

Fracking Matters Newsletter 42-12 (77) – 14 September 2012



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

Thanks to all for your contribution

contact: ineke@frackingfreeireland.org

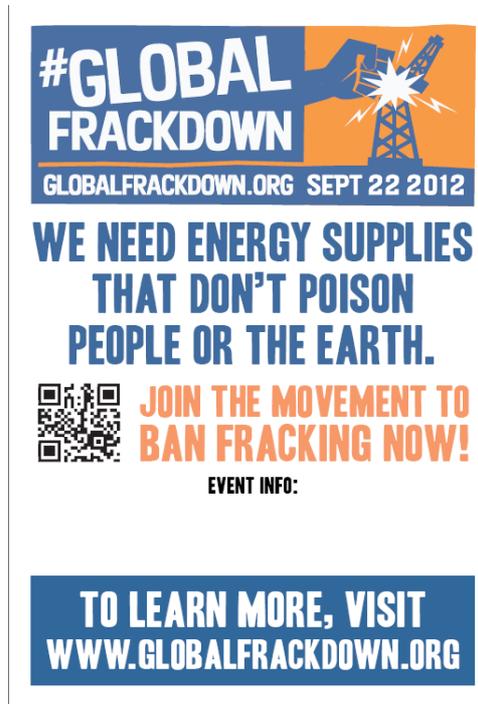
visit: www.frackingfreeireland.org



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<http://africartoons.com/cartoon/8741?filter=5063>



EVENTS and other small CAMPAIGN news

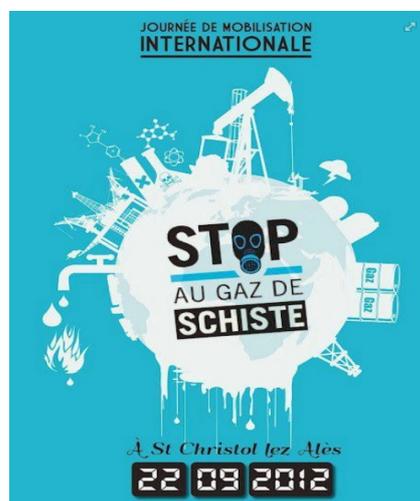


GLOBAL FRACK DOWN DAY 22 September – over 125 actions are taken place, world wide!

Reporter: Mark Schlosberg mschlosberg@fwwatch.org

There are now over 125 actions being planned all over the world. For those who haven't been keeping score, there are now actions and events being organized in Canada, United States, Mexico, Argentina, South Africa, France, Spain, Ireland, UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Australia - and I'm sure I'm missing some in this list. In the United States, there are actions taking place in every region of the country.

The resist in France is really huge – so many people out on the streets - and has great impact. They made this wall poster:



http://action.foodandwaterwatch.org/p/salsa/event/common/public/index.sjs?event_KEY=76069

ACTIONS:

ROI

1. There are plans for an action in Dublin for the Global Frackdown day - people are meeting next Saturday, (15 Sept) in **Seomra Spraoi** in Dublin at 2pm for planning the action and making banners. If you want more info, email me or youngfoe@foe.ie

2. Fracking comes to Ireland! Fracking Free Ireland invites you (**19th of September!**) to come and see the presentation "Fracking comes to Ireland" by Ineke Scholte: what is fracking, how it will affect you. Find out about the Irish situation, the anti fracking campaign, why a ban by the counties can not guarantee that Ireland will be fracking free, how we fit into Europe & how you can have your say. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session www.frackingfreeireland.org contact: info@frackingfreeireland.org

Event location: Cawley's hotel, Tubbercurry, 8pm

3. We will flyer and collect signatures to Keep Ireland Fracking Free at Ireland **West Airport Knock** (can still need some help!) **Contact: ineke@frackingfreeireland.org**

4. LOVE LEITRIM Manorhamilton street party Global Frackdown Action

On September 22, 2012 people all around the world will be hosting events to ban fracking. Manorhamilton, Leitrim, street party - join local & international musicians, dancers & performers & voice your opposition to the proposed fracking of Leitrim & Fermanagh, family fun, badge-making, balloon-twisting, tea & buns!

Event Location

*LOVE LEITRIM
Market Square
Manorhamilton*

JOIN US!

Flyer at airports, organise a (small) event and more ideas in the activist Toolkit! And check out the web what other groups are doing.

Activist Toolkit

The Global Frackdown is not one centralized event, but rather a day of action across the world where people are encouraged to take action in their own communities to ban fracking. Never planned an event before? Check out our [action guide](#) for event ideas and planning tips.

Events may include:

- Human signs spelling out "Ban Fracking" targeting decision-makers
- Protests or street theater outside oil or gas company headquarters or elected officials' offices
- Frackdown mock wrestling event where community members take on oil/gas executives and/or elected officials
- Erect and take down fake drilling rig in park or public square and put up wind turbine
- Film screenings of *Gasland* or *Split Estate*
- Petition gathering actions
- Visibility events at key intersections with signs
- Assemblies/pot lucks about fracking with community members

The important thing is to get the message out about fracking, engage people in your community, and have fun doing it. Here are some resources to help you:

[Here](#) and [here](#) we've provided two editable event flyers to promote your event. Don't have an event yet, but want to promote GlobalFrackdown.org? Use [this](#)!

Download the  [Ban Fracking petition](#) to gather signatures and demonstrate to local elected officials that your community opposes fracking.

Here is  [a guide](#) and a  [sample script](#) to help you collect signatures.

Here's a  [guide](#) to help you set up a screening of Gasland in your community (availability outside US may be limited).

CAMPAIGN NEWS FROM NI

Reporter: Michael Mc Evoy mickeymcevoy@yahoo.com

Maybe you could share our facebook page.

Wake up to fracking!!!

<http://www.facebook.com/events/426571377380263/>

detailed on the facebook page is the following. We've had great numbers sign all three for the last number of days with over 10,000 folk now invited to take part.....
SIGN THE 3 PETITIONS, below, for the sake of our countryside and future generations. You can sign each petition only once.
Click on the "INVITE FRIENDS" button at the top of this event and invite your friends.

