



Information letter for those to whom fracking matters and updates on the website FFI

**Thanks to all for your contribution**

contact: [ineke@frackingfreeireland.org](mailto:ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)

visit: [www.frackingfreeireland.org](http://www.frackingfreeireland.org)

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## **EVENTS and other small CAMPAIGN news**

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**Chris Coffey** ([chriscoffey.11@gmail.com](mailto:chriscoffey.11@gmail.com)) **did set up facebook for Cork!**

<http://www.facebook.com/FrackingFreeCorkGroup>

and **Sian Cowman** [siancowman@gmail.com](mailto:siancowman@gmail.com) hopes to help him with the group and organising some speakers to come to Cork. Both are students UCC

'My homeplace is near Carrick, so this is a campaign that is close to my heart. I'm interning with **Young Friends of the Earth** for the summer, and I've been in touch with Nuala about the youth activism training weekend I'm organising - <http://www.eventbrite.ie/event/3895750294> (also on Fb at <https://www.facebook.com/events/362145050518892/> ) '

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Reporter: Sian Cowman [siancowman@gmail.com](mailto:siancowman@gmail.com)

**Young Friends of the Earth Network Gathering 2012**

**Friday, September 7, 2012 at 5:00 PM - Sunday, September 9, 2012 at 5:00 PM (PT)**

**Drumshanbo, Ireland**

We are organising a weekend away as an opportunity for you to meet young people from all over Ireland who feel that there is a pressing need for solutions for the environmental crisis our world faces. Space for discussion and idea-sharing is an important part of planning and taking action for environmental justice, and this gathering aims to do just that.

As well as sharing ideas and inspiration, the gathering aims to provide a solid, practical training in college environmental campaigning: how to run a successful college society, how to organise a Freshers' Week, how to facilitate a meeting, and much more.

We will also be hearing from local community activists who are campaigning to stop hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in the area.

The weekend is fully funded by the Youth in Action programme. We will be staying in a beautiful location near the village of Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim. A local education centre is providing us with both beds and workshop space. ....

<http://www.eventbrite.ie/event/3895750294>

## Conference

**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Environment Ireland Thursday 13 Sept. 2012 Dublin**  
**With a.o. Phil Hogan, TD and Alex Attwood, MLA**

<http://www.environmentireland.ie/programme.php>

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## **GLOBAL CAMPAIGN NEWS**

### **Conference on shale gas 10-11-12 October, Brussels.**

**Reporter: Antoine Simon (Friends of the Earth Europe)**

After the (very) disappointing last-minute cancellation of the conference on shale gas in May, we've been working on trying to organise on our side (not linked with the Greens this time) an event where we could meet with campaigners and talk about a concrete strategic plan of activities at the European level. We finally set a final date for that meeting that will take place in Brussels and that will be organised by Friends of the Earth Europe.

It will happen on the 10-11-12th of October, two weeks before the vote of the two reports on shale gas that are currently being discussed at the European Parliament. It will then be the perfect moment to discuss with 30 other people working on shale gas and coming from local/regional/national groups of around a dozen of European countries. The main objective is to discuss about how to coordinate our campaigns and to find a way to realize the various commitments that have been taken recently during various international meetings against shale gas (Alternative Water Forum in Marseille and Rio Summit in particular). I'll circulate a proper agenda after the summer but the idea is to find concrete ways to achieve our objectives through activities we could jointly work on. We would also like to use the last day (Friday the 12th) to offer the opportunity to the participants to meet with MEPs from their country in order to deliver them our shared positions, which is key, only two weeks before the vote of the two reports I mentioned earlier in this email.

**Ineke has accepted the invitation to represent Ireland and will talk about the Irish situation.**

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**Think globally!**

**This is our opportunity to get our act together!**  
**Let's participate and let Ireland's anti fracking voice be heard on the global stage!**  
**(contact details of groups at the end of the newsletter)**

**INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST FRACKING 22 SEPTEMBER**  
(see also newsletter 35-12 (70))

Reporters: Gabriella and Geert

**Dear friends, allies and colleagues,**

Following regional/international meetings in Marseille (The Alternative World Water Forum - March 2012) and in Rio (Peoples' Summit - June 2012) as

well as discussions with many groups, there is a growing consensus among the anti-fracking movements around the world that we need a global anti-fracking day to mobilize locally and to build solidarity among our movements. **(Susan Griffin represented Ireland in Marseille)**

The local, regional and national groups in the United States have chosen a day to do a massive national 'frackdown' in the United States - \*22 September 2012\*. It would be fantastic if we could turn this into a GLOBAL day against fracking, a GLOBAL FRACKDOWN!

Since fracking started in the United States and is now being exported across the world, we would like to invite movements around the world to join us on the \*22 September 2012\* in mobilizing locally and nationally to fight against this invasive and harmful practice.

A coordinated global day of action will allow us to push back in a powerful way against the industry's propaganda, maximize media attention at a critical time, and highlight local efforts.

**A website will be built allowing people to find information, upload their activities, sign up to petitions etc. And the message should be clear:**

\*Fracking is inherently unsafe and should not be part of our energy future. It should be banned. Groups in the United States who sign on to participate in their day of action will support the following mission statement:\*

\*Fracking for oil and gas is inherently unsafe and the harms of fracking cannot be fully mitigated by regulation. We reject the multi-million dollar public relations campaign by big oil and gas companies and urge our local, state, and national officials to reject fracking. We stand united as a global movement in calling on governmental officials at all levels to pursue a renewable energy future and not allow fracking in our communities or any communities. Fracking is not part of our vision for a clean energy future and should be banned.\*

So please join us and spread the word! This can be our global anti-fracking day! A day to show companies and governments around the world that we will not let them destroy our water, land, air and health. We have stopped them before and we will stop them again.

Please forward this to any groups or list-serves who could be interested and please help us translate it into any language that could help spread the message.

Once the website is up, we will send around information on how to access it.

For more information, please contact - Geert deCock [gdecock@fweurope.org](mailto:gdecock@fweurope.org) and Gabriella Zanzanaini [gzanaini@fweurope.org](mailto:gzanaini@fweurope.org)

In Solidarity,

Gabriella and Geert

Gabriella Zanzanaini Food & Water Europe, Rue d'Edimbourg 26, Brussels 1050, Belgium tel: +32 (0) 2893 1045 mobile: +32 (0)488 409 662 [gzanaini@fweurope.org](mailto:gzanaini@fweurope.org)  
[www.foodandwatereurope.org](http://www.foodandwatereurope.org)

We would like to collect as many signatures and logos as possible before launching the website so that we can go out with a big bang.

**FRACKING FREE IRELAND HAS SEND IN THE LOGO GUARANTEED FRACKING FREE (as we did for another statement last year)**

# **Global Frackdown!: An International Day to Stop Fracking September 22, 2012 Be There, or Be Fracked!**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENT FORM**

**Fracking for natural gas and oil** poses a direct and immediate threat to our drinking water, air, health and communities. The oil and gas industry has been ramping up its massive multi-million dollar PR campaign to convince the public and elected officials their dirty gas and oil is clean. Its time to fight back with a Global Frackdown!

