



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

facebook: [NO FRACKING IRELAND](#)

fracking ireland google groups, apply for membership: charlie2williams@gmail.com

BAN FRACKING IN IRELAND!

For an overview of all groups and contact details visit:
<http://frackingfreeireland.org/contact/contact-local-groups/>



Full info: see UPCOMING EVENTS

Bringing the voice of The North West to The Dail PRO Love Leitrim Sat. 27 Oct.2012

Members of the 'Love Leitrim' group are walking from Manorhamilton to Dail Eireann over the autumn mid term to deliver the voice of the people of The North West to the Dail.



Join us for a local traditional music session in the West of Ireland from the comfort of your own home (20th November)

FRACKING IRELAND IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Environmental Pillar was testing the water and contacted four campaigners a.o myself. (ineke) This week meetings were organised by groups, discussions on face book/ fracking ireland google groups took place regarding the Environmental Pillar proposal and the following meeting is organised:

Leah:

There will be a meeting this Saturday Saturday 27 Oct 6 pm.in

the Bush hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon

to discuss the Environmental Pillars proposal - the pro's and cons and whether or not we should engage with such a process.

This meeting is open to all active groups and members in the anti-fracking campaign north and south.

It is a very important meeting, we are at a pivotal stage in this campaign. I feel it is extremely important that we all try to make this meeting, please spread the word on this, through the various email groups, websites etc...

If you have to travel from far, we have a place to sleep for free.

We have a converted barn with 2 rooms upstairs and a 'kitchen' area with a range downstairs (not in operation yet) that can heat the rooms upstairs. It is not yet finished, toilet and shower are not installed, (but there is a toilet and shower in the cottage and the studio/office as well) so at present very basic and some DIY has to be done, but it is clean, dry and cosy.

If you bring in your sleeping bag, we have some simple mattress we can put on the wooden (varnished) floor, so you are more than welcome to stay overnight. The rooms are 25 and 20 m² so place enough for a lot of campaigners.

Ineke (ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)

The Environmental Pillar 's proposal

Dear...

Good to talk with you earlier. To repeat the background on this, representatives of the Environmental Pillar met with Minister O'Dowd and his officials. They asserted that it was not possible for them to hold a full public consultation, but at the same time they were very keen to ensure that the Terms of Reference for the EPA research included the concerns of the communities that are situated in the areas where fracking was a possibility. They asked the Pillar if they would be willing to work with the groups that represent the concerns of those communities and collate a list of questions that need to be answered by the research. They offered to cover the costs of this process.

The Pillar proposed that the research report, following its academic review should then be put out for a 3 month public consultation prior to any political decision being made.

Following the meeting the Pillar Plenary spent some considerable time discussing this proposal and finally decided on a possible process, but to check it first with some of the anti-fracking groups to see what they felt about engaging with the process as outlined below. If the response is positive then the Pillar intends to employ a person to carry out the following process over the three weeks leading up to the 16th November. This date will have to be checked against the Department of Energy's timetable to ensure the document gets to them in time to have an effect.

Proposed Process

A process of transparent and inclusive engagement will take place with all known groups campaigning against the introduction of fracking in Ireland and Northern Ireland, including the Environmental Pillar, in order to produce a document listing the questions that these groups need the EPA research to answer in order to address their concerns regarding this issue. This statement will include the names of all groups included in the process unless they want to be excluded. The document will then constitute a list of all the questions that the groups want to have included in the Terms of Reference of the pending EPA research tender and that also need to be addressed in the research project itself. In the document all questions will be listed with equal prominence and without qualification. This process does not preclude the groups concerned submitting their concerns separately. The document will be circulated to all the contributors for verification before being submitted to Minister O'Dowd in the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources on 19th November.

The process will include a workshop to which representatives of all the anti-fracking groups will be invited, as well as an email/electronic survey with telephone follow-ups as is necessary.

I have already spoken to ... on this and hope to get Ineke and ... before the day is out, so for now I would appreciate it if you could keep this within your own group.

I hope this is helpful. Please feel free to ring me if you need any clarification.

