

## **Petition to Ban Hydraulic Fracturing for Shale Gas in Ireland**

We the undersigned call on the Irish government to place an immediate and permanent ban on the process known as Hydraulic Fracturing ('Fracking') and all related preparatory and exploratory work in the Republic of Ireland.

This horizontal drilling process involves the pumping of millions of gallons of water, mixed with hundreds of highly toxic chemicals, thousands of feet deep into the ground.

Already in the U.S.A and Australia, pollution caused by this process to land, to air, to surface water and to groundwater has resulted in a terrible health toll and catastrophic environmental damage.

Countless cases of death have been reported among wildlife and livestock. A litany of serious 'fracking' related health problems for people in communities in areas where this technology has been used have also come to light.

Because of this damning body of evidence, which includes academic reports (1), moratoria on 'fracking' have been put in place in the state of New York, in the state of New Jersey, in the North Rhine Westphalia (Germany), in South Africa and in France.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has only recently begun an investigation into the safety of the process. Their final report is not expected until 2014. At present in Ireland there is no regulation in existence that covers this extraction method, and there has been no research published into the potential consequences of such activity here.

Presently, a number of oil and gas companies who have already been granted exploratory licences, are preparing to use this process to profit from shale gas in the Lough Allen and Clare Basin Regions – an area which includes twelve counties (2).

If this is allowed the aftermath may be an irreversible disaster for us and our environment. It may result in the contamination of our water table, and of Ireland's most extensive and important river and lake network. We will not allow the safety of our water and the health of our children to be put at risk in return for temporary jobs and a quick-fix and unsustainable energy project.

1. See <http://nofrackingireland.wordpress.com/reports/>

2. Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo, Donegal, Cavan, Monaghan, Clare, Limerick, Cork, Kerry & Fermanagh (N.I.)

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