Berlin.

VW spends over 6.5 million Euros on lobbying in Berlin, thus preventing protective measures such as a 100 km/h speed limit and implementing an ongoing 9€ ticket for public transport. The former would save about 5.4 million tonnes of greenhouse gases annually. It would be a measure that signals that we are in a climate emergency – and must act accordingly. Since VW seemingly does not want to speak out in favour of such a simple measure, it is quite clear that their climate ambitions are hypocritical. With their greenwashing and lobbying, the corporation is contributing to the failure of the Paris Agreement.

With their actions of civil resistance, Scientist Rebellion, a coalition of international scientists founded in 2021, calls for immediate action to limit the climate crisis – nationally and internationally. Classic science communication and policy advice 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 at the World Health Summit taking place in Berlin last Sunday and covered the conference building with scientific publications. On Monday, they protested together with "Debt for Climate" at the Ministry of Finance to obtain debt cancellation for the Global South. On Tuesday, their protest took them to the Ministry of Transport together with "Last Generation" and "Parents Against the Fossil Industry" to demand a speed limit and the reintroduction of the 9€ ticket.

Pictures/videos freely available:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/115VEaQoGMyaREkPLxhchcLTi74GDMgcW?usp=sharing>

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