We kept it within our own group, either it is a group, company, network (facebook), a website (FFI) or a google group and did share it with you because fracking will affect all Irish people

Today, Friday, we four received the following email from the Environmental Pillar:

PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES - Communication from the Environmental Pillar on the TOR for the EPA research on fracking

Communication from the Environmental Pillar on the TOR for the EPA research on fracking

At no time in this process has it been the intention of the Environmental Pillar to speak on behalf of anybody other than itself.

The background to our current discussion about the EPA research is this.

In August the Environmental Pillar adopted a strong [policy position](#) against shale gas exploration and fracking.

We posted the policy [on our website](#) and issued a press release which was [carried in the Fracking Matters newsletter](#). As with all our policy positions we sent it to relevant ministers and officials and asked for meetings.

We were invited to meet Minister O'Dowd at the end of September. Before the meeting Departmental officials indicated that one of the issues on their agenda was the terms of reference (TOR) for the EPA research. We wrote to the Department saying that in line with the Aarhus Convention there should be public consultation and participation in the process of developing the TOR.

At the meeting the Department maintained that they were not in a position to hold a formal public consultation. But they said they were open to receiving our views on the TOR in writing. We stated that they needed to hear the views of people in the affected communities. They reiterated that they couldn't hold a public consultation but offered to pay for the hiring of a short-term contractor (at an estimated cost of around €4,000) to compile the views of interested parties to be submitted alongside our own.

We agreed to consider facilitating this but made it clear that we could only do so if the groups whose views were being compiled (along with our own) were ok with the arrangement. **It seems now that there is not sufficient consensus for us to proceed down this road.**

The Environmental Pillar fully respects the absolute right of people to represent their own views, and at no time in this process has it been the intention of the Environmental Pillar to speak on behalf of anybody other than itself. **Therefore we are now minded to inform the Department that we are not in a position to hire a contractor to compile those views.**

The Pillar continues to believe the EPA research is important and that making our views known on the TOR is worthwhile. We will continue to prepare our own position on the TOR and we hope others who want to will do the same. It remains the Pillar position that the best context for this would be a Departmental-run public consultation.

Michael Ewing
Coordinator
The Environmental Pillar
Knockvicar
Boyle
Co Roscommon
Rep of Ireland

web: www.environmentalpillar.ie

Environmental Pillar members: An Taisce. Bat Conservation Ireland, BirdWatch Ireland. CELT - Centre for Ecological Living and Training. Coast Watch. Coomhola Salmon Trust. Crann. ECO UNESCO. Feasta. Forest Friends. Friends of the Earth. Global Action Plan Ireland, Gluaiseacht. Hedge Laying Association of Ireland. Irish Doctors Environment Association. Irish Natural Forestry Foundation. Irish Peatland Conservation Council. Irish Seal Sanctuary. Irish Seed Saver Association. Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. Irish Wildlife Trust. The Organic Centre. Sonairte. Sustainable Ireland Cooperative. VOICE. Zero Waste Alliance Ireland

The Talamh group has taken it's position and asked to post it on the web and the newsletter:

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Talamh-response-EPA-TOR.pdf>

All info on the fracking situation in Ireland on: web Fracking Free Ireland, button: fracking in Ireland? <http://frackingfreeireland.org/fracking-in-ireland-update/>

Two other groups also decided not to engage.

And the latest news is that the 'non public consultation' is rejected, by a.o. Friends of the Earth Ireland: campaigners will call for a proper, full, open ,transparent, democratic, public consultation!

Debate is still going on on this issue.

So we need your thoughts so, come to Carrick-on-Shannon Sat. 27 Oct. 6pm Bush hotel

Statement from Friends of the Earth

regarding the Environmental Pillar's Communication on the EPA research

Friday, 26th October 2012

Friends of the Earth has had reservations about the idea of the Environmental Pillar acting as a compiler of views on the terms of reference (TOR) for the EPA research since it was first suggested by Departmental officials as an alternative to a full public consultation.

Like the Pillar itself, our preference since the beginning was for a proper Departmental-run public consultation. But we agreed that it was worth exploring whether people in the affected communities were interested in the "non-public consultation" suggested by the Departmental officials.