As a movement to ban fracking, we have collectively achieved a tremendous amount. In the past year, together we have passed over 200 local measures across the United States to ban fracking, we have stopped fracking in Bulgaria and France, pushed for moratoriums in multiple regions in Europe, obtained a moratorium on fracking in South Africa, we have defeated state legislation that would have expanded fracking and the state of Vermont has banned fracking completely. We have stopped plans to open the Delaware River Basin to fracking and are working to stop pipelines and facilities to export fracked gas from coast to coast.

This fall, the oil and gas industry will be escalating their pro-fracking propaganda even further and our elected officials – some of whom are running scared – need to hear the truth in a powerful way from their constituents. It's time to expose the oil and gas industry's propaganda for what it is. It's time to hold our elected officials accountable. It's time for a Global Frackdown!

**Why a Global Day to Ban Fracking?** Because there is a tremendous amount of anti-fracking activity across the world. In the United States alone, hundreds of local organizations are working to protect their communities from fracking. All over the world, local communities are putting pressure on their elected official to ban fracking. The industry gets their power from their ability to divide us and defuse our power. A coordinated global day of action will allow us to push back in a powerful way against the industry's propaganda, maximize media attention at a critical time, and highlight local efforts.

This Fall, the United States will be debating the direction of our energy future, similar debates are happening elsewhere I the world. Unconventional gas is being promoted as a solution to a low carbon future. This is our collective opportunity to say fracking is not the answer. It is inherently unsafe, cannot be safely regulated, and should be banned.

**What is the Message of the Global Frackdown?** The message of the day of action is clear – fracking is inherently unsafe and should not be part of our energy future. It should be banned. Groups who sign on to participate in the day of action support the following mission statement:

Fracking for oil and gas is inherently unsafe and the harms of fracking cannot be fully mitigated by regulation. We reject the multi-million dollar public relations campaign by big oil and gas companies and urge our local, state, and national officials to reject fracking. We stand united as a global movement in calling on governmental officials at all levels to pursue a renewable energy future and not allow fracking in our communities or any communities. Fracking is not part of our vision for a clean energy future and should be banned.

### **What will organizations get out of participating?**

- An opportunity to increase media attention locally by tying local events to the global day of action
- Create a powerful counter-narrative to the industry PR push though coordinated, unified actions across the world
- Sample materials to use for the day of action, including media advisory template, event

- page to track registrations, and template editable flyers
- Opportunity to build your organization by being part of a growing, powerful, meaningful and winning movement
- Event featured on Global Frackdown Website and link to your organization and event

## What types of events should we do?

Events should be fun, creative, and locally relevant. The idea is to use a global day of action to amplify what is happening and needed locally. Some ideas include:

- Protests outside elected officials' office
- Street theater outside oil or gas company headquarters
- Film screening of Gasland or Spilt Estate
- Petition gathering action
- Work in community to generate phone calls to key decision makers
- Visibility event at key intersection with signs
- Assemblies / pot luck about fracking with community members

## YES! WE WANT TO ENDORSE AND PARTICIPATE IN GLOBAL FRACKDOWN: AN INTERNATIONAL DAY TO STOP FRACKING

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, contact: Gabriella Zanzanaini – [gzanaini@fweurope.org](mailto:gzanaini@fweurope.org) and Geert De Cock – [gdecock@fweurope.org](mailto:gdecock@fweurope.org)

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### PLEASE ADD/CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESSES

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Sian Cowman [siancowman@gmail.com](mailto:siancowman@gmail.com)

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### WHAT YOU MUST/CAN DO

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- Do not sit on the fence
- participate in global frackdown
- Contact your local group (for contact details scroll down or visit <http://frackingfreeireland.org/contact/contact-local-groups/>)
- share your ideas by meetings, posting on facebook/websites/google groups etc.
- keep in touch to ineke ([ineke@frackingfreeireland.org](mailto:ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)) to post your ideas in the newsletter

## Friends of the Earth appeal to call Phil Hogan about Climate Change Targets

From our campaigner

I just got this from **FOE**. For anyone who might have responded to the public consultation on climate change in April, especially.

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Phil Hogan is dragging his heels on climate action. Hundreds of our supporters like you responded to the Department of Environment's Public Consultation on climate change earlier this year. The Minister's Climate Action Roadmap promises that the results of this consultation would be published by the end of June. Now the Department says they don't know when they will be published.

**We want you to call the Minister's office on 01 888 2403 and ask when the results will be published.** You will get through to one of the staff who's job it is to log calls from the public. Simply explain you want to know about the public consultation results and ask them to get back to you with an answer. If you responded to the consultation it makes sense to mention this. Otherwise you're just an interested member of the public who wants to see the results of the consultation.

The public consultation was a 63 question long survey and people went to some trouble to participate. The consultation closed at the end of April. There is no excuse for a delay in publishing the results. The Minister launched the consultation saying he wanted it to be open and inclusive, now he should have nothing to hide. Let's have the public's views on climate out in the open. So, please phone Phil today on 01 888 2403. Don't let him skid to a halt on the Roadmap.

Your Friends of the Earth Team, Oisín, Molly and JoAnne.

P.S. We are also still looking for people in the following constituencies who can come with us and meet their TD: Cork South Central, Dublin North, Dublin North East, Dublin South East, Laois-Offaly, Longford-Westmeath, Louth-Meath East, Roscommon-South Leitrim. If want to get involved please reply to this email.

This today from FOE:

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Yesterday we asked you to ring Minister Hogan's office to ask when the results of the public consultation would be published. And many, many of you did, thank you! The good news is that the Department were on to us pretty sharpish. They reassured us that there is no intentional delay in publishing the results. The volume of submissions, over 600, has meant a lot of work of compile the analysis. Callers who sent us feedback reported being told that publication would be between 2 weeks and 2 months, so before the Autumn political season begins. Minister Hogan also gave a written answer to a parliamentary question on this issue yesterday. He said "My Department is at an advanced stage in working through these submissions and the overview will be made available online as soon as possible". He also reiterated his commitment to publishing the draft Climate Bill before the end of 2012. See here: <http://bit.ly/SGvFSI?i=1340728568454023292> So thank you keeping up the pressure for climate action. Together with you we will continue to make sure the Government delivers on its climate commitments. Thank you, Oisín, Molly and JoAnne Your Friends of the Earth team P.S. An update on the Food Harvest 2020 controversy: <http://bit.ly/O9UIQj?i=1340728568454023292> A couple of weeks ago we asked you to email Simon Coveney about

the inadequate assessment of the environmental impact of Food Harvest 2020. The Government is still playing "Alice in Wonderland" wordgames to claim it isn't a Government plan but they did extend the deadline for the public consultation. Friends of the Earth was involved in four submissions as a result with various allies. There was also some press coverage, and now the European Commission has announced it is launching an investigation of whether proper procedures were followed. You can read the submissions and press coverage here: <http://bit.ly/O9UIQj?i=1340728568454023292>

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Friends of the Earth, 9 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2, Ireland Tel : 353 1 6394652 Email :

## CORRESPONDENCE – SAMPLE LETTERS

**(SAMPLE) Letter** Received from Chris,  
**Please use this letter as a format, compose your own letter... WRITE!**

Sir,

I'm writing in regards **to the article by Ronan Mc Greevey 'Dangers from Fracking 'very Low' if done correctly' published in your paper Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup>**. Both the article, and the Euroscience Open Forum's discussion on which it was reporting, appeared to be little more than an advertisement for Hydraulic fracturing in Ireland. A measured debate on the safety and environmental issues associated with fracking in Ireland is undoubtedly needed. However a conference that, as Mr McGreevey noted, contained not a single voice critical of fracking can hardly be considered a measured debate by any stretch of the imagination. I think it is fair to say that the article maintained a positive tone towards fracking throughout. This is quite a feat considering it also states fracking has been responsible for an earthquake in Blackpool in the UK, can contaminate groundwater aquifers and that problems associated with fracking in the US were not just solely due to well casings not being secure enough.

