

Harkin urges citizens to "make your voices heard" in EU fracking consultation

Ireland North & West MEP Marian Harkin today (20 December) welcomed the European Commission's launch of a public consultation on shale gas and hydraulic fracturing and called on Irish citizens to make "full, detailed and targeted" submissions.

Harkin, who has monitored the fracking issue closely at EU and Irish level for a number of years, hailed the Commission's move as "the right thing to do, and the only appropriate response to the growing concern expressed by myself, other public representatives and citizens, that stronger rules and greater powers of enforcement - both at European and national level - are needed for all shale gas activities, including hydraulic fracturing".

The Independent MEP noted that "this consultation is likely to identify significant gaps in EU legislation - such as the need for a Mining Directive, the necessity to expand the remit of the Environmental Impact Directive and gaps in the Water Framework Directive - but it is also a clear opportunity for concerned citizens, both individuals and action groups - to express their views from an Irish perspective".

While emphasising that "it is strictly up to each member state to legislate for fracking," Harkin argued that "this Europe-wide consultation affords Irish citizens a chance to input into highly influential EU guidelines, expected to be published in 2014".

"Now is the chance to have your say; to bring to the attention of policymakers your concerns in regard to fracking; to highlight the various studies and assessments which back up your arguments: in essence, to have some input as a citizen into the drafting of European guidelines on fracking," the Independent MEP concluded.

Contributions are particularly sought from the oil and gas sector, environmental non-governmental organisations, geological surveys, scientists, experts in the management of industrial risks, national and local authorities and citizens at large:

Link for submissions:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/uff_en.htm

Further information from:
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Marian Harkin MEP
Winner MEP of the Year Award 2011 &

Ph: 086-8341758

Sligo Office: 071-9145888

Website: www.marianharkin.ie

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/marianharkin>

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/marianharkin