This week we heard many concerns raised about the risks and pitfalls of the "non public consultation" by people inside the Pillar and, more importantly, by people outside the Pillar in the wider anti-fracking movement.

We became increasingly concerned that the idea of the "non public consultation", and the Pillar's role in it, was becoming a potentially divisive distraction from the bigger issues all of us who are opposed to fracking face.

So, in response to the questions and concerns being raised, we worked with others to get the Pillar to issue the communication that went out this morning (copied below). And we're glad the Pillar will now restate to the Minister its original position and demand the Department run a public consultation on the TOR for the EPA research.

I very much endorse the menu of questions for discussion that was posted today about what the fracking-free movement does next (specifically what might be discussed at tomorrow's meeting). They were:

- people might wish to prepare submissions to the department about the TOR as individuals or groups and could brainstorm for ideas on this?
- people might want to do some media work calling for a public consultation on the TOR, and argue that in the spirit of the Aarhus convention the people of Ireland are entitled to this. We know the EPA are planning to do a piece of research that will mainly focus on environmental impact, we could be putting public pressure on them to make sure the research is appropriately independent and broad?

- people might want to discuss bigger issues than the TOR?... such how to mobilise the whole country around fracking while the EPA research is taking place? And how to improve the capacity and communication networks of the fracking-free movement to meet that need to achieve that mass mobilisation and shift in public opinion?

Wishing you all the best for your meeting tomorrow as we all try to construct a broad, inclusive and collaborative movement **to ban fracking in Ireland forever.**

Oisín Coghlan
Director
Friends of the Earth.

More about the EPA – from a campaigner:
I just went to the EPA site just to see if by chance they had posted anything about the public consultation for their study. Nothing. But I found this instead, in case it is of interest to anyone:
<http://www.epa.ie/downloads/consultation/corstrat/>

They are looking for public input about their **strategy for 2013-2015**, what areas they should focus their energies on, etc. There seems to be an online survey.

The deadline for submissions is **November 9 2012.**

UPCOMING EVENTS and other CAMPAIGN news

REQUEST B by a campaigner

A gentle reminder to all on the email list to - please delete body of script if / when they are replying to all or individuals on list, and just leave the original subject header. i dont know how else to word that. em?

example - an original large email has been sent to all, and then someone replies to it leaving all the original email in the reply email and adds what they want to say, like ' thanks for that'. so please if anyone is replying just write 'thanks for that', leave the original subject header with 're.', and then delete the script below your reply / press send.

i have been having big problems with storage on my outlook express. and am deleting many of the emails, but especially those with the script undeleted in them : /

Bringing the voice of The North West to The Dail PRO Love Leitrim

Members of the 'Love Leitrim' group are walking from Manorhamilton to Dail Eireann over the autumn mid term to deliver the voice of the people of The North West to the Dail. The walk is the brainchild of Sligo native and teacher Cecily Gilligan, as she intends to take on the full journey walking through the villages & towns on the 133 miles in 9 days to raise awareness with the communities shes meet on route, of the threat of hydraulic fracturing to Ireland. The journey is to take on an added significance because at the recent international Global Frackdown event in Manorhamilton , residents were asked to write down their concerns about fracking. Their voices will be personally delivered into the hands of ministers after the 133 mile trek is completed to the Dail. One of the organisers says "Walking has a noble tradition in this country. We want to reach out from one community under threat in the North West to others and look forward to meeting people on route and ask them to walk with us. We are honoured to bring peoples voices personally to legislators and ask them to listen to them and act on their behalf, to ban fracking" '

Fracking is banned in France, in Bulgaria, a ban in parts of Germany & some states of

America. The Love Leitrim walkers start off on **Saturday 27th Oct at 9am** from the Market Square in Manorhamilton. Walkers will be asking people on their journey to come out and support their campaign to keep Ireland fracking free. They will ask people to sign their petition and appeal to communities to lobby their politicians. Love leitrim calls on members of the antifracking movement and the general public to come out and join the walk in whatever area they live. Cecily will walk through Killargue, Drumkeeran, Drumshanbo, Leitrim village, Carrick on Shannon, Drumsna, Dromod, Lomgford town, Edgeworthstown, Mullingar, Kinnegad, Enfield, Lucan, and Dublin. To keep up to date with their progress during the walk people can link up on twitter @loveleitrim If you spot them on their journey please take a photo and tweet or text it into us!