Little research has been carried out on the possible effects of Fracking on human health and the environment. However scientific studies on the dangers associated with it are beginning to mount, with recent articles in the journals *Groundwater* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* in the US pointing to serious water safety and environmental concerns, not to mention the often terrifying anecdotal evidence of widespread environmental damage and drinking water contamination in fracked areas of the US and Australia.

The Euroscience open forum's 'discussion' on fracking appears to have been little more than a mouthpiece for those in support of the fracking industry and sadly Mr McGreevy's article followed suit. Debate on the issue of fracking needs voices from both sides of the spectrum in order for the people of Ireland to make an informed decision on the future of hydraulic fracturing in Ireland.

Yours etc...

Chris Coffey, Corcaigh

**Dangers from fracking 'very low' if done correctly** (14 July 2012)  
<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/0714/1224320063674.html>

## **Terri Jackson and the counter attack!**

Received from Michael Cairns [mcairns@notforshale.com](mailto:mcairns@notforshale.com)

be interesting to see what terri jackson hits back with now..

maybe she is out of ideas in content to write in..

## **Letter by Teri Jackson in the BT**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/IrishNewsArticle13-7-20121.jpg>

## **AND ALL THE RESPONSES**

### **Expensive option – Tom White**

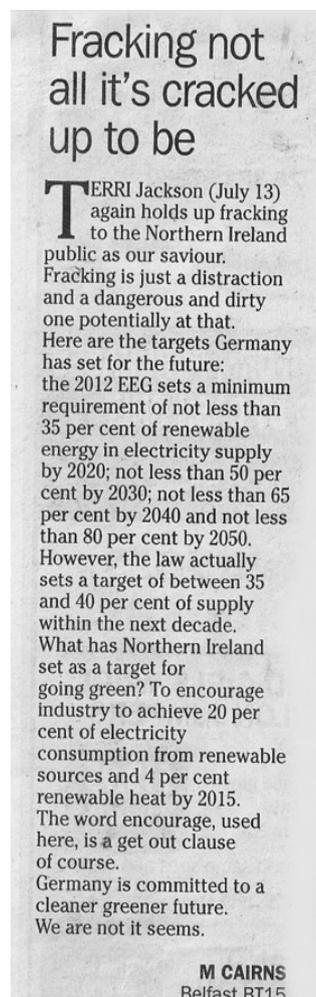
<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/IrishNewsArticleFour19-7-2012.jpg>

### **Fracking not all it's cracked up to be – M. Cairns**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/IrishNewsArticleOne19-7-2012.jpg>

### **Health warning – Fr. Joe McVeigh**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/IrishNewsArticleTwo19-7-2012.jpg>



## **We can make our minds up about fracking – GERALYN McCARRON**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/BelfastTelegraphArticle17-7-2012.jpg>

## **Some correspondence between Charlie Williams and (the Office of )the Tánaiste**

(full correspondence on [fracking-ireland@googlegroups.com](mailto:fracking-ireland@googlegroups.com))

*Reply by (the Office of )the Tánaiste*

"Food Harvest 2020 was developed by an industry-led committee whose wide membership included representatives of the food and drink industry, state agencies, academia, farm bodies and other interested stakeholders. The report that was produced is a high-level strategic policy document for industry and therefore is not in the category of a public plan or programme in accordance with the definition set out in Directive 2001/42/EC

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Directive:

(a) "plans and programmes" shall mean plans and programmes, including those co-financed by the European Community, as well as any modifications to them:

- which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and

- which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions;

. Implementation of many of the key measures needed to achieve the growth figures set out in the report is a matter for private sector actors including industry and individual farmers.

Coordination of the state contribution to Food Harvest 2020 is being overseen by a High Level Implementation Committee (HLIC), chaired by Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney. This Committee consists of representatives from Bord Bia, Teagasc, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Enterprise Ireland, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and this Department. The HLIC also engages regularly with various private sector groups with a key role in Food Harvest.

Notwithstanding that the Food Harvest 2020 Report did not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment, the HLIC decided it would be appropriate that an analysis of environmental impacts should be undertaken to inform the implementation of measures by all relevant actors, including those in the private sector. The committee recognised that the broad strategic targets in the report could be achieved in a variety of ways and determined that the environmental analysis should be of various possible scenarios related to realisation of the broad production targets in the report. It was

felt that this analysis was appropriate as the high level strategic nature of the report does not contain specific implementation plans open to analysis.

Following this determination by the HLIC, an independent team of consultants has been procured, and is currently undertaking a detailed analysis of the likely environmental impacts of the achievement of the targets set out in the Food Harvest 2020 Report. The team is due to present an interim report in the coming weeks with a final report due in October.

The analysis will substantially follow the process of strategic environmental assessment as set out in Directive 2001/42/EC. It will include the likely impacts of achieving the targets, through a number of scenarios, on:

- biodiversity,
- flora/fauna,
- water, including groundwater quality,
- soil,
- air quality,
- landscape and
- climatic factors including impacts on greenhouse gas emission levels.

The Department is facilitating public consultation for the process, and in this regard details of the consultation were posted on the Department's website on 11 May 2012 and advertised in the Irish Independent on 16 May 2012 with a closing date of 28 June 2012. On request, this closing date was subsequently extended to 6 July 2012. This represents a consultation period of some eight weeks. The closing date for submissions was set originally for the end of June in order to allow sufficient time for the consultants to properly consider submissions before the finalisation of their interim report. However, in the event of any further submissions being received after the deadline, the Department will also forward these to the consultants."

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*and reply by Charlie*

One of the recent studies on hydraulic shale gas fracturing which Confirmed: Fracking can pollute

## **New Study: Fluids From Marcellus Shale Likely Seeping Into PA Drinking Water**

And here the full study:

Geochemical evidence for possible natural migration of Marcellus Formation brine to shallow aquifers in Pennsylvania

The debate surrounding the safety of shale gas development in the Appalachian Basin has generated increased awareness of drinking water quality in rural communities. Concerns include the potential for migration of stray gas, metal-rich formation brines, and hydraulic fracturing and/or flowback fluids to drinking water aquifers. A critical question common to these environmental risks is the hydraulic connectivity between the shale gas formations and the overlying shallow drinking water aquifers. We present geochemical evidence from northeastern Pennsylvania showing that pathways, unrelated to recent drilling activities, exist in some locations between deep underlying formations and shallow drinking water aquifers. Integration of chemical data (Br, Cl, Na, Ba, Sr, and Li) and isotopic ratios ( $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ ,  $2\text{H}/\text{H}$ ,  $^{18}\text{O}/^{16}\text{O}$ , and  $^{228}\text{Ra}/^{226}\text{Ra}$ ) from this and previous studies in 426 shallow groundwater samples and 83 northern Appalachian brine samples suggest that mixing relationships between shallow ground water and a deep formation brine causes groundwater salinization in some locations. The strong geochemical fingerprint in the salinized ( $\text{Cl} > 20 \text{ mg/L}$ ) groundwater sampled from the Alluvium, Catskill, and Lock Haven aquifers suggests possible migration of Marcellus brine through naturally occurring pathways. The occurrences of saline water do not correlate with the location of shale-gas wells and are consistent with reported data before rapid shale-gas development in the region; however, the presence of these fluids suggests conductive pathways and specific geostructural and/or hydrodynamic regimes in northeastern Pennsylvania that are at increased risk for contamination of shallow drinking water resources, particularly by fugitive gases, because of natural hydraulic connections to deeper formations.