Our politicians need a wake up call and our **petitions** just aren't big enough yet.
We need the petitions to go viral.

There are three because Ireland is divided into Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, then because life is complex a third!
It doesn't matter where you live, Ireland depends so much on tourism, every signature has an impact.

Here are the links.

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/northern-ireland-no-fracking-required-here.html>

<http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/ban-hydraulic-fracturing-for-natural-gas-in-ireland.html>

http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Ban_Fracking_Ireland/

We also have this event next Monday.

Basil McCrea UUP, MLA is hosting a debate on Monday 17th September at 6:00pm in the Senate Chamber at Stormont on Fracking. The debate will give balanced arguments both for and against fracking.

EMAIL FROM THE OFFICE OF BAIL MCCREA:

"Please send us an email (basil.mccrea@mla.niassembly.gov.uk) with your name and we will add them to our list of attendees. There will be limited space in the Senate Chamber, so it may be that we will close the event unless people are on our list. I will let you know as soon as I can if this will be the case.

So far, the confirmed speakers are Prof Peter Styles (Keele University), Dr Sandy Steacy (University of Ulster) and Dr John Barry (Queen's University Belfast). We are awaiting further responses. The panel to date reflect scientific/sustainable-political perspective, and there are no representatives from the gas companies.

I am pleased to say that members of the public will have an opportunity to speak. The debate will be opened by Basil, followed by each speaker making introductory remarks. After they have outlined their positions, the debate will be opened to the audience who will be able to interact with the panel by raising points and asking questions."

Please make a big effort to be there on the night and express how you feel about fracking.

BAN fracking in N.Ireland.

GRASSROOT GATHERING

Dear all,

My name is Jerrieann, I'm getting in touch about the [Grassroots Gathering](#), taking place on 12-14th October, in Galway city.

Event info here - <http://www.indymedia.ie/article/102415>
and here: <http://www.facebook.com/events/338782336211364/>
<http://www.facebook.com/GrassrootsGathering>

I'm involved in bringing together one important strand of the a Grassroots Gathering - a strand of sessions and workshops which aims to bring together people involved in different communities and groups resisting fracking/drilling/extraction. The idea is create a space for networking, discussing strategies and sharing skills people have learned over the past year of campaigning to keep Ireland fracking free.

To create this space we would like to get ideas from as many campaigners as possible about how to structure the weekend. An outline of the possible format for the fracking/community resistance strand of the weekend is in the attached word document and pasted below this email. **The gathering is going to be place for networking and sharing lessons from different groups. We want the sessions to be really relevant and useful to people campaigning for a fracking free Ireland. With that in mind, we a have a few questions for you all - any input you can give would really help with the organising;**

1. Can you come to the gathering to share some of your experiences of campaigning on fracking issues?
2. Is there a particular skill, strategy or experience that you or your group could share as part of a group discussion or workshop?
3. Are there specific people you know who we should ask to come and share their experiences?
4. what do you think of the proposed format for the weekend in the attachment? anything missing? suggestions for content?
- 5. are there any key questions/topics would be useful for campaigners/the movements focused on fracking to discuss with each other?**
- 6. should there be workshops for sharing relevant campaign skills? if so, which particular skills are most needed/most relevant to share within the movement at the moment?**

(examples of skills: skills for doing outreach in the communities where we live, decision making and facilitation skills, website skills, social media skills, presentations, staging demonstrations, video skills, legal awareness, dealing with gardai in protest situations, lobbying, mainstream media skills, direct action...) and do you know any fellow campaigners who could offer a workshop (or part of a workshop) on any of these skills?

We would be really grateful if you can you pass the invite on to fellow campaigners in your group or area and encourage them to get in touch. Thanks to everyone who has offered workshop, discussion and ideas already! We'd like to firm up the programme of the weekend in the next two weeks - so if you have any thoughts, comments, questions don't hesitate to get

in touch. You can email grassrootsgalway@gmail.com with any thoughts.

It's easiest to get a sense of what ideas are useful over the phone - so we'd like to try to ring around as many people as we can. If you're open to chatting over the phone or you call myself (Jerrieann [0876686644](tel:0876686644)) or Cat ([085 1452429](tel:0851452429)) or send us a text and we'll give you a ring back.

Best wishes,

Jerrieann

For draft agenda: scroll down to the end of the newsletter

UPCOMING EVENTS – OIL AND GAS WEDNESDAY 17 October 2012

<http://www.energyireland.ie/events/oilgas/>

It is an exciting time for Ireland's oil and gas industry with a number of important projects currently underway, including: development of Ireland's first commercially viable oil well; Corrib; the Shannon LNG terminal as well as a number of commercial gas storage projects which are at the development stage. These are in addition to developments around shale gas, significant finds of which have been confirmed in Ireland and which has the potential to transform the gas market, although social and environmental concerns regarding extraction remain. All these projects have the potential to bring important economic benefits, as well as delivering improvements to Ireland's security of energy supply position.

This seminar will examine some the key issues around the future of oil and gas, both in the global and Irish context, with a focus on how oil and gas will fit into Ireland's energy future, alongside the drive towards greater renewables. Issues explored will include:

- Drivers of international oil and gas markets
- Exploration and production offshore Ireland
- The licensing and fiscal regimes around oil and gas exploration
- The role of gas storage in the all-island gas market
- Impact of shale gas as a new source of energy
- Effect of international developments on the Irish gas market

CAMPAIGN PRESS RELEASES

PRESS RELEASE – for immediate release

Young Friends of the Earth, a youth environmentalist network, held their annual gathering in Drumshanbo over the past weekend.

35 participants from the four corners of Ireland travelled to attend the environmental activism training, which took place in the Lough Allen Education Centre and Drumshanbo Vocational School.

The young people were there to share ideas and solutions for the environmental crisis our world faces, as well as to receive solid, practical training in college environmental campaigning.

Young Friends of the Earth members are concerned about the possibility of hydraulic fracturing for gas coming to Leitrim and the surrounding areas, and chose to come to Leitrim to show solidarity with the local community.

Aedin McLoughlin of 'Good Energies Alliance Ireland' and Leah Doherty of 'No Fracking Ireland' each gave a presentation to inform the young participants about fracking.