Contact proloveleitrim@hotmail.com or ring 086 1657424.

Join us for a local traditional music session in the West of Ireland from the comfort of your own home (20th November)

What are we doing?

On 20th November between 8pm and 10pm GMT on www.irelandwesttrad.com you can tune in to a live session of Irish traditional music and song. Wherever you live in the world across Europe and other continents this session is unique, brought to you live from Carrick-on-Shannon, County Leitrim, Ireland.

Who is here?

As part of this superb night's entertainment, traditional Irish music legends Donál Lunny, Seamus Begley and John Carty will be joined by Brian Rooney, Eleanor Shanley and many of County Leitrim's finest musicians. Followers of folk music across Europe will be familiar with Donal Lunny who was the inspiration behind legendary Irish folk groups Planxty and the Bothy band. Throughout the evening you'll also hear from Mossie & Tom Martin; Kevin O'Brien; Tommy Guihan; Pat Sweeney; John Dwyer; Fionnuala Maxwell; John McCartin; Alan Reid; Seán Gilrane; Tommy Guihan; Mick Mulvey; Lorraine Sweeney; the Moylurg Ceili Band; and Padraig McGovern.

Your host on the night will be Charlie McGettigan, well known especially across Europe as the co-writer and singer of Rock N Roll Kids one of the most beautiful songs which in 1994 won the Eurovision for Ireland. With Charlie's presence, the banter, the interaction with comments from all around the world this will be a great get together in the West of Ireland.

Bringing you closer

We want to bring you even closer to this beautiful part of the West of Ireland which we will play and sing about on the night.

- **Join our conversations**

You too will be able to interact during the live session by posting your comments or requests which will appear live on screen;

- **Take a tour**

You will be taken on a tour of some of the best places and festivals you might wish to visit sometime in Leitrim and hear from the artists you would most likely see playing at them. Leitrim is seeing The Gathering as a great opportunity to welcome overseas visitors with one highlight being the Leitrim Roots Festival 20th- 27th Sept 2013. Its County Town Carrick-on-Shannon celebrates 400 years since its foundation and 2013 is packed with events for people to enjoy.

- **Fly here**

If you live in Europe you will see on the night just how easy it will be to get to Leitrim with the international airport, Ireland West Airport Knock less than one hour away.

Win a dream holiday to Leitrim in the West of Ireland

Leitrim is renowned for its natural beauty with the river Shannon, lakes and mountain scenery and also for its many local folk music festivals. To showcase Leitrim and the webcast from Leitrim on Tuesday November 20th, we are offering visitors the chance to win a dream holiday to Leitrim in the beautiful West of Ireland. The prize includes return flights to Ireland West Airport Knock, three nights' accommodation at Lough Rynn Castle Hotel for two adults, two evening meals at award winning restaurants, cruise on Moon River Pleasure boat and car hire with hertz for the duration of stay.

The winning entry will be announced live during the webcast on November 20th. All you will have to do is register your details on www.irelandwesttrad.com now and tune in on Tuesday the 20th November at 8pm GMT on www.irelandwesttrad.com

Dear friends, colleagues and community representatives.

You are invited to join us on **Thursday 1st November at 7.30 pm** in **Larne Bowling and Lawn Tennis Club, Glenarm Road**.

Hosted by Larne & District Friends of the Earth group, we are delighted to welcome as guests:

Andrew McMurray, Director of NI's first community wind project, **Drumlin Wind Energy Cooperative**; speaking of construction of its first turbine in Larne, and how individuals can invest and be part of the project.

Kerri Whiteside, Living Seas Community Engagement Officer, **Ulster Wildlife Trust**, will talk about the Marine Bill, and how coastal communities can get involved in the Living Seas' vision to protect our marine habitats.

Following the presentations the public are welcome to stay for the **Annual General Meeting** of Larne and District Friends of the Earth.