Just to show one more brick of the wall.

Fracking isn't safe. Keep in mind Ireland's reputation for sound agriculture and farming...



Reporter: Des Guckian [dguicks@yahoo.com](mailto:dguicks@yahoo.com)

### **Re 5 th June meeting of certain Cllrs from Leitrim with Min Fergus O'Dowd.**

I find it amazing that Cllr Gerry Dolan, one of our best supporters and advocates, was not even informed of this meeting.

I'm somewhat disappointed at the reactions of Cllrs Kenny and Bohan to the meeting -- too trusting of the Minister etc.

As reported in The Leitrim Observer, all that the Minister did was reiterate THE FORMAL TIME-LINE and gave no assurances and nothing new.

It amounts to nothing more than what I call "a huddle of politicians" where they pretend that they will defend us without any care for their lives and limbs, but all the time they are playing that old game of pretence and mass deception

Des

## **MARBLE ARCHE CAVES**

Reporter: Andy Pollak <mailto:a.pollak@qub.ac.uk>

### **A Note from the Next Door Neighbours (71) a geological 90 second read**

July 2012

Centre for Cross Border logo

#### **A CROSS-BORDER GEOPARK THAT LEADS THE WORLD**

Fermanagh in the 1980s didn't have much going for it. A remote place – in European, British and Irish terms – with a declining agricultural sector and a small inflow of tourists, largely for the boating on Lough Erne, and the seemingly endless misery of the Northern Irish conflict making both everyday life and economic activity enormously problematic.

Sometime in the early years of that horrible decade a small group of visionary people in Fermanagh Council – led by chief executive Gerry Burns and director of tourism John Crichton – came up with an idea to promote a different kind of tourism in the county. 90 years earlier a French cave explorer, Edouard Martel, and a young Irish scientist, Lyster Jameson, had discovered the Marble Arch Caves, south of Enniskillen and north of Cuilcagh Mountain on the border with Cavan. This extensive cave system was formed some 330 million years ago during the Carboniferous geological period out of the fossil-rich limestone caused by the accumulation of mud at the bottom of the tropical sea which then covered Ireland. Its spectacular galleries, often following fast-flowing underground rivers, contain a marvellous array of stalactites, translucent mineral veils and cascades of calcite.

The Fermanagh Council group were well ahead of their time in wanting to make Marble Arch Caves the centre of a new kind of sustainable and educational tourism in north-west Ireland. In 1985 the caves were opened to the public and started to attract a growing stream of visitors, helped by an attractive and well-fitted out visitor centre. In 1998 the adjoining Cuilcagh Mountain Park was opened, fulfilling a vital conservation function as a place where a large concentration of endangered blanket bog – among the most unspoilt in Ireland – could be preserved.

In 2000 Richard Watson, the Caves manager (who has been in charge since the beginning), took a call from a geologist in the Geological Survey of Ireland, John Morris, who had been active in cross-border activities with his counterparts in the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland. Morris had heard about a seminar in Spain to discuss the new concept of 'geoparks', which he told Watson was 'exactly what you're doing at Marble Arch'. The concept was the identification, preservation and sensitive development of areas with a geological heritage of international significance where that heritage would be used to support local communities through sustainable tourism.

In the following year Marble Arch Caves became the first UNESCO-endorsed geopark in the United Kingdom, and one of the first eight in Europe. In 2007 Cavan County Council (where a good part of Cuilcagh and its mountain surroundings are situated) said it would like to join Fermanagh Council in applying to the UNESCO-endorsed 'Global Geoparks Network' for recognition for an expanded cross-border geopark, which would be the first of its kind

in the world.

The expanded geopark was launched in the following year and has been managed as one unit since then. It is run by a Joint Operational Committee made up of councillors from the two councils and a joint Geopark Management Team led by Watson and Cavan area engineer Derry Scanlan. There is a joint development plan, joint projects (usually EU funded) and joint marketing and education programmes.

The geopark – endorsed by UNESCO as a 'Global Geopark' because of its international significance – stretches 50 miles from Lower Lough Erne near the Donegal Border to just north of Cavan town. It has overcome the potential problem of farmers' property rights by choosing to base itself around scores of 'serial sites' – ranging from hundreds of hectares (much of this owned by the Northern Ireland Forest Service) to a single acre (such as the 'Shannon Pot' where the River Shannon rises) – rather than extensive national park-style public ownership. It has been visited by people from all over the world, including from China, where they have taken to geoparks in a big way and now run 26 out of the 88 in existence (and where Marble Arch has recently twinned with a geopark in Hong Kong); and from Slovakia and Hungary, Germany and Poland, where they have followed the Irish example and set up cross-border geoparks. Around 300,000 visitors now visit the geopark annually, of whom 60,000 take the guided tour of Marble Arch Caves.

The geopark's latest project – with support from EU INTERREG funding – is to develop the wonderful Cavan Burren site, one of the best preserved megalithic burial sites in Ireland (and possibly in Europe), which because of its remote, border location and forested surroundings is virtually unknown outside the immediate vicinity. 'This will be a truly iconic site in the future, which Irish people will come to value as an important part of their national heritage,' says Richard Watson.

The cross-border success story which is the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark has not gone unnoticed elsewhere in Ireland. A few years ago the International Centre for Local and Regional Development – the Centre for Cross Border Studies' 'sister' spatial planning body – featured Marble Arch as a case study of local authority cross-border cooperation in a research study aimed at identifying models of successful cooperation that Newry and Mourne and Louth councils might follow. This fed not only into an unprecedented Memorandum of Understanding between the two councils, but also a successful £1.7 million funding application to the EU INTERREG programme which will allow the councils, under the auspices of the East Border Region Committee, to develop a parallel Mournes, Cooley, Ring of Gullion cross-border geo-tourism project. How about that for the power of a good example!

Andy Pollak

'A Note from the Next Door Neighbours

<<http://www.crossborder.ie/category/notes-from-the-next-door-neighbours/>> ' is sent to everyone on the Centre for Cross Border Studies e-mail list on a monthly basis. If you have friends or colleagues who would like to be added to the mailing list for 'A Note from the Next Door Neighbours', please send their details to [crossborder@qub.ac.uk](mailto:crossborder@qub.ac.uk). or call +44 (0)28 3751 1550.

Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/crossborderstudies](https://www.facebook.com/crossborderstudies)  
<<http://www.facebook.com/crossborderstudies>>

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Reporter: Sarah

**Hi guys,**

I was just reading the latest issue of Fracking Matters with great interest as usual. Here is an excerpt from an interesting article to which Ineke provided the link (see link at end of excerpt for more):

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"West Virginia and Pennsylvania are big fracking states, but they happily ship most of their wastewater for disposal in Ohio injection wells. Only recently did West Virginia's Department of Environmental Protection take samples of the brine to find out exactly what they were burying in Ohioans' back yards. The results were shocking (or not):

The lab results indicate high levels of alpha particles, arsenic, barium and toluene, among other contaminants, and are cause for the brine to be classified as "hazardous," according to Ben Stout, professor of biology at Wheeling Jesuit University who interpreted the results. Stout labeled the results as "eerily similar" to brine samples taken by West Virginia's Department of Environmental Protection. He describes heavy metals found in the sample as "grossly above standard," citing skyrocketing arsenic and barium levels that exceed the primary standard for acceptable drinking water concentrations by 370 and 145 times, respectively.

The fact that environmental protection agencies at the state and federal level are allowing these substances to be dumped in areas where they can then seep into water supplies is outrageous. These agencies have a simple job: to protect the environment and human's health above all else. Yet they would rather play the "wait and see" game instead of confronting these companies and holding them accountable for their actions.

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/causes/ohio-fracking-wastewater-test-reveals-toxic-mess.html#ixzz20tU1wS9I>"

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So it seems that after the wastewater is left to evaporate for a while in open pits and tanks, in the US it is pumped into the ground in neighbouring states. It is these injection wells, incidentally, that have been blamed for most (all?) of the seismic activity in the US associated with fracking. Are these injection wells part of the plan for Ireland, I wonder? (I mean, on the odd chance that all the various toxins and contaminants in the brine cannot be made disappear by the magical "recycling" process...)

Just in case anyone didn't get to the article yet.

Sarah

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Sarah <nofrackingthanks@gmail.com>

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## MOVIES- SONGS

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"**My Water's On Fire Tonight**" is a product of Studio 20 NYU (<http://bit.ly/hzGRYP>) in collaboration with ProPublica.org (<http://bit.ly/5tJN>). The song is based on ProPublica's investigation on hydraulic fractured gas drilling (read the full investigation here: <http://bit.ly/15sib6>).  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=timfvNgr\\_Q4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=timfvNgr_Q4)



<http://shaleshockmedia.org/>

## **Economic Impacts of Natural Gas Drilling**

Published on 31 May 2012

This is a presentation on the economic impacts of hydrofracking in Marcellus and Utica Shale in New York State. It was given by Jannette M Barth, PhD of J M Barth Associates Inc. This event took place on May 22nd, 2012 and was hosted by the Committee to Prohibit Hydrofracking, which is an organization based in Kirkland, New York.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsnRw3kXs78>

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## **IRISH NEWS**

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### **Completed ratification of Aarhus Convention in Republic of Ireland - Department of the Environment, Community**

The three agreements will enter into force on 18 September 2012

<http://www.environ.ie/en/Environment/News/MainBody,30552,en.htm>

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### **NORTHERN IRELAND**

#### **We can make our minds up about fracking**

*Tuesday, 17 July 2012*

Although the people of Fermanagh have clearly stated they don't want fracking, and although Fermanagh District Council has voted in favour of a moratorium, we are told that decisions like that cannot be left to us.

Richard Moorman, CEO of Tamboran, stated publicly that: "The state wouldn't let anyone who doesn't have an expertise in geology and engineering make such complicated decisions ... "

We, the apparently stupid people of Fermanagh, are assured that these guys have a miraculously precise engineering ability.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/letters/we-can-make-our-minds-up-about-fracking-16185878.html>

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Received from Michael Cairns

This is from the **Larne Times** that was in the 5-7-2012 paper.

**Environment impact study for gas storage scheme is incomplete head**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/LarneTimesArticleHeadline5-7-2012.jpg>

**part one**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/LarneTimesPartOne5-7-2012.jpg>

**part two**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/LarneTimesPartTwo.jpg>

**Larne Harbour**

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Larne.jpg>

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**Comment by Michael Cairns**

Huge underground/sea caverns are to be excavated to allow storage of gas at high pressure.

The gas to be stored maybe Gas extracted by hyd Fracturing.

The similarities with the progression of this project is in some ways similar to the way Fracking is being developed and the reporting of.. or lack of it in media and information given over to the public by government.

I dare say that many people throughout ireland might not be aware of this and might feel it is a distraction, but i feel that it could be a side project in the development of Shale Gas extraction on the island of ireland and people who might be against this project might also have sympathy with people speaking out against Fracking.

This project (which is one of 3 in the same area) is huge.

Its is huge and has the potential to cause alot of enviro damage if it goes ahead.

by the way... they are doing the same in England which they reckon is in conjunction with the fracking there....

They are Creating huge salt excavated caverns near Hull.

[www.infrastrata.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=171&Itemid=105](http://www.infrastrata.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=171&Itemid=105)

[www.islandmageestorage.com/](http://www.islandmageestorage.com/)

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**GLOBAL NEWS**

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**US**

Received from Joel

**Interesting twist in PR battle. Now if you're anti-fracking you are against the poorest of the poor**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/17/world/asia/fracking-in-us-lifts-guar-farmers-in-india.html?\\_r=1&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/17/world/asia/fracking-in-us-lifts-guar-farmers-in-india.html?_r=1&hp)

## **Environmentalists Call For Drillers to Recycle Fracking Water**

<http://keranews.org/post/environmentalists-call-drillers-recycle-fracking-water>

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### **US insurer won't cover gas drill fracking exposure**

By MARY ESCH

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) - Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. has become the first major insurance company to say it won't cover damage related to a gas drilling process that blasts chemical-laden water deep into the ground.

The Columbus, Ohio-based company's personal and commercial policies "were not designed to cover" risk from the drilling process, called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, Nationwide spokeswoman Nancy Smeltzer said Thursday.

The process injects chemically treated water into wells to fracture shale thousands of feet underground and release trapped gas or oil. There are rich shale deposits in parts of Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, West Virginia and elsewhere.

Health and environmental groups claim fracking can contaminate drinking water. The gas industry says it's safe if done properly. Nationwide said risks involved in fracking operations "are too great to ignore" and apply to policies of commercial contractors and landowners who lease property to gas companies.

The Nationwide policy first came to light when an internal memo detailing underwriting guidelines was posted on websites of upstate New York anti-fracking groups and landowner coalitions seeking gas leases. Smeltzer confirmed that the memo was genuine but said it wasn't intended for public dissemination.

The memo reads: "After months of research and discussion, we have determined that the exposures presented by hydraulic fracturing are too great to ignore. Risks involved with hydraulic fracturing are now prohibited for General Liability, Commercial Auto, Motor Truck Cargo, Auto Physical Damage and Public Auto (insurance) coverage."

It said "prohibited risks" apply to landowners who lease land for shale gas drilling and contractors involved in fracking operations, including those who haul water to and from drill sites; pipe and lumber haulers; and operators of bulldozers, dump trucks and other vehicles used in drill site preparation.

A spokesman for a research and outreach program of the Independent Petroleum Association of America, whose members drill most of the nation's oil and gas wells, said nothing in what Nationwide said represented a change in policy for the company. Simon Lomax, the research director for Energy In Depth, said insurers don't sell products specific to individual steps of the oil and gas development process.

