NRGI’s National Oil Company Database is designed to advance public knowledge of state-owned oil companies around the world. The freely accessible website includes standardized and contextualized data for 71 national oil companies (NOCs) covering production, revenues and spending. NOC transparency has improved over recent years. However, for many companies key financial data, such as those related to revenues, are either unavailable or reported after a significant delay. Some major industry players (e.g., the state companies of the UAE and Bahrain) and NOCs responsible for significant national revenue generation (e.g., in Gabon and South Sudan) report almost none of the financial data essential to understanding performance. In this update to the NOC Database, there is new data available for 20 NOCs, including data on nine companies for 2021.

The dramatic fall in oil prices in 2020 prompted companies to cut capital expenditures. On average, NOCs 2020 capex reductions were the highest seen in the years covered by the NOC Database (2011-2020). However, variances among NOCs is vast, and some actually increased CAPEX in spite of the price fall, including GNPC and NNPC. The way a company responds to short-term price fluctuations may indicate how its spending will change, or not, in the face of the longer-term market decline expected as the energy transition unfolds.

The latest database update confirms that NOC fiscal transfers to governments generally rise when oil prices increase and fall when prices decline. However, amounts transferred vary widely among NOCs. In 2020, the total transfers to governments by companies reporting this information amounted to $377 billion. This is more than half of the over $600 billion that Rystad estimates governments received from oil and gas tax revenues. The few companies that have disclosed data on 2021 so far report more revenue transfers to government due to higher oil prices.

15 companies in the NOC database have long-term liabilities greater than 5% of their home country’s total GDP in 2020, a number that has been higher in past years (18 NOCs in 2015), but some companies with historically high debt have not reported 2020 data. High debt is of particular concern when equity is low or negative, as in the case of PEMEX in Mexico. The energy transition could result in hundreds of billions of dollars of NOC investments in new projects becoming stranded, potentially increasing NOC debt burdens and placing broader economic sustainability at risk.

Explore the database: www.nationaloilcompanydata.org