The gathering attendees also enjoyed a farm walk on Tommy Earley's organic farm in Co. Roscommon.

One of the participants said: "The weekend was a great opportunity to network and share ideas, and the talk on fracking has been the clearest and most well delivered talk I heard to date."

On Sunday, the young people held a photo-shoot with banners of environmental messages on the shores of Lough Allen and beside the Shannon in Carrick-on-Shannon.

****ENDS****





more photos - they are on <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.455375634485802.100482.100000401087687&type=3> and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/photowarrior/7970994168/in/set-72157631499562384/>

thanks to Gearoid Lynch Photography

POEM

Send the Frackers a Pack'in

The evidence is a Stack'in
That Pollution is a Happen'in
That the safety is Lack'in
And the regulation is a Slack'in
That cracks are a Happen'in
In the process of a Frackin...

On the island of Erin..
It's the creation of Frackin
The media is Brand'in

The good people of Erin
That there's a lot-a Scaremonger'in
On the process of Frack'in
So we will go-ona a Say'in
No Frack'in in Erin
And we will go a Feck'in a Tear'in
For..
No Frack'in nor Crack'in
To help the Fram'in and sight-see'in
On the island of Erin
No Frack'in I'm a say'in
So send the Frackers a Pack'in

WHAT YOU CAN/MUS T DO

In Fracking Matters 41-12 (76) I posted the call from Geert de Cock to write to MEP's regarding to important voting next week.

(scroll down to the end of the newsletter)

Find below the provided sample letters and letters already sent by campaigners!

Use these letters, write and do not forget to attach the voting lists!

Here the provided sample letters:

**to Member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee
(Nessa Childers)**

nessa.childers@votelabour.ie, nessa.childers@europarl.europa.eu

voting list: ENVI: http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Voting-list-ENVI-Sonik_FINAL.pdf

and

**Member of the European Parliament's Industry Committee,
(Brian Crowley)**

briancrowleymep@eircom.net **voting list: http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Voting-list_Tzavela-report-shale-gas_FINAL.pdf**

Sample letter one:

Dear Member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee,

I am writing to you to ask for your support for a sound regulation of the shale gas industry in Europe. Attached, you can find a voting list, which will be helpful in supporting the highest possible environmental standards for fracking in Europe. Attached, you can find a voting list for next week's vote in the Parliament's Environment Committee.

We have a number of key amendments that we would like to see approved by the European

Parliament. These are our top 6:

- Am 84 (no EU funds for R&D on shale)
- Am 92 (mandatory environmental impact assessments)
- Am 97 (fracking fluids to be considered as hazardous waste)
- Am 115 (no fracking in drinking water areas)
- Am 136 (strict compliance with REACH)
- Am 152 (mandatory 'green completions' to deal with fugitive methane emissions)

Without all of these 'red lines', the shale gas industry loses its licence to operate in the European Union. If large-scale unconventional gas operations are allowed to go ahead in an unregulated way, this industry will repeat the same mistakes as in the US, with negative impacts for the climate, the environment and public health.

If this voting list and specific amendments do not receive sufficient support at the level of the Committees, we will work to introduce a call for a ban on the use of hydraulic fracturing for all types of unconventional gas in the EU during the October 2012 plenary session of the European Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Sample letter two

Dear Member of the European Parliament's Industry Committee,

I am writing to you to ask for your support for a sound regulation of the shale gas industry in Europe. Attached, you can find a voting list, which will be helpful in supporting the highest possible environmental standards for fracking in Europe. Attached, you can a voting list for next week's vote in the Parliament's Industry Committee

We have a number of key amendments that we would like to see approved by the European Parliament. These are our top 6:

- Am 54 and 70 (shale gas is not a transition fuel to a low-carbon energy mix)
- Am 67 (shale gas is a high-carbon fuel + 'green completions')
- Am 96 (shale gas competes with geothermal energy)
- Am 104 and 130 (no public money for development of shale gas)

Without all of these 'red lines', the shale gas industry loses its licence to operate in the European Union. If large-scale unconventional gas operations are allowed to go ahead in an unregulated way, this industry will repeat the same mistakes as in the US, with negative impacts for the climate, the environment and public health.

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Yours sincerely,

**LETTERS SENT BY CAMPAIGNER(S)
(two campaigners, each two letters)**

have a look, use it as a sample or copy it, write!

Letter one:
Dear Ms. Childers,

I am a citizen of Ireland living in an area in which hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") for the exploitation of shale gas could soon be permitted. I am extremely concerned about the serious and long-term risks to the environment and human health that are associated with hydraulic fracturing as it is practiced in the United States. One of my concerns is that there is no legislative or regulatory framework in Europe that specifically addresses the particularities of fracking.

I am writing to you to ask for your support for sound regulation of the shale gas industry in Europe. I have attached a voting list for next week's vote in the Parliament's Environment Committee.

I urge you to support in particular the following amendments:

- Am 84 (no EU funds for R&D on shale)*
- Am 92 (mandatory environmental impact assessments)*
- Am 97 (fracking fluids to be considered as hazardous waste)*
- Am 115 (no fracking in drinking water areas)*
- Am 136 (strict compliance with REACH)*
- Am 152 (mandatory 'green completions' to deal with fugitive methane emissions)*

If large-scale unconventional gas operations are allowed to go ahead in an unregulated way, this industry will repeat the same mistakes as in the US, with negative impacts for the climate, the environment and public health.

I am sure you are familiar with the excellent report published in 2011 by the European Parliament, "Impacts of shale gas and shale oil extraction on the environment and on human health" (<http://europeecologie.eu/IMG/pdf/shale-gas-pe-464-425-final.pdf>), which details the serious consequences the unregulated practice of fracking has had in the United States. Here is a recent article from the Irish Times that summarizes some of the findings: <http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/0911/1224323845985.html>.

