

Subject: RE: Thank you for your message
Date: Wed, 26 Apr 2017 15:25:23 +0000
From: Alan Shepard
To: Kathleen Ruff

Dear Ms. Ruff,

I am responding to your latest email regarding the report *Lessons from the Quebec industry: can there be meaningful dialogue and consensus when facts come up against feelings?*

Thanks for flagging the issue of the broken links and the unclear communications that this may create. In an effort to lessen confusion, we have added information to the site that explains clearly that the report has been withdrawn. You can access this page here: [Update on report](#)

This means that rather than getting a “page not found” notification, users will be redirected to the relevant information.

You will note from that page that, in order to ensure that anyone searching for the report has the proper context, we have made it clear that the report should not be drawn from or cited out of context.

As you correctly state, the report continues to live in the public domain – something that we cannot change. We have reached out to one site we know is housing the report but they have not responded to us.

We have been very clear in our communications with you and with the media who have contacted us that the views and conclusions expressed in the paper, which is not a scientific, peer-reviewed work, are the author’s alone.

As for the issue with the ICA, we again thank you for flagging this issue. We are pleased to advise you that appropriate steps have been taken in this regard and that the association has, in response to those steps, removed from its report the content taken from the study in question.

Link to the reworked report:

http://www.chrysotileassociation.com/data/ICA_Rotterdam-Convention_2017-COP8_v4F.pdf

Regards,

Alan Shepard

President

From: Kathleen Ruff

Sent: April-24-17 4:09 PM

To: Alan Shepard

Subject: Thank you for your message

Dear President Shepard,

Thank you for your message.

I am glad to learn that Concordia University will be acting very soon regarding the request we submitted to you that Concordia:

- Retract the report it published, *Lessons from the Quebec industry: can there be meaningful dialogue and consensus when facts come up against feelings?*
- Instruct the International Chrysotile Association (ICA) to remove the section that the ICA has taken from the Concordia asbestos report to assist the ICA's efforts to prevent the listing of chrysotile asbestos at the Rotterdam Convention Conference of the Parties, which commenced today.

I think it is important to be clear that Concordia did not withdraw its asbestos report. Concordia simply stopped making the report available on Concordia's website.

As I am sure you will agree, if an institution withdraws a publication, this is a serious decision, much more serious than simply stopping making the publication available on the institution's website.

A responsible institution has an obligation to provide a clear statement that the publication has been withdrawn and instruct any academics, scientists, researchers, media and the general public that they should discard any copy they have of the publication. Concordia did not do this. When people went to the Concordia website to access the report, they simply got a message saying: "Page not found. Looks like this page didn't show up for class today", which, I am sure you agree, could mean anything, such as, for example, a technical glitch at Concordia's website.

Currently, anyone who downloaded or obtained a copy of Concordia's asbestos report can accurately and legitimately use the report as a Concordia publication. The purpose of the report is to provide strategic advice to entities involved in controversial initiatives, a purpose which one would expect a university to handle responsibly.

It is also important to be clear that the report Concordia published cannot be dismissed as simply an opinion piece by the author. Concordia would not, I hope, publish a report that said that the scientific evidence shows that the earth is flat and that those who disagree are ignorant of the scientific evidence and are being emotional, not rational. Nor would Concordia, I hope, publish a report that said that the scientific evidence supports burning fossil fuels as

posing no threat to human and environmental health and that those who disagree are ignorant of the scientific evidence and are being emotional, not rational. Concordia would not then, if these reports were criticized, try to justify them by saying they were just "opinion pieces."

The then Dean of Concordia's Business School and/or the senior academics responsible for the Business School peer reviewed and praised Concordia's asbestos report, calling it publicly an example of the excellent work that Concordia produces.

Concordia gave the public assurance that the report met the high academic standards of Concordia. Concordia has not, to date, in spite of repeated requests from leading scientists and academics, retracted the report nor withdrawn its praise of the report.

The issue we have put before you is not about the right to express an opinion or academic freedom of speech. It is about the publication of a report that puts forward inaccurate, misleading information that serves the interests of the asbestos industry and causes harm to human and environmental health and, in our opinion, does not meet academic standards.

We deeply hope for a clear answer from Concordia University to our two clear requests.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Ruff on behalf of the signers