There will be a discussion of local concerns regarding the recent announcement that Islandmagee Storage Ltd have secured planning permission to commence the first stage of the £400m project to create salt caverns in the Permian salt layer, deep underneath Larne Lough, to store circa 500 million cubic metres of natural gas.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-19991194>

Please pass the attached invitation to your friends and colleagues.
We look forward to seeing you next Thursday evening.

Leanna Filbey
Co-ordinator
Larne & District FoE

07919 098751

Enforcing European Union

Environmental Law

Friday, 23 November 2012

2 - 6pm

UCC Brookfield Health Science Complex

Lecture Theatre G01

Following Ireland's ratification of the Aarhus Convention in June 2012, it is timely to explore the ongoing tensions between international, European Union (EU) and national environmental law. The obligation to deliver affordable access to environmental justice has proven to be especially challenging. The scope of this obligation remains contested, notwithstanding the growing body of jurisprudence from the Court of Justice of the EU, the national courts and the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee. Significant issues remain unresolved: What is the appropriate standard of review to be applied by the courts in environmental judicial review and just how expensive is "prohibitively expensive" in the context of effective access to the courts?

Beyond purely legal questions, there remain a series of complex practical issues: How best to deliver affordable access to environmental justice in the Irish context? What impact have the new costs rules had in practice? Does the Irish legal system deliver "timely" review procedures? Is the public aware of the right of access to a timely and affordable review procedure under the Aarhus Convention and EU environmental law? What impact will ratification of the Aarhus Convention have in day to day practice and in litigation? What role is the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee likely to play in the ongoing debate over access to environmental justice in Ireland?

This conference is intended to build on the success of the environmental enforcement conferences held at UCC in November 2010 and 2011. It aims to identify contemporary issues in the enforcement of environmental law, to consider innovative solutions to the ongoing enforcement challenge and to foster discussion among participants. At a more general level, it seeks to provide accurate, up to date information for participants on issues relating to enforcement.

This event is supported by funding from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government and from the Department of An Taoiseach *Communicating Europe Initiative*.

MAKE-YOU-HAPPY-NEWS

A Dublin group will be set up by Richard Curtin [richard.curtin@gmail.com] **and Fergal Scully** [scullyf@tcd.ie] Welcome to our campaign and thanks a million!. This is really what we need. So, all people living in the Dublin area, contact Richard or Fergal and get involved! And Niamh Mac joined the group as well. She is involved in a Young Friends of the Earth-Frack Aware group in Dublin, and co-run the Eco Society in IADT, Dun Laoghaire. We are doing our best to get the word out in Dublin.

WHAT YOU CAN DO/MUST DO

Sign the petitions:

BAN FRACKING IN EUROPE/ IRELAND (FULL STOP)

this is one of the two on-line petitions in Romania:

http://www.petitieonline.com/nu_vrem_exploatarea_gazelor_de_sist_in_romania_prin_fractionare_h

and another one:

http://www.petitieonline.ro/petitie/nu_dorim_exploatarea_gazelor_de_sist_prin_fractionare_hidraulica_in_romania-p33029045.html

Ireland:

RECENT SIGNERS

yesterday



Ashley Boland, Ireland

2 weeks ago



Orla Quinn, Ireland

2 weeks ago



Benoît, Spain

2 weeks ago



Monica McNelis, Belgium

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

SIGN THIS PETITION



10,740 signers. Let's reach 20,000

FIND ALL EU PETITIONS ON: <http://frackingfreeireland.org/fracking-free-europe/eu-petitions/> (this could be of help to compose our Irish petition that should be handed over to the EU parliament)

PETITIONS – EU should receive all petitions from all countries.