I also ask you to support all measures that may come before the European Parliament calling for a total ban on hydraulic fracturing in Europe.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Kind regards,

Letter two

Dear Mr. Crowley,

I am a citizen of Ireland living in an area in which hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") for the exploitation of shale gas could soon be permitted. I am extremely concerned about the serious and long-term risks to the environment and human health that are associated with hydraulic fracturing as it is practiced in the United States. One of my concerns is that there is no legislative or regulatory framework in Europe that specifically addresses the particularities of fracking.

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- Am 67 (shale gas is a high-carbon fuel + 'green completions')*

*Am 96 (shale gas competes with geothermal energy)
Am 104 and 130 (no public money for development of shale gas)*

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I also ask you to support all measures that may come before the European Parliament calling for a total ban on hydraulic fracturing in Europe.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Kind regards,

Letter one: SONIK REPORT VOTE

This is a (sample) letter to Nessa Childers who sits on the Environment Committee which will be voting on a shale gas report next Wednesday, the day after the Industry vote. Feel free to use/adapt and please don't forget to attach the voting list to your email.

See message from Geert de Cock - Food & Water Europe on Charlie's Google groups for further details on these votes AND FRACKING MATTERS NEWSLETTER 41-12 (76) (and scroll down to the end of the newsletter)

Subject: Urgent: Sonik report vote - Wednesday 19 September
To: nessa.childers@votelabour.ie, nessa.childers@europarl.europa.eu

Dear Ms Childers,

As an Irish citizen who has spent many months now researching the unconventional gas industry, I am well informed about the serious risks associated with the extraction of this gas and how these risks may cause long-term damage to the Irish economy, society and environment. I am therefore firmly against any support for this industry, be it at national or European level, and will not be voting for any 'gas friendly' MEP in the 2014 European elections.

I am writing to you to ask for your support for the amendments in the voting list attached ahead of next week's vote in the Parliament's Environment Committee.

I have a number of **key amendments** that I would like to see approved by the European Parliament. These are my top 6:

- Am 84 (no EU funds for R&D on shale)
- Am 92 (mandatory environmental impact assessments)
- Am 97 (fracking fluids to be considered as hazardous waste)
- Am 115 (no fracking in drinking water areas)
- Am 136 (strict compliance with REACH)

- Am 152 (mandatory 'green completions' to deal with fugitive methane emissions)

Without all of these 'red lines', the shale gas industry loses its licence to operate in the EU.

As the US experience shows, the risks have been well researched and well documented. Here is a non-exhaustive list of these risks:

- economic (**boom & bust cycle, displacement of investment in renewables, displacement of jobs in indigenous sectors such as agriculture, agri-food and tourism, death of livestock and contamination of foodstuffs leading to fall in revenue & employment in the agri-food sector, degradation of rural road infrastructure due to heavy transport**)
- environmental (**air pollution caused by the mobilisation of radioactive particles due to fracturing of the shale layer at high pressure, pollution of aquifers, pollution of surface water caused by the disposal of radioactive fracking wastewater**)
- public health (**rise in breast cancer, low birth weight.**)

I am sure you have read the very comprehensive European Parliament report on shale gas of June 2011 which documents many of these risks. For an Irish perspective of the issue, I am attaching a recent article by Irish-based hydrogeologist Davide Gallazzi which provides a concise overview of the risks fracking will pose to our clean water supply in Ireland.

In addition to the risks outlined above, I would strongly urge you to vote against any amendments that promote shale gas development in the EU for the following reasons:

- 1) The technique used to extract unconventional gas has not been proven to be safe anywhere
- 2) Recent studies published by the European Commission show that eight key pieces of the European Union (EU) environmental *acquis* are identified as being ill-equipped to deal with the water, waste, liability, air quality and other issues of large-scale use of hydraulic fracturing.

If this voting list and specific amendments do not receive sufficient support within the ENVI Committee, I will be supporting the **eNGOs' call for a ban on the use of hydraulic fracturing for all types of unconventional gas in the EU** during the October 2012 plenary session of the European Parliament.

Thank you for your support on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

VOTING LIST

ENVI:

http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Voting-list-ENVI-Sonik_FINAL.pdf

Letter two: ITRE REPORT

To: **CROWLEY Brian**; briancrowlemep@eircom.net

Subject: Urgent: Vote on ITRE Report 'Industrial, energy and other aspects of shale gas and oil'

Dear Mr Crowley,

As an Irish citizen who has spent many months now researching the unconventional gas industry, I am well informed about the serious risks associated with the extraction of this gas and how these risks may cause long-term damage to the Irish economy, society and environment. I am therefore firmly against any support for this industry, be it at national or European level, and will not be voting for any 'gas friendly' MEP in the 2014 European elections.

I am writing to you today to ask for your **support for the following amendments** to the report which will be voted on by the ITRE Committee on Tuesday next, September 18. Attached you will find a **voting list** for next week's vote.

I have a number of **key amendments** that I would like to see **approved** by the European Parliament. These are my top 6:

- **Am 54 and 70** (shale gas is not a transition fuel to a low-carbon energy mix)
- **Am 67** (shale gas is a high-carbon fuel + 'green completions')
- **Am 96** (shale gas competes with geothermal energy)
- **Am 104 and 130** (no public money for development of shale gas)

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- economic (**boom & bust cycle, displacement of investment in renewables, displacement of jobs in indigenous sectors such as agriculture, agri-food and tourism, death of livestock and contamination of foodstuffs leading to fall in revenue & employment in the agri-food sector, degradation of rural road infrastructure due to heavy transport**)
- environmental (**air pollution caused by the mobilisation of radioactive particles due to fracturing of the shale layer at high pressure, pollution of aquifers, pollution of surface water caused by the disposal of radioactive fracking wastewater**)
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with the water, waste, liability, air quality and other issues of large-scale use of hydraulic fracturing.

If this voting list and specific amendments do not receive sufficient support within the ITRE Committee, I will be supporting the **eNGOs' call for a ban on the use of hydraulic fracturing for all types of unconventional gas in the EU** during the October 2012 plenary session of the European Parliament.

