Preface

Climate change and a number of other environmental problems are partly, and sometimes mostly, caused by the legitimate activities of large corporations. Corporations, therefore, often control the behaviour that needs to be changed to solve the problem in question. The conventional way of studying the effectiveness of international environmental regimes or domestic environmental policy is to analyse the chain of consequences flowing *from* policy decisions *to* the strategies and behaviour of target groups. In this study, we have turned this research approach upside down by taking non-state target groups, i.e. large corporations, as our point of departure. Instead of starting out with joint international commitments or national policy goals, we have focused on corporate climate strategies. Why do corporations apparently operating within very similar business contexts nevertheless choose different strategies to confront a common problem? Which conditions trigger changes in corporate strategies?

The consequences of this ‘bottom-up’ approach immediately became clear when we planned this study: fact-finding had to start at the corporate level rather than at political level. In two rounds in March and November in 2000, we visited oil companies in the US and Europe. We also talked with representatives of the environmental movement, government authorities and various business organisations. To us as political scientists, the business community represented a new challenge, and our understanding of the sources of corporate strategy choice is coloured by our profession.

We started our work on this study in 1999. Preliminary find-

ings were first presented at a side-event at COP-6 in The Hague in November 2000, and subsequently at a number of workshops and conferences. The positive feedback we received encouraged us to write a book on this topic. We got funding from the Norwegian Research Council's PETROPOL programme. This book would never have materialised, however, without additional financial support from the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Center for International Climate and Environmental Research, Oslo (CICERO), and Department of Political Science at the University of Oslo. Lynn A. Parker Nygaard's help was invaluable. She helped us to make our arguments as logical and consistent as possible, and she provided language editing. Atle Christer Christiansen participated as a fact-finder in the project at an early stage. We have also benefited from his useful comments to earlier drafts. Many scholars have helped us with comments and valuable suggestions for improvements to earlier drafts. We would particularly like to thank Arild Underdal, Jørgen Wettestad, Per Ove Eikeland, Steinar Andresen, Jon Hovi, Asbjørn Torvanger, Asbjørn Aaheim, Dag Harald Claes, Knut Alfsen and Audun Ruud. Last, but not least, we would like to thank representatives of the oil companies, environmental movement and governmental organisations for taking the time to talk with us despite their no doubt tight time schedules.

The responsibility for any errors or misinterpretations rests with the authors.

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