Reporter: Borislav from Bulgaria

Dear anti-fracking and climate action campaigners,

I got the info from the European parliament about the shale gas petitions in the PETI committee. There are 9 official petitions + 2 answers (attached):
3 from Poland, 2 from Romania, 2 from Germany, 1 from France and 1 from Bulgaria. There was a PETI commission meeting on 09.10 focused on those petitions (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/peti/dv/shalegas-programme/_shalegas-programme_en.pdf), so we hope there will be at least a report which show the struggle of the european citizens against shale gas exploration and exploitation. Such a report could make pressure to the MEPs in the upcoming plenary decision process on the **ITRE (bad) and ENVI (not perfect, but OK) shale gas reports**. The plenary decisions are expected to be voted on **19-22 Nov so we should raised pressure campaign until that**

session. We should also use as arguments the last studies by the European commission ([Potential Risks for the Environment and Human Health Arising from Hydrocarbons Operations Involving Hydraulic Fracturing in Europe](#), [Climate Impact of Potential Shale Gas Production in the EU](#), [Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union](#)). The decision by the European parliament could be a crossing point in the development of the fossil fuels and specially the unconventional ones.

So here is my proposal:

Lets collect the statistic of all the petitions over countries in EU which were not applied in the PETI commission but in some other national or regional authorities (number of petitions, number of signatures, request bodies)! For example, here in Bulgaria, we have 8000 signatures in a petition to the PETI, but we also have 51551 signatures to the Bulgarian Parliament as a national citizen initiative petition. Then we can sent a letter with all the data to the PETI commission and to all the MEP's in EP.

Lets also try to convince Avaaz or some other organization/website/campaign platform to start a anti-fracking petition in the begining of the next month!

In the meantime, we can organize demonstrations and other events.

All the best,
For a Fracking Free Europe!

CALLING FOR A BAN --- UNLESS

CALLING FOR A BAN -- UNLESS....

From one of our campaigners:

An Taisce called for a public consultation on fracking. Did the different anti-fracking groups make a similar statement at some stage? I can't recall reading it.

"If we cannot show that the safety of the people and the environment can be safeguarded, then fracking should be banned.

Meanwhile, we are calling on Minister Pat Rabbitte to:

1. Organise public consultation to explain the current situation.
2. Follow The State of New York and issue no licences for Fracking **unless**/until he can ensure that enforceable safeguards are in place.
3. To be able to assure the people that if fracking to be undertaken in this island, that he has in position the regulations and enforcement powers to ensure that it will be carried out without environmental, social or economic harm."

<http://www.antaisce.org/transportenergy/Fracking.aspx>

GEAI: taken from their website: <http://goodenergiesalliance.com/our-view/>

Please open the link and read the full view of the GEAI

ARE BANS AGAINST FRACKING REALLY NEEDED?

The shale gas industry is a dirty industry. In the US, it has a history of operating with poor regulation, poor standards and working practices, many incidences of contamination of ground and surface water, air and land pollution wherever it operates and total disregard for local communities.

Fracking has been banned in many countries, including France, Netherlands, Germany and Bulgaria. New York State has put a moratorium on the practice and many other states are following suit.

We do not have the regulations in place in Ireland to ensure good practice in this industry. It is not known if this is even possible, the studies in the US and Europe on the environmental and social impacts of fracking are only beginning to be done.

To allow the gas industry to take over large tracts of land in our country and transform them into dirty mining zones without strict and enforceable regulation would be unbelievably short-sighted, foolish and irresponsible.

GEAI is therefore lobbying nationally and internationally **for a ban on hydraulic fracturing unless independent scientific studies verify that it can be undertaken sustainably and will result in no environmental, social or economic harm**

List of harmed people across Pennsylvania -

<http://pennsylvaniaallianceforcleanwaterandair.wordpress.com/the-list/>



THE JOINT OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE



The Joint Oireachtas Committee – **report from GEAI** taken from their website

<http://goodenergiesalliance.com/>

On 10th October, GEAI was received very well by the Joint Oireachtas Committee. An important outcome is that the Committee has agreed to write to the EPA to request that the Steering Group (set up to decide on the Terms of Reference for the more detailed research report on fracking) agrees to include GEAI. Before our presentation, Laura Burke, EPA Director General, made a submission to the Committee.

Representatives of Tamboran, the company given the licensing option for North Leitrim/Fermanagh were invited, but they did not attend, saying there was no point in doing so before 2015.

At the end, an open discussion occurred between the GEAI members (Liam Breslin, Dr Aedín McLoughlin and Eddie Mitchell) and the members of the Committee.