"But practical implications aside, the fact that the company would send out a statement this reckless, and this uninformed, should tell us a lot," Lomax said in an emailed statement. "For starters, it tells me that I won't be buying home and car insurance from this company."

Opponents of fracking point to some highly publicized accidents that resulted in contamination.

In late 2010, Houston-based driller Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. settled for \$4.1 million with residents of Dimock, Pa., over gas found in their water. State environmental regulators determined Cabot contaminated the aquifer underneath homes with explosive levels of methane. A Cabot spokesman said levels of contaminants found didn't pose a threat to human health or the environment.

Jeffrey Hanneman, the Texas-based director of environmental practice at the insurance broker Aon Risk Solutions, said the Nationwide move was "really unique" and he doesn't expect it will be the beginning of a trend.

"To date, all we've seen are some that were hesitant to write environmental coverage," Hanneman said. "But the Nationwide is sort of a broader ban on all the ancillary services related to it (fracking)."

Hanneman noted that there haven't been any substantial claims that targeted companies other than those that own and operate the wells or the contractors who do the drilling. And even those claims have been few and far between.

He said one factor that may be driving Nationwide's decision is that increasing publicity - much of it negative - surrounding fracking makes it possible that any damage claims would go beyond the big oil and gas companies to include the hundreds of supporting businesses such as haulers.

Mike Elmendorf, president of the general contractors' group Associated General Contractors of New York State, said the Nationwide decision was unwelcome news for his members who do work for the gas industry and was not based on facts.

With a record of shale gas development having been done safely, "it is hard to fathom the rationale for this decision," Elmendorf said. "It would seem Nationwide is not on job creation's side."

[www.nbc12.com/story/19014611/us-insurer-wont-cover-gas-drill-fracking-exposure](http://www.nbc12.com/story/19014611/us-insurer-wont-cover-gas-drill-fracking-exposure)  
(not sure if this url is ok)

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*"It's only water, sand, and 1% chemicals."* Really?

Water is water, but the 'sand' is not 'just sand', (and the 1% of chemicals is between 100,000 and 250,000 thousand gallons of toxic chemicals.)

This 'sand' comes with OSHA warnings for the workers... a warning that is frowned upon, discouraged, and not enforced by the industry.

Here's a link to a recent OSHA alert re fracking hazards for workers.  
[http://www.osha.gov/dts/hazardalerts/hydraulic\\_frac\\_hazard\\_alert.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/dts/hazardalerts/hydraulic_frac_hazard_alert.pdf)

**Water Truck Whistleblower:**

**"They laughed me out of my Hazmat suit."**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKtI0gevFCU>

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Financial Times, July 19, 2012 9:02 pm  
**Osborne blocks renewables subsidies**

By George Parker and Pilita Clark

George Osborne is blocking a new subsidy regime for renewable energy, as he fights a coalition battle with the Liberal Democrats to ensure gas remains central to Britain's future power needs.

The chancellor fears [overgenerous support for wind power](#) and other renewable sources

will deter investment in gas-fired power stations, which he believes offer business and consumers the prospect of lower bills in future.

The stand-off between Mr Osborne and Ed Davey, the Lib Dem energy secretary who wants to prioritise renewables, has infuriated business. John Cridland, head of the CBI employers' group, claims a "[political row](#)" is holding back investment in Britain's energy infrastructure.

The battle over Britain's energy policy is exacerbating coalition tensions following [this month's row over House of Lords reform](#) . Mr Davey has been forced to cancel an announcement, originally planned for this week, on renewable subsidies.

Lib Dems believe Mr Osborne's stance is further evidence that the Tories are tacking to the right and diluting Mr Cameron's pledge to run Britain's "greenest government ever".

Meanwhile the chancellor will be cheered on by more than 100 Tory MPs who signed a letter this year calling for cuts in the subsidies paid to promote "inefficient and intermittent energy" supplied by wind farms.

The row has been referred to David Cameron and Nick Clegg, but the prime minister and deputy prime minister were unable to strike a compromise.

While the energy secretary accepts the case for a 10 per cent cut in the subsidy for onshore wind farms, Mr Osborne believes it should be steeper. His aides say that overgenerous renewable subsidies "reduce the viability" of gas.

Officials on both sides say the main stumbling block is Mr Osborne's insistence on linking the renewables policy to decisions on gas so that there is "a credible and certain framework" for investment in both.

In his March Budget, Mr Osborne declared: "Gas is cheap, has much less carbon than coal and will be the largest single source of our electricity in the coming years." Mr Davey's department is due to complete work on a gas strategy in the autumn.

Some Tories believe that [shale gas could play a crucial role in Britain's energy needs](#) in future, although Mr Davey is sceptical.

The energy secretary is holding back on issuing new shale gas licences in Britain, amid local community concerns about the controversial "fracking" process used to extract it and possible regulatory problems.

"The government has a big decision to make: are we going to build a low-carbon power system or are we going to have a second dash for gas?" said David Kennedy, chief executive of the committee on climate change. "The economically sensible thing is to deliver a low carbon power system."

Under the coalition's energy market reform plans, the gas plants that supply nearly half the UK's electricity supplies would be play a less dominant – but still critical – role in coming decades, especially when back-up power is needed to balance the electricity grid on windless or cloudy days.

### **Coalition quiet on post-2015 spending plan**

David Cameron and Nick Clegg are rowing back from setting out detailed coalition spending plans for two years beyond the next election, partly in recognition of the

political tension such an exercise would cause.

The prime minister and his deputy had toyed with the idea of conducting a full spending review – allocating money to individual departments until 2017 – to illustrate exactly how they planned to complete the job of eliminating Britain's structural deficit.

The policy might have forced Labour to be equally transparent about its spending plans, but the idea of the Tories and Lib Dems setting out joint priorities after the 2015 election dismays many coalition MPs.

Against a backdrop of coalition feuding over Lords reform, Mr Cameron told the Daily Telegraph that he and Mr Clegg would spend "more time talking" about the shape of the spending review.

Senior Lib Dems believe the exercise may now be scaled back, so it only covers 2015-16, the minimum needed to set departmental budgets for the financial year in which the planned May 2015 election takes place.

David Laws, former Lib Dem Treasury chief secretary, recently told the House Magazine: "I don't think there's any rush to make decisions about spending beyond 2015."

Overall government spending totals are pencilled in until 2017 but the current five-year departmental plan – which dictates how the pie is shared out – expires in April 2015. The Treasury had pencilled in a review in the autumn of 2013, setting out totals until 2017 – the year in which George Osborne hopes to finish his financial repair job. However with growth failing to materialise, that deadline could slip.

Meanwhile Mr Cameron caused surprise among Tory Euro-sceptics when he vowed on Thursday to never campaign for an "out" vote in a European referendum, insisting EU membership was in Britain's interest.

In the past, the prime minister has said he wanted to renegotiate Britain's membership terms and has left open the prospect of leaving the bloc if he failed to get what he wanted.

One veteran Euro-sceptic Tory MP said: "What is the point of saying what you are going to do ahead of a negotiation? What is the point of showing your hand now? It makes no sense."

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## REPORTS - RESEARCH

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### [Leaked report on costs of nuclear spells trouble for the government](#)

The Times reports that EDF Energy is seeking a guaranteed price of £165 per megawatt hour (mWh) from government for energy produced by a nuclear power station it intends to build at Hinkley Point.

