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## **Unconventional gas production**

Reports, information and news about the unconventional gas production and gas search in Germany, Europe and the rest of the world

### **Overview of political initiatives regarding unconventional gas extraction.**

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Currently, there are a number of policy initiatives to the unconventional gas production.

Many districts and villages of NRW have taken decisions to reject unconventional gas production in their field. That is the case also in southern Lower Saxony. Basically, such decisions have no legal but a political and social relevance.

The countries of North Rhine-WESTPHALIA and Baden-Wuerttemberg have decided that for the time being, no promotion of unconventional gas resources is permitted. Again, the legal relevance is questionable. In theory, companies could prosecute their right to test drilling, but that would be neither politically nor socially currently enforce.

The land North Rhine-WESTPHALIA submitted a request in the Bundesrat amending of Bergrechts and for the implementation of compulsory environmental impact assessments. The process is the official way of federal States, initiate changes to federal laws and is mainly chosen by opposition parties.

This application will be considered at the moment of the committees of the Federal Council. Only the Committee has already rejected the application with the majority of CDU and FDP. In Lower Saxony Economics Minister bode (FDP) the result presented premature and contrary to the usual confidentiality as a victory for his position. He wants to prevent this public participation and environmental impact assessments will be compulsory for exploration and development drilling.

The Committee on regional development adopted the request, however, apparently. It was however still not publicly made from Joerg bode. Committee on the environment of the Federal Council is expected to only discuss at its next meeting the topic on the 20 October 2011. Committee on the environment, SPD, Greens and the left have a clear majority. Chairman is

the Minister of environment of Lower Saxony, Germany Hans-Heinrich Sander (FDP).

A hearing of experts of the Federal Council was also announced for the autumn. Ultimately, the House of the Federal Council decides whether an application to change the Bergrechtes from NRW is accepted or rejected. The country NRW for this already actively advertises in the other Länder. In the past, applications were accepted by opposition parties but only in exceptional cases.

Applications of the left and the Greens on prohibition or restriction of the unconventional gas production are currently discussed in the committees of the Bundestag. It was first written comments shortly before the summer break. This week, a hearing of experts of the Bundestag for the fall was also approved.

After initial confusion about the two separate hearings of Federal Council and Parliament, is being discussed now on a joint hearing. The result is still open.

At the national level is at the moment the statement of Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen, that no Fracking can take place as long as there is no secure evidence about the risks. A study of the Federal Environment Ministry is to provide the secure knowledge that is so far not yet advertised.

The statement of Environment Minister has while political, but no legal relevance.

At European level, there are also several initiatives. In addition to the requirement of a European moratorium on unconventional gas production, there are efforts, be offset against the cost of intervention on the price of gas transmitted so far by the gas industry to the company.

In Brussels, it is also prepared include the technology "Hydraulic Fracturing" Seveso III - in the directive on the "control of major accidents involving dangerous substances" - called.