

# EGM 2024

## RESOLUTION 2

*Proposed by 31 SoA members*



## On ending fossil fuel investment in the books industry

Resolution 2 was proposed by 31 members of the Society of Authors. The text that follows is an amended version of the resolution which has been agreed both by the proposers and the SoA Management Committee.

The contextual text in **blue** was added by the Management Committee.

### Context

The Society of Authors recognises the climate and ecological emergencies and believes that there can be no more new investments in fossil fuels if we want a liveable future. We support calls from Fossil Free Books for a books industry free from fossil fuel finance.

As a signatory of [Publishing Declares](#), the Society of Authors believes that as storytellers, creators, and educators, we and our members have a unique role to play in the climate crisis. We have a responsibility to use our collective voice to inspire positive change, as we reduce our impact and transform our ways of working.

The publishing industry has made important steps in recent years to improve the carbon impact of its practices. The SoA has supported this work as a signatory to Publishing Declares, working actively and closely with the cross-industry [Sustainability Industry Forum](#) and other groups to drive change across industry. We have launched our own working group, a sustainability network for members, and the [Tree to Me](#) campaign – which has been endorsed by the Sustainability Industry Forum – to help authors start conversations about sustainability with publishers and readers. We encourage all authors to support and get involved with this work.

### Resolution 2

In 2021, Fatih Birol, the executive director of the International Energy Agency, [told the Guardian](#), ‘If governments are serious about the climate crisis, there can be no new investments in oil, gas and coal, from now – from this year.’ In 2022, the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#) stressed that new fossil fuel developments are ‘incompatible with limiting warming to 1.5C’. But in October 2023, [Reclaim Finance](#) demonstrated that too many of the biggest financial institutions ‘do not have the basic policies and financing targets ... to massively increase their support for sustainable power and to immediately stop supporting the expansion of fossil fuels.’

**We invite the membership to consider and vote on the following statement and actions:**

*The SoA recognises the urgent need for action, and the influence that publishing and the creative industries can have in this. As such, the SoA believes we must achieve a publishing industry free from fossil fuel finance.*

*The SoA believes this must be done as soon as possible and in a way that protects jobs and livelihoods in the publishing and energy industries.*

*To this end, firstly, the SoA calls on financial institutions with ties (for example, through sponsorship or other partnerships) to the publishing industry to divest from fossil fuel companies as soon as possible and in a way that protects jobs and livelihoods in the publishing and energy industries.*

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*The SoA will write to these financial institutions to this effect, individually and / or as a group, capacity allowing.*

*To this end, secondly, the SoA calls on institutions in the publishing industry being supported (for example, through sponsorship or other partnerships) by financial institutions that invest in fossil fuel companies to write to these institutions and ask them to divest from fossil fuel companies as soon as possible and in a way that protects jobs and livelihoods in the publishing and energy industries.*

*The SoA will write to such institutions in the publishing industry to this effect, individually and/or as a group, capacity allowing.*

*To this end, thirdly, the SoA calls on institutions in the publishing industry which invest in fossil fuel companies to make and implement strategies to divest from fossil fuel companies as soon as possible and in a way that protects jobs and livelihoods in the publishing and energy industries.*

*The SoA will write to such institutions in the publishing industry to this effect, individually and/or as a group, capacity allowing.*

*In addition:*

- 1. The SoA commits to continuing to support the right of authors to free speech supporting fossil fuel divestment or sustainability initiatives, subject to the limits set by international human rights law and standards, and in line with its policies in particular where authors feel pressured by publishers or events organisers not to express their views on these subjects publicly.*
- 2. The SoA urges all of its members to engage with their publishers and readers to support Tree To Me and Publishing Declares and to use their voices to inspire positive change, as we reduce our impact and transform our ways of working.*

*Our members authorise us in these actions on their behalf giving notice of the above resolutions.*

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The Society of Authors is a company registered in England No. 00019993 and an independent trade union