This is almost identical to an estimate by Citi bank analyst, Peter Atherton, of £166/mWh.

If true, it could throw the government's plans for the energy sector into disarray.

To enable the transition to a secure and decarbonised electricity grid the government wants to support investment in a range of low carbon technologies.

EDF, The Times claims, is arguing that they should receive the reported price as it is lower than that required for major offshore wind projects, which they expect to be £180/mWh.

This figure seems high. The current cost of energy produced from offshore wind is about £135/mWh. This may increase as the first phase of 'round three' projects get underway because they are in deeper water than previous developments.

But industry sources expect costs above £165/mWh to be unlikely. Moreover, after this phase, costs are expected to fall dramatically, with the government and industry working towards a target of £100/mWh by 2020.

If it is more expensive to get electricity from new nuclear power stations than offshore wind then the government's commitments will become difficult to maintain.

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**in The Economist of July 14th-20th 2012 is a 15 pages Special Report - Natural Gas**  
<http://www.economist.com/printedition/specialreports>

Comment by a campaigner

Brought to you by the petroleum industry....  
The article I read (I don't know if I will bother with the rest...)  
reads like one of those Irish Times articles: Fracking = No problem!

.....

**Courting Shale: The Shale Debate in the European Courts and in the Court of Public Perception**

July 19th, 2012 12:10am Posted In: [Shale Gas](#), [Natural Gas](#), [Featured Articles](#)



Elizabeth Shepherd (Source: Eversheds)

Very few topics in the fossil fuel industries could be said to be as uncertain as shale gas. A resource marred by heady debate and vigorous dissent, the often misunderstood gas continues to face challenges at every step: in the court of public perception, at a

legislative level, in its exploitation and its production. This dissent is all the more surprising when one considers how obscure a resource it was until recently.

"It's a very fast-moving area, illustrated by the fact that around 18 months ago, very few people were talking about shale gas," Elizabeth Shepherd said at the recent SMI Shale Environmental Summit.

Ms. Shepherd, a partner in the regulatory group of international law firm [Eversheds](#), whose clients include [British Gas](#) parent [Centrica](#), says the legislation surrounding the unconventional resource is now the subject of much debate in Europe, both in Brussels and in the individual member states of the EU.

"The EU legislative framework is very complex, because, in looking at shale gas, you are covering a wide spectrum of activities which require regulation. You're looking at mining and hydrocarbons; you're looking at work health and safety; you're looking at chemicals; and of course at environmental concerns generally."

Various existing EU directives already cover a host of potential issues and areas where shale gas activity may have an impact, she says. There are water directives, for example, as well as chemical directives, a noise and waste directive, an environmental impact directive, and directives applicable to habitats, birds, and conservation areas. There is also the environment liability directive which is based on the principle of "polluter pays"—"if you damage it, you have to pay for it to be put right," she explains.

"But just because it's complex, doesn't necessarily mean it is inefficient or impracticable," Ms. Shepherd says. "It broadly works. Some adjustments may be necessary, for example to ensure early public consultation and to look at thresholds for environmental impact assessments. But broadly, the conclusion reached by the European Commission study published by Philippe & Partners earlier this year was that the existing regulatory framework in the EU is adequate for current shale gas activities."

Despite much of the prevailing fear on the adequacy of regulation of shale gas in the European Union and the implementation of several European moratoria, there is no need for any urgent revision of existing EU legislation, Ms. Shepherd says.

"The European Commission study was very clear; a new directive for shale gas is not immediately required. For now, in the exploratory stage, what we have is perfectly adequate. In fact, it is often overlooked that the procedures to be followed to authorise shale gas activities are the general procedures every operator has to follow to explore/exploit conventional hydrocarbons."

But public concerns continue and these concerns, she agrees, can and should be tackled head-on.

Speaking to Natural Gas Europe after the conference, Ms. Shepherd said that the responsibility for assuaging public fears comes down to both government and industry. She says that each has a role to play in addressing the concerns of a sometimes sceptical public.

"Increasingly industry is reaching out and working with the government and the public on each of these concerns, whether it's environmental concerns or the adequacy of the regulatory regime or any other issue.

"Across the EU we see increasing studies into different aspects of shale gas. At EU

level, two draft reports were issued recently by Committees of the European Parliament, into the industrial, energy and other aspects of shale gas and oil, and the environmental aspects respectively. Neither of these draft reports call for new regulation, but both see disclosure of chemicals used in fracturing fluid as a key issue.

“In addition, technical studies on the socio-economic impacts of shale gas and climate impact are underway, commissioned by the European Commission. At member state level too, governments are increasingly looking to be better informed in relation to shale gas. The [UK](#) is arguably the best informed member state, in that it was the first to carry out a detailed study. For example, a UK Select Parliamentary Committee report in May 2011 concluded that there is no direct risk to water aquifers, so long as the well-casing is intact. Most recently in the UK, DECC (the Department of Energy and Climate Change) has concluded a consultation process on its draft report on seismic activity in the north west of England in April/May 2011, which recommended that hydraulic fracturing be allowed to continue with appropriate safeguards and mitigation measures.

“In Germany, two studies by experts into the environmental impact of hydraulic fracturing have been commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia respectively, and these studies are likely to inform [Germany](#)’s approach to regulation. This reflects the fact that increasingly across the EU, the policy and decision makers are looking to have the debate influenced by fact, not emotion.”

She acknowledges that, even with the best efforts, some people will not be convinced, no matter what information is at hand. There are conflicting agendas; for example there is a view that much of the opposition to shale gas stems from a concern that it will hold back renewables. Member states take very different positions on shale gas; politics and concerns about energy security are key drivers in this.

With moratoria implemented in [France](#), [Bulgaria](#), Northern Ireland (though no fracking licences have been applied for there), two German states, and [Romania](#) and a two-year moratorium proposed in the [Czech Republic](#), the political support for shale varies across countries.

However, Ms. Shepherd points out, the proposed moratorium in the Czech Republic may have less to do with a disapproval for the activity and more to do with weak current legislation in the country.

On the other side of the coin, [Poland](#) is keen to pursue its shale gas opportunities on a commercial scale, with more concessions for exploration granted than in any other EU country. The [Netherlands](#) and the UK also appear, at least, more open to shale.

“In Poland, a new tax is proposed on hydrocarbon production, to ensure what they see as a fair return for Poland without discouraging investment from foreign companies who have the means and knowledge to help them take this forward,” she says.

“They have been talking about this for a little while. It’s being worked on by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment, but they haven’t actually produced [at time of writing] their design goals yet. They are due to produce them for consultation very soon.

“Poland’s enthusiasm for shale gas is reflected in the fact that new regulation in Poland is more designed around managing shale gas arrangements than on imposing additional controls,” she told the SMI Summit in May.

"One example is new legislation giving companies which find shale gas priority when applying for a mining permit. This has been controversial, but that's where Poland stands at present."

Certainly, Poland is currently seen as the member state likely to be the first to exploit its shale gas reserves on a commercial scale.

On the other side of the coin, there is a risk that taking action too quickly at a member state level could prejudice the extraction of natural resource in general, not just shale gas. A recent example is Bulgaria, which had to change the wording of its moratorium to allow the extraction of conventional gas. However, Ms. Shepherd says, most governments are taking a measured approach.