Thank you for your support on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

VOTING LIST

TZAVELA REPORT SHALE GAS:

http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Voting-list_Tzavela-report-shale-gas_FINAL.pdf

Enclosed links to articles Geraldine refers to:

article Davide Galazzi: <http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Inshore-Ireland-Vol8-nr-4-2012.pdf>

Health report: <http://europeecologie.eu/IMG/pdf/shale-gas-pe-464-425-final.pdf>
<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/impacts-of-shale-gas-etc-on-human-health1.pdf>

Help to correct the Irish Times its figures - 55 \$ SHOULD BE 5.5

Meg Rybicki wrote:

Dear all,

The Irish Times online printed an inaccurate piece today, again overstating the worth of the shale gas in Ireland.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/finance/2012/0911/1224323844660.html>

Could you all take five minutes, and use this template kindly provided by Tom White, and email Irish Times, Hugh Linehan, on hlinehan@irishtimes.com and copy the press ombudsman - info@pressombudsman.ie and the email goes as follows, or you can adapt and write in your own words. The more emails the better, so please share to contacts.

Dear Sir/Madam.. I believe the information in this article to be incorrect. There has been an error in calculating the worth of the gas in Leitrim which your paper has been made aware of, yet the error has now reappeared. The correct worth of the gas should appear as 5.5billion dollars using the Irish Times calculations. Please can this be corrected asap and the error fixed online as this error is now starting to propagate around the Internet and other media. Please also issue a correction in both the online and print editions of the Irish Times, and work with Google and other search engines to correct the online errors.

Regards... name, address phone number.

MOVIES- SONGS

Reporter: Sandra Steingraber ssteingraber@ithaca.edu

Here is a new video short by Jon Bowermaster and Alex Gibney, "What is Fracking?," from the upcoming documentary, "Dear Governor Cuomo."

Creating the script for this segment was a meaningful writing assignment for me, and participating in this concert event last spring in New York's capital city of Albany was a truly amazing experience. I hope it's useful to your own good work around the world.

On September 22, I will be speaking at a Global Frackdown event here in New York State. As you may have heard, our anti-fracking efforts here are gaining traction, as our governor recently announced that no decision to lift New York's fracking moratorium is imminent (as in, the next few weeks). That is a very different message from both June and August when we were hearing that a plan to begin fracking in our southern-most counties would be announced before the end of the summer. We are still in an uphill fight, but we are fighting hard!

Sandra

<http://www.takepart.com/video/ban-fracking-new-york-says-sandra-steingraber-and-horseflies>

p.s. the band is called "The Horseflies," and some of their members live in my own little village north of Ithaca.

IRISH NEWS

Oireachtas petition system

http://petitions.oireachtas.ie/online_petitions.nsf/PetitionForm?openform&type=intro+to+petitions&lang=EN&r=0.14928719193272022

REIsearch – Research Excellence Innovation Network"

" we invite the European leaders, particularly in this moment of crisis, to see the expenditure in research and innovation as an essential investment, and to choose a course that will allow Europe to gradually reach the spending on R&D of 3% GDP by 2020.

An increased investment in this direction has to happen soon. But we should start immediately to make better use of the resources already available. Europe can do a lot even in the areas that do not require significant financial investment but better coordination to create a more efficient European Research Area: avoiding duplication of efforts in research, **increasing the cooperation between university and industry**, guaranteeing a better and facilitated communication for researchers and a simplified access to existing databases and other research infrastructures."

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/atomium/2012/2012091101.html>

Fracking risks at angling lough

THIS week Lough Erne in Fermanagh hosts the World Pairs Championship, one of the world's leading angling competitions.

However, the future of such competitions is being put in jeopardy, as it is in the vicinity of Lough Erne, where a licence has been issued to gas company Tamboran Resources to enable it to develop up to 9,000 gas wells and extract gas using the highly controversial process of hydraulic fracturing ('fracking'). Fracking is blamed for environmental contamination across North America.

ROSS BROWN

Chair, East Belfast Green Party

EU -NEWS

MEPs consider tightening rules on mining companies

<http://www.europeanvoice.com/article/imported/meps-consider-tightening-rules-on-mining-companies/75108.aspx> (subscription only)

By Toby Vogel - Today, 05:58 CET

Transparency also asked of oil, gas and logging industries.

Transparency in the financial operations of European oil, gas, mining and logging companies will be the main focus of a vote in the European Parliament's legal-affairs committee on Tuesday (18 September) on reporting requirements in extractive industries.

A proposal from the European Commission would oblige multinational firms to report annually and country by country on payments they make to foreign governments, especially in developing countries, where many of these resources are located. The aim of the measure, presented by Michel Barnier, the European commissioner for internal market and services, is to deter corruption and tax evasion.

But the text foresees an exemption under which companies would not have to report when to

do so would violate local criminal law. Companies in the extractive industry are seeking to broaden this exemption, so it covers civil law as well.

Transparency campaigners describe the exemption as a loophole that would encourage governments in the developing world to adopt legislation outlawing disclosure. The campaigners received a boost last month when the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued its final rules implementing the Dodd-Frank act, adopted by the US Congress in 2010. Dodd-Frank does not provide for an exemption, and the SEC has rejected industry claims that exemptions are necessary, in an echo of campaigners' warnings. For the SEC, conformity with local law is a matter for contract negotiations between extractive firms and foreign governments.

The Commission's proposal, which takes the form of an amendment to the EU's transparency directive of 2004, broadly followed the Dodd-Frank act. The intention was that, taken together, the two pieces of legislation would create a de-facto global standard for transparency in the extractive industries.

Arlene McCarthy, a centre-left British MEP who is in charge of steering the draft legislation through the Parliament, has cautioned that the Barnier proposal consequently presents "a risk of a fragmented response to transparency". Eloise Todd, the director of the Brussels office of ONE, an anti-poverty campaign group, said: "The SEC was clear: project-by-project reporting and no exemptions in the US law. The Parliament can now reset the debate in Europe and help create a strong global transparency standard by endorsing equally strong EU legislation."

UK

Gold Mining Company in Omagh had to pay local residents in the area of mining due to a failure to enforce planning regulations. Locals are critical of company due to the mining company stating that the money given to residents should be donated to local investment and damage done to a local School.

