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US Oil & Gas Sector Used Ukraine to Push Expansion

Analysis unpicks how industry promoted ‘American-made energy’ in response to global shocks

New *research* from climate think tank InfluenceMap shows how the US oil and gas sector utilized the war in Ukraine and higher energy prices to renew its push to expand domestic fossil fuel production.

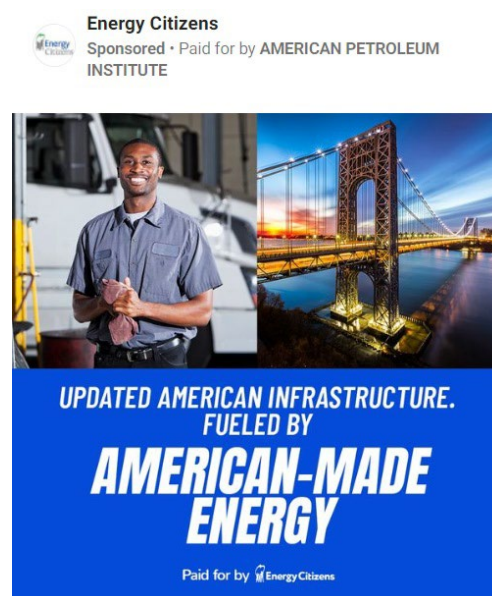
In the lead up to the invasion and the weeks afterward, the sector used various messaging strategies that included misinformation to capture the public narrative on the cause of the energy price crisis. Many of these claims have been debunked by the AFP Fact Check team.

The sector also promoted a greater role for domestic oil and gas production as part of the solution.

One of the key players in this lobbying effort - the **American Petroleum Institute (API)** – used Facebook platforms to push its message of ‘American-made energy’ and ‘American natural gas and oil’, using claims around energy security and US energy independence.

Between January 26 (when the API first specifically referenced the Ukraine crisis) and April 1, the organization created and ran 761 ads via its ‘Energy Citizens’ page. This included an extensive ad campaign promoting US-produced energy and energy independence, consisting of 233 individual ads, which received 19.6 million impressions.

By comparison, in the final three months of 2021, the API’s ‘Energy Citizens’ page created just 67 ads referencing energy/national security or energy independence, which were seen 6 million times.



The report also analyzes public statements from executives at **ConocoPhillips**, **Chevron**, the **American Gas Association**, and others, that have either sought to blame climate policy for the high energy prices or promoted US-produced energy as part of the solution.

In responding to the findings, **US Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)** said: *“It took the industry no time at all to twist the dangerous situation in Ukraine into a financial boon for oil and gas executives and their shareholders. Deploying misinformation to capitalize on an international crisis is straight out of the fossil fuel industry’s well-worn, nasty playbook.”*

Co-founder of Clean Creatives, Christine Arena, said: *“Much attention has been paid to the fossil fuel industry’s demonstrable history of denying climate science. But as InfluenceMap’s analysis reveals, the kind of climate disinformation proliferating since the invasion of Ukraine is more misleading, widespread, and dangerous – with direct participation from industry CEOs and a nearer-term impact on public policy.”*

The report highlights:

- Since the invasion of Ukraine, several of the policy ‘asks’ made by the industry have been successful. For example, the **Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC)** rolled back a plan to consider how gas projects affect climate change and local communities. The sector has also been successful in securing a commitment to speed up approvals for new gas projects.
- Company CEOs, including **Chevron’s Mike Wirth** and **ConocoPhillips’ Ryan Lance**, have both sought to blame climate policies for recent price spikes. Such claims have been found to be misleading by [AFP Fact Check](#).
- At the same time, the sector has opposed state-level policies that would reduce demand for oil and gas. For example, gas bans in new buildings in New York, ethanol mandates in Iowa, and electric vehicle incentives in Virginia.

InfluenceMap Program Manager Faye Holder said: *“The US oil and gas sector has consistently argued for policies that allow for new or increased fossil fuel exploration, and against policies that would reduce demand. But what’s changed in recent months is the intensity of that message. The sector has quickly mobilized around the war in Ukraine and high gas prices to promote the need for more ‘American-made energy’, often relying on potentially misleading or questionable claims.”*

[Click here for full briefing paper](#)

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About InfluenceMap

InfluenceMap is a London-based think tank with offices in Tokyo and New York. It provides data driven analysis on issues related to energy and climate change. Our metrics for measuring corporate influence over climate policy are used by investors, including the global Climate Action 100+ investor engagement process.