"Bulgaria had its own issues, under political pressure as well as public pressure to introduce a moratorium, for reasons which we can only speculate about. It is encouraging though that in Romania, the Prime Minister has said that shale gas should only be discussed after the general election in the autumn, to allow a rational, fact-based debate and to prevent propaganda on shale gas being used for political gain by all sides during the campaign season."

So with such diverse and heated opinion surrounding shale, what does she recommend in a regulatory context for both industry and government? Is there anywhere either needs to focus more?

"From a legal point of view, one of the most topical issues around shale gas activity is chemical disclosure," she says. There are misunderstandings about how the chemicals legislation, REACH, applies to shale gas, in that REACH (which focuses on individual substances and their associated risks) is not the mechanism to address public disclosure concerns about the chemical constituents of hydraulic fracturing fluid.

She points to FracFocus, a web-based national registry ([fracfocus.org](http://fracfocus.org)) in the US, run by the US Groundwater Protection Council and US Department of Energy, which allows the public to access information on a well-by-well basis on exactly which chemicals are being used. This disclosure of chemicals by operators on FracFocus is a legal requirement in some states—Colorado and Texas are the two that immediately come to mind.

"Representatives of the EU institutions are receptive to an EU FracFocus-style website," she says, "and consensus is building around FracFocus-like reporting in the EU. It is a very welcome development in the EU that actually this is being discussed".

"It may take some time for it to be introduced in the EU on an overarching Brussels/EU level; there's talk of a pilot project in Poland. This is a good example of industry coming forward and saying, 'This is your concern. This is what we're proposing to do about it.'"

## OVERVIEW OF GROUPS/NETWORKS

### **Carrick Against Fracking**

Meetings every week (Thursday) in Burke's Bar, Bridge Street Carrick-on-Shannon

Contact: John Cronogue [jcronogue@gmail.com](mailto:jcronogue@gmail.com) tel: 087 909 3 909/086-9127536

**SOS "SAVE OUR SHANNON"** meeting, hosted by Carrick Against Fracking group. The first Thursday of each month will be set aside for SOS meetings in Burke's Bar, Bridge Street, Carrick on Shannon (or other venue)

This group will facilitate those who want to SAVE something rather than against.

People from other groups are encouraged to attend and bring a friend

Contact: John Cronogue [jcronogue@gmail.com](mailto:jcronogue@gmail.com) tel: 087 909 3 909/ 086-9127536

### **West Cavan: Shannon-Erne Protection-Alliance**

Contact: Tom Hyde [toseithechain1@eircom.net](mailto:toseithechain1@eircom.net)

### **Ardcarne Community Against Fracking**

Roscommon Cora Molloy 071-9667223 [doherty.lea@gmail.com](mailto:doherty.lea@gmail.com)

### **Love Leitrim - Manorhamilton -**

Chair: Bernie Meehan [bernziemeehan77@gmail.com](mailto:bernziemeehan77@gmail.com)

Contact: Dervilla Keegan ( [dervybird@hotmail.com](mailto:dervybird@hotmail.com))

086 165 7424

### **Kiltubrid Anti-Fracking Action Group,**

**Co.Leitrim,** Mary Rose Geohan, Monica Grossman [mongrossman@eircom.net](mailto:mongrossman@eircom.net)

### **People's Association Watchdog,**

Sonya Oldham [andraiocht@hotmail.com](mailto:andraiocht@hotmail.com)

### **Sligo/Glean**

Contact: Kate Wilson [tulipsandoysters@eircom.net](mailto:tulipsandoysters@eircom.net)

### **North West Network against Fracking**

[www.facebook.com/pages/North-West-Network-Against-Fracking](http://www.facebook.com/pages/North-West-Network-Against-Fracking)

Contact: Meg Rybicki [youthmardingo@gmail.com](mailto:youthmardingo@gmail.com)

Ursula Schweiger [islandview12@yahoo.ie](mailto:islandview12@yahoo.ie)

### **Good Energies Alliance Ireland**

Contact: Campaign [goodenergiesalliance@gmail.com](mailto:goodenergiesalliance@gmail.com)

Chair: Miriam Hennesy [miriamhennesy@eircom.net](mailto:miriamhennesy@eircom.net)

Spokes person: Eddie Mitchell [eddie.mitchell@gmail.com](mailto:eddie.mitchell@gmail.com)

### **DULBIN CONTACT**

**Dame Street Outreach coordinator:**

-Lee Page [leepage100@gmail.com](mailto:leepage100@gmail.com)

Tommy Foster

[tommy.j.foster@gmail.com](mailto:tommy.j.foster@gmail.com)

**Talamh task group** - research/legal group

contact: [talamhactiongroup@gmail.com](mailto:talamhactiongroup@gmail.com)

**Telephone information/tree service** is available.

- contact John and Val Bailey: **071 9643989**

[bailey.john45@gmail.com](mailto:bailey.john45@gmail.com)

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**Ballinamore** Joan, Tracey

Joan Walsh [joanw2006@eircom.net](mailto:joanw2006@eircom.net)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=518359759> (Joan)

**Geevahn**

Tiffany Budd [tiffanybudd79@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanybudd79@gmail.com)

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**Ballyshannon**

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**Fermanagh Fracking Awareness Network**

network co-ordinator Derek McGuidir [info@frackaware.com](mailto:info@frackaware.com)

**BLOGS/FACEBOOK**

[NO FRACKING IRELAND \(all caps\) on Facebook - Follow @notofracking on twitter](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/146055765467930/>

<http://www.facebook.com/WhatTheFrack>

**Cavan**

<http://www.facebook.com/nofrackingcavan>

**Carrick-on-Shannon**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Carrick-Against-Fracking/246513672047924>

**North-west (Sligo etc)**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/North-West-Network-Against-Fracking/279444575416522>

**Clare/Limerick**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/No-Fracking-ClareLimerick/241082045932097>

**Cork (new!)**

<http://www.facebook.com/FrackingFreeCorkGroup>

**Fermanagh**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Stop-Fracking-Fermanagh/133710973389744>

**GROUPS**

[fracking-ireland@googlegroups.com](mailto:fracking-ireland@googlegroups.com) apply for membership to Charlie Williams  
[charlie2williams@gmail.com](mailto:charlie2williams@gmail.com)

**WEBSITES**

Fracking Free Ireland:

[www.frackingfreeireland.org](http://www.frackingfreeireland.org)

contact: Ineke Scholte [ineke@frackingfreeireland.org](mailto:ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)

Fracking Ireland – with comment on articles and letters to politicians and media

<https://sites.google.com/site/frackingireland/>

contact: Charlie Williams [charlie2williams@gmail.com](mailto:charlie2williams@gmail.com)

Frackingfree Clare

<http://frackingfreeclare.org/>

What the frack

<http://what-the-frack.org/>

No Fracking Ireland

<http://nofrackingireland.wordpress.com/>

<http://lough-allen-frack-free.weebly.com/index.html> - not active

Good Energies Alliance Ireland (GEAI)

<http://goodenergiesalliance.com/>

**Northern Ireland**

Not for Shale

[www.notforshale.com](http://www.notforshale.com)

**FFAN Fermanagh Fracking Awareness Network**

<http://www.frackaware.com/wordpress/>

<http://notofracking.com/>