(This highlights the failure to regulate basic mining/Excavating activities in Northern Ireland. How can this happen and at the same time be assured that Fracking will be without similar failures? Fracking of course is a more technically complex industry im guessing with much more logistics and haulage)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-17931871>

The Netherlands

Engels bedrijf dat ook in Brabant naar schaliegas wil boren in de fout
Laatst gewijzigd: donderdag 13 september 2012 - 13:38 | Auteur: [Sandra Kagie](#)



'Vogels geen last van boringen' 

BLACKPOOL - Het bedrijf Cuadrilla erkent dat het vorig jaar bij het boren naar schaliegas in Engeland in de fout is gegaan. Het Engelse bedrijf, dat ook in Brabant naar schaliegas wil boren, was in Engeland drie weken langer bezig dan afgesproken.

De termijn is van belang omdat juist was afgesproken dat er na 30 september niet meer geboord zou worden. Dit ter bescherming van vogels die in de buurt van de boorplek in Engeland overwinterden.

Cuadrilla verklaart donderdag dat een ingehuurd deskundige stelt dat er geen bewijs is dat de vogels last hebben gehad van de boringen.

Boxtel en Haaren

In afwachting van onderzoek naar de mogelijke risico's en gevolgen van schaliegaswinning gaat Cuadrilla in Nederland nog niet aan slag. In Brabant wil het Engelse bedrijf in Boxtel en Haaren graag naar schaliegas boren.

<http://www.omroepbrabant.nl/?news/1804761043/Engels%20bedrijf%20dat%20ook%20in%20Brabant%20naar%20schaliegas%20wil%20boren%20in%20de%20fout.aspx>

http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/12894382/_Vertraging_studie_schaliegas_.html

Cuadrilla breached fracking conditions, court told

Company exploring for shale gas in Lancashire exceeded 90-day drilling limit and broke wildlife protection agreement

- [Damian Carrington](#)
- guardian.co.uk, Monday 10 September 2012 13.11 BST



Cuadrilla's shale gas exploration site in Lancashire. The company has breached conditions of planning permission, it has emerged. Photograph: Matthew Lloyd/Getty Images

The company exploring for [shale gas](#) in Lancashire broke the conditions of their planning permission by drilling beyond an agreed time limit and beyond a cut-off date put in place to protect wintering [birds](#), it emerged on Monday.

The revelation of the breaches by [Cuadrilla](#) – which came to light during evidence given by Lancashire county council's head of planning in a trial of anti-fracking protesters – come as concern over the regulation of [gas](#) fracking led three of the UK's biggest environmental groups to write a [warning letter to the climate and energy secretary, Ed Davey](#).

"It's appalling that Cuadrilla is unwilling to respect even the most basic safeguards in the earliest stages of exploration," said Caroline Lucas, Green party MP. "Instead of cosying up to the shale gas industry, the government should impose an immediate moratorium on fracking, following in the footsteps of France and Czech Republic."

The regulation of possible future shale gas production is controversial because the government has argued that existing rules protecting the environment are sufficient to ensure safe operation of the new technology. Opponents of fracking claim the blasting of gas from rock deep underground with water and chemicals endangers local water supplies and that the gas produced will drive further climate change. Supporters claim it can be produced safely, providing a low cost fuel which is cleaner than coal.

Mike Clarke, chief executive of the RSPB, who has written to Davey with his counterparts at WWF-UK and Friends of the Earth, said: "We're concerned that government is pushing ahead with shale gas extraction without clear safeguards in place to protect [wildlife](#) and people. The disturbance to wildlife and habitats has not been properly explored and neither has the risk of water contamination."

The trial ended on Thursday with the conviction of Zoe Smith for trespassing on Cuadrilla's site during [a protest in December 2011](#) when activists occupied a drilling rig.

"The regulatory authorities are hopelessly inadequate at their job and don't have the protection of the environment as a priority. Companies like Cuadrilla are allowed to flout their obligations with impunity, while concerned citizens are criminalised," said Smith, who was the [third person to be convicted](#) after protesting at the site and was fined £250. Lancashire council has no current plans to pursue the breaches by Cuadrilla.

Stuart Perigo, Lancashire's planning chief, told the court that Cuadrilla had drilled beyond the permitted 90-day limit. He also said the company had failed to meet a planning condition aimed at protecting wintering birds at a nearby sanctuary, by drilling beyond 30 September 2011.

[Cuadrilla](#) declined to comment until it had discussed the matter with the county council.

Once the drilling had passed the 30 September, the company commissioned an ecologist to monitor the birds. He reported there was no evidence to show any specific impact of the rig on wintering birds.

"The company appear to have decided it was worth the risk of breaching the conditions as they have satisfied themselves that they could have proved that no harm was done to the birds if needed," said a source at Lancashire council.

The ecologist, Pat Waring, declined to comment on his work for Cuadrilla. He also declined to comment on the suggestion by anti-fracking group [Rising Tide](#) that he had refused to give evidence on behalf of the prosecution.

Cuadrilla's spokesman said: "Waring's decision whether or not to appear is a matter for him alone." He added: "We respect the fact that protesters have the right to represent their point of view but are pleased that the trespass and in particular the assault of our staff has been recognised and punished."

Lucas said: "Cuadrilla's flagrant disregard for the potential risks that shale gas exploration poses to local communities and the environment shows clearly that Cuadrilla's only interest is profit at any cost."

In June, a [report from the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Royal Society](#) concluded the UK's current regulatory systems were sufficient for shale gas fracking if they were adequately enforced.

www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/sep/10/cuadrilla-breach-fracking-lancashire?newsfeed=true

Gas glut threatens climate battle-IEA

- <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/09/13/energy-ia-gas-idUKL5E8KD4ZJ20120913>

Thu Sep 13, 2012 11:30am BST

* Indebted governments seen likely to switch to gas

* IEA says new supplies will pressure gas prices lower

By Emma Farge

BERNE, Sept 13 (Reuters) - A new "golden age of gas" could derail global efforts to fight climate change as indebted governments mull a switch to the cheaper fuel, the International Energy Agency's chief economist said on Thursday.

Government subsidies designed to promote renewable energy currently amount to around \$70 billion globally, he said.

But governments may be tempted to drop them as new shale gas and export facilities of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in east Africa and Australia pressure prices lower.

"Governments are feeling more and more uncomfortable to put money in renewables especially in the days of austerity, and some governments are cutting their support," Fatih Birol from the West's energy watchdog said at an energy conference in Berne, Switzerland.

"The availability of cheap or lower gas prices are putting additional pressure on renewable energies," he added.

Currently, natural gas prices of many exporters such as [Russia](#), Norway and Qatar are high because they are sold under long-term contracts that are linked to oil, but suppliers are coming under increasing pressure by customers to reduce prices or allow more flexible pricing based on movements in the freely traded spot gas markets.

But Birol said that new supplies will undermine their ability to charge high prices in the long term.

In North America, a boom in unconventional shale gas exploration has led to sharp drops in domestic natural gas prices and the U.S. is expected to begin exporting LNG by 2015, putting pressure on global gas prices and established pipeline suppliers such as Russia's Gazprom and Norway's Statoil.

"You will see more and more, even in Europe, gas available outside of major current gas exporters which can put downward pressure on prices and give more flexibility on importers to negotiate long-term contracts," he later told Reuters.

Other analysts, however, say that shale gas exploration in Europe will not be big enough to break the dominance of established pipeline suppliers, and that the development of renewables will therefore remain important in order to meet energy demand and Europe's emissions reduction targets.

Birol said that any reduction in investment in renewable energy would increase the risk of an increase in global temperatures by 6 degree Celsius this century, describing the current trend as "catastrophic".

"If there are no urgent and bold policies put in place the door to a 2 degrees trajectory, the door to a normal life for us and for our children, will be closed and will be closed forever," he said.

The IEA has already said that global emissions hit a record in 2011, and that carbon emissions from countries switching from nuclear to other conventional power generation technologies such as gas or coal are likely to rise

"You are wrong if you believe all this nuclear will be 100 percent replaced by renewable energy," he told the conference. (Additional reporting by Henning Gloystein in London, editing by William Hardy)

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Patrick Bonin

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GLOBAL NEWS

Landscape level impacts:

<http://blog.skytruth.org/2012/08/gas-drilling-time-series-analysis-in.html>

USGS says drilling has largescale impacts on landscape in PA

A short post at <http://marcelluseffect.blogspot.com/2012/09/marcellus-drilling-creates-largescale.html> with **link to the USGS report.**

NEWS FROM JESSICA ERNST

Owners and contamination

<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca/not-at-fault-you-may-still-pay-faultless-owners-of-contaminated-property-beware>

Two new drilling sites have been approved in north Springbank, tapping into the area's popular Cardium zone formation.

<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca/springbank-to-be-drilled-and-fracked-this-fall>

Meeting to discuss fracking

<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca/meeting-to-discuss-fracking>

Financial Times, September 11, 2012 10:01 pm

US rail groups track shale boom

By Robert Wright

On track: railways are optimistic that crude oil shipments and movements of fracking sand will offset loss of coal traffic

When the cold, windswept plains of North Dakota opened to large-scale European settlement in the 1870s, the region was part of the Wild West. Resistance from native Americans had been largely broken and settlers from other parts of America poured in, seeking quick fortunes.

Nearly 150 years later, parts of North Dakota around the Bakken Shale formation – a vast, oil-bearing geological formation in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Saskatchewan – are boom towns again. Camps have been set up for temporary

workers and infrastructure is straining to cope.

The vast US rail network links the two eras. Newly built railways brought in the first wave of European settlement. Today, long trains of black tank cars head off daily, taking the region's newly unlocked oil reserves to coastal refineries.

The exports have helped North Dakota become the second-biggest oil producing US state, behind only Texas. Customers of BNSF, the railway that handles 44 per cent of the region's oil exports, have built terminals on its routes through the region capable of handling 1m barrels of oil a day.

The surge in oil traffic has provided railways with unexpected benefits amid a shift in energy consumption that threatens one of their main traffic sources. Low natural gas prices resulting from "fracking" drilling techniques had led to a sharp fall-off in railways' coal traffic. [CSX Corp](#), the largest railway on the US east coast, announced a 28 per cent fall in domestic [thermal coal traffic](#) for the first quarter this year.

Railways are now optimistic that crude oil shipments and movements of fracking sand, used to release the hydrocarbons, and of oil pipe segments can help recoup some of the lost revenue.

The concern, however, is that railways profiting from the early stages of the [shale oil and gas boom](#) could be setting themselves up to serve a disappearing market. Railways opening up new oilfields and transporting pipeline segments could be repeating the experience of the railways that in the 1960s carried building materials for motorways, only to see trucks on motorways take their markets away.

Frederik Eliasson, CSX chief financial officer, accepts that there are risks involved. Among them is investment in new tank cars – a particular challenge given that the unexpected boom has created long order backlogs among manufacturers.

"There are many things that need to come into place before really seeing the benefit," Mr Eliasson says.

Some railways have seen tail-offs in demand for fracking sand used in [the shale boom](#), shipped mostly from Minnesota to the areas where it is needed.

Denis Smith, BNSF's vice-president of marketing for industrial products, says demand has suffered as [low prices](#) have deterred new drilling activity.

"Down here in the Barnett Shale, there have been a lot of closures of drilling rigs," Mr Smith says, referring to a gasfield near BNSF's Texas headquarters.

Nor are crude oil, fracking sand or surging export coal volumes yet sufficient to counterbalance big fall-offs in domestic coal traffic. Coal has traditionally accounted for between 20 and 25 per cent of traffic for many big US rail companies.

"I'm not going to say that hauling petroleum products is total compensation for the rail volumes, because we'd like to have the coal volumes back," Mr Smith says.

Yet there remains optimism that neither pipelines' arrival nor market volatility will turn the rail companies' hydrocarbon boom into another natural resources bust.

Mr Smith says BNSF should retain between 25 and 37 per cent of the Bakken Shale's export market once pipelines arrive, and when the field is fully developed, that should provide more traffic than its current 44 per cent market share.

"As long as we can provide transportation services to markets that pay better than [the market served by] the pipeline, we're going to maintain and retain our market share," Mr Smith says.

Many railways point to their customers' behaviour – including the order in June by Phillips 66, the refining and chemicals group, [for 2,000 rail tank cars to transport shale oil](#) – as evidence of a long-term interest in moving oil by rail.

However, according to Rick Webb, chief executive of Watco, owner of several of the small railways involved, rail's defence may be the flexibility that it has demonstrated in the face of fast-shifting energy demand.

"A pipeline cannot be picked up and moved," he says. "A rail supply chain can be built between an origin and a destination almost overnight."

GRASSROOT GATHERING - DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR FRACKING RESISTANCE STRAND

Friday evening: Opening session introducing whole weekend. Opening of exhibition space with artwork related to community resistance, fracking etc. Visual display with images of what fracking campaigners have been doing over the past year throughout Ireland and NI - people arriving can add to this (Meg's idea - something that would stay up for whole weekend and that people add to, use to reflect on all that has been done in past year)

Saturday morning

- Intro Session - groups and individual campaigners introduce themselves and can speak for 3-5 minutes each about the experiences of their group in the past year, what they feel they have learned along the way. Opening out into a discussion of what what people would like to gain from the weekend/what questions people would like to discuss together as a movement.
- Skills workshop -one group/pair of facilitators runs a workshop to share a skill that people have suggested would be useful to share (options might be: skills for doing outreach in the communities where we live, facilitation skills, website skills, social media skills, presentations, staging demonstrations, video skills, legal awareness, dealing with gardai in protest situations, lobbying, mainstream media skills, direct action...)
- Lunchtime - time for networking and catching up...

Saturday afternoon

- Skills workshop - one group/pair of facilitators runs a workshop to share a skill that people have suggested would be useful to share (options might be: skills for doing outreach in the communities where we live, facilitation skills, website skills, social media skills, presentations, staging demonstrations, video skills, legal awareness, dealing with gardai in protest situations, lobbying, mainstream media skills, direct action...)
- Cross-movement collective discussion space - a discussion space open to themes across our movements (resistance to fracking, movements against austerity)
- Discussion space for the movement against fracking in Ireland - a space for discussing issues, ideas that affect the whole movement (e.g. round table discussion on what we have learned in our various groups? key moments when we should pull together coming up over next 3-6 months? discussing how we communicate between groups and counties? how different campaign approaches are working/not working? overview of success over the past year and how we build on them? strategies for community-based awareness raising?)

Saturday evening: Evening programme - we plan to have a strong arts dimension to the weekend with music, video, poetry etc - contributions relevant to our movements welcome!

Sunday: Discussion space OR Skill sharing space (specific theme needs to be chosen based on interest and need as above)

Sunday Lunch (time for networking)

Plenary session for whole grassroots gathering. Close of weekend c. 4pm.

VOTING – EU MEMBERS

This message is aimed at the supporters of the anti-fracking movement, working within the European Union.

If you are represented by a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), please read this message and take action! Feel free to share widely!

As was already discussed in previous messages, the European Parliament's [Environment Committee](#) and [Industry Committee](#) will vote on reports on the environmental impacts and the industrial and energy aspects of shale gas respectively. These votes will take place on *18 September* (Industry Committee) and *19 September* (Environment Committee).

The authors of these reports – Mr [Sonik](#) for the Environment Committee and Ms [Tzavela](#) for the Industry Committee – are close to the fossil fuel industry and the shale gas lobby in particular. Both have faithfully represented the viewpoints of the industry in their draft reports. You can find original versions of the Sonik draft report [here](#) and the Tzavela draft report [here](#).

Some environmental NGOs ([Food & Water Europe](#) & [Friends of the Earth Europe](#) in particular) have actively lobbied MEPs about the need for a ban on fracking. While the Greens and the leftwing GUE group and individual Liberal MEPs support such a ban, they find little support among the 2 biggest groups, the European People's Party (EPP), the Socialists (S&D), the Conservatives and the extreme-right EFD group.

After the vote in these Committees, Food & Water Europe and Friends of the Earth Europe are committed to place the vote about a ban on fracking in the European Union on the agenda of the plenary session of the Parliament at the end of October. This plenary vote will be combined with a roll-call vote, which will enable us to know who voted in favour and against a ban on fracking. Such a vote will be an important symbol for the emerging anti-fracking movement in the EU, and enable us to keep the pro-fracking MEPs accountable at the next elections in 2014. Stay tuned for this one!

The vote in plenary session will be important, but we have also made progress in toning down the enthusiasm for shale gas in these Parliament reports, especially the report by Mr Sonik in the Environment Committee. A number of Compromise Amendments between all political groups is very likely to receive a clear majority. While we may not like everything in these Compromise Amendments, they do represent significant progress compared to the first drafts of these reports.

Secondly, there are a number of more 'radical' amendments by individuals or groups of MEPs, which are not incorporated in the Compromise Amendments. This is where we can still make the biggest difference, particularly in the Environment Committee. Some amendments call for a mandatory impact assessment of all shale gas projects (nr. 92). Others demand that fugitive methane emissions be addressed by the use of 'green completions' (nr. 152). We also want to delete some sections of the draft report, which calls for public funding for research on how to frack more 'sustainably'.

You can find the 166 amendments for the Sonik report [here](#) and the 233 amendments for the Tzavela report [here](#).

This is why we would like national groups to call up their respective MEPs and ask them to support the voting list in attachment. Individual MEPs do not make up their own mind about how they vote on every piece of legislation or resolution. They typically follow the party line, which is decided by the 'coordinators' of the groups. However, MEPs can sometimes be convinced to follow their conscience and support a different voting list.

This is why we want to ask you to call up or mail your MEPs (particularly the EPP and Socialist, but others as well) to follow this voting list. In our experience, pressure from constituents is the most effective way to influence an MEP.

You can find a list of your MEPs in Environment and Industry Committee in attachment.

Please do not hesitate to contact us gdecock@fweurope.org and antoine.simon@foeeurope.org, if you have any questions. Keep us posted about any responses that you receive.

Friends, let's rock this vote and finish the licence to operate of the dirty gas industry!