This is the complete video of the Joint Oireachtas Committee meeting (online made by [The Mr Sir Charles](#)). The GEAI contribution begins at 1:36:00: NOTE if the video will not open try <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheMrSirCharles?feature=watch>

Received from Good Energies Alliance Ireland

Three files, the statement made to the Oireachtas committee, the Powerpoint presentation and the complete submission also sent to the committee.

Obviously, the pdf won't show the animations.

All files also on good energies website.

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Opening-statement-Final.pdf>

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Oireachtas-submission-101012.pdf>

[Ireland the wrong place to start fracking](http://irelandthewrongplacetostartfracking.com) - <http://ubuntuone.com/0YNabHdk4HKhBsDqRh1nHk>

GIVE IT A THOUGHT:

Some excellent satire on the shale gas versus renewables debate

<http://www.thedailymash.co.uk/news/science-technology/windmills-preferred-to-cracking-open-the-earths-crust-2012102446178>

Energy expert Julian Cook said: "We are at a crossroads. Do we invest in more efficient renewable energy? Or is causing thousands of massive underground explosions that could also poison our water the obvious way forward?"

[Frontline: Climate of Doubt #public #opinion #denial](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/climate-of-doubt/)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/climate-of-doubt/>

(Highly recommended – Charlie Williams)

MOVIES- SONGS

SPAIN

Videos of the 2 big demonstrations held in Santander (2000 people) and Vitoria (6000 people) on october 6th 2012

<http://vimeo.com/51062343>

<http://www.fracturahidraulicano.info/noticia/videos-manifestaciones-6-octubre.html>

IRISH NEWS

The farmers journal again! - <http://www.farmersjournal.ie/site/farming-Reliance-on-imported-gas-continues-15844.html>

Comment:

Ireland is surrounded by water: if we use wave and tidal (and biomass/algae) energy we could be (less) independent of fossil fuels.

Reporter: David

In Ineke's newsletter was a link to an *Irish Times* article about flogging off Coillte assets to further impoverish the Irish:

The Irish Times - Wednesday, October 3, 2012

Plan to sell rights to Coillte trees criticised

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/1003/1224324776882.html>

Now I see this:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-09-25/biggest-english-polluter-spends-1-billion-to-burn-wood-energy.html>

which is possibly not related, but who knows? I mean, the wood will have to come from *somewhere*, unless I'm very much mistaken. Related or not, what it again points up is yet more cracks appearing in the minority world's energy-addicted culture, cracks which lead to ever desperate measures to maintain profit levels at the expense of you, I and the planet.

Drax Group Plc (DRX) will spend \$1 billion to turn the U.K.'s biggest coal-fired plant

into western Europe's largest clean- energy producer. The utility plans to convert one of the site's six units to burn wood pellets by June, said Chief Executive Officer Dorothy Thompson. It intends to switch two more units to wood at a later date, investments that if completed will see it harvest a forest four times the size of Rhode Island each year.

"We see a key part of our future as converting from essentially a coal station to a biomass station," Thompson said in an interview in London. "It will take Drax from being the largest carbon emitter by site in the U.K. to being, probably, one of the largest renewable plants in the world."

So have I got this right: an annual increase in consumption of forestry four times the size of Rhode Island (which totals about the same area as Northern Ireland, folks!) becomes, magically and suddenly, 'renewable'!!!??? How's that for spin?

David

EU -PARLIAMENT /NEWS

We have to inform our MEP's

Please note that this is the first in a series of directives that the EU will be revising to ensure an adequate regulatory framework for fracking. We need to keep our eyes peeled in the coming months and need all hands on deck to lobby our MEPs to make sure we get the strictest possible rules which will make it very difficult for the fracking industry to operate. You can be assured that the lobbying from vested interests will be huge so we really can't afford to adopt a wait-and-see attitude here. Hope everyone realises how important it is that we make our voices heard!

MEP's visit also web FFI contact/ contact Irish politicians:
<http://frackingfreeireland.org/contact/contact-irish-politicians/>

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Environment: Commission to streamline rules on environmental impact assessments of projects

The European Commission today outlined new proposals to streamline legislation on environmental impact assessments. The proposals are intended to lighten administrative burdens and make it easier to assess the potential impacts of major projects, without weakening existing environmental safeguards. Current levels of environmental protection will be strengthened, and businesses should enjoy a more harmonised regulatory framework.

Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik said: "For the past 25 years, the EIA Directive has helped ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into decision-making for projects. This has improved the sustainability of countless projects, while also empowering citizens and ensuring that they are informed and consulted before decisions are made. But loopholes need to be fixed, in particular concerning the quality of the assessment process, to make sure that projects that

will affect the environment are properly assessed."

The [EIA Directive](#) entered into force more than 25 years ago. It has been amended several times, but, following a wide stakeholder consultation, the Commission decided the time has come for a comprehensive overhaul, adapting it to developments in policy and to legal and technical developments. The changes are also forward looking, and emerging challenges that are important to the EU as a whole in areas like resource efficiency, climate change, biodiversity and disaster prevention will now be reflected in the assessment process.

The proposed changes include:

- Adjusting the procedure that determines whether an environmental assessment is needed. This will ensure that only projects with significant environmental impacts are subject to such an assessment. Projects adapted to reduce their impacts and small-scale projects with local impacts should be approved more swiftly at lower cost, leaving authorities more time to focus on assessments of major projects with large-scale environmental impacts.
- Strengthening rules to ensure better decision-making and avoid environmental damage. Impacts from alternative proposals will need more systematic consideration, and competent authorities will need to explain the reasons behind their decisions more clearly.
- Streamlining the various stages of the EIA process, by introducing timeframes and a new mechanism to ease the process when several assessments are required and several authorities involved. These changes will bring more legal certainty and accelerate the process, without compromising the quality of the assessment.

Today's proposals are the result of a revision process that included wide consultations, and studies on the effectiveness of existing rules and the impact of possible amendments.

Next Steps

The proposed measures will now be considered by the European Parliament and the Council. Once the text is agreed, it will become EU law.

Background

The aim of the EIA Directive is to ensure that projects which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment are adequately assessed before they are approved. Hence, before any decision is taken to allow such a project to proceed, the possible impacts it may have on the environment (both from its construction or operation) are identified and assessed. Developers can then adjust projects to minimise negative impacts before they actually occur, or the competent authorities can incorporate measures to avoid, reduce or compensate environmental impacts into the project approval.

The Directive also ensures early public participation in the environmental decision-making procedures. In particular, members of the public concerned must be given the possibility to comment while all options are still open to the competent authority, i.e. before a final decision is taken on the request for development. When approving a project, the competent authority is required to inform the public, including on the measures envisaged to avoid, reduce or compensate environmental impacts.

For more information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/home.htm>

Source: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1158_en.htm?locale=en

The European Environment Bureau also had a press release today responding to this. Might be of interest to people

SMALL STEPS FORWARD ON DIMINISHING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF MAJOR PROJECTS, BUT CONCERNS REMAIN

For immediate release: 26 October 2012

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and Justice & Environment (J&E) have welcomed the European Commission proposal for a revision of the EU Directive on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) released earlier today [1]. Both NGO federations consider that the proposal in many respects represents an improvement on the existing Directive, attempting to address many of the shortcomings they have criticised over the years, but are concerned that a number of shortcomings remain, especially relating to public involvement in the process.

The criteria for whether or not a project should have an EIA are now more specific. The proposed text includes **new aspects** to be taken into account, such as impacts on **climate change**, and more comprehensive analysis of environmental impacts. . Once the project is under way, the proposal then provides for monitoring of the environmental impact, though this is still not a requirement for all projects.

Jeremy Wates, EEB Secretary General reacted: *"For years, developers have got away with avoiding having the environmental impact of projects taken into account by splitting up projects into small parts; otherwise known as 'salami slicing'. The EEB is happy to see that today's proposal deals with this by examining the **accumulation of impacts** of multiple projects by the same or different developers."* However he added that more remains to be done to bring the directive into the 21st century: *"This proposal makes no attempt to deal with the bizarre situation whereby the project developer is under no obligation to guarantee that the EIA is carried out before the project starts."*

Despite some improvements in many aspects the proposal remains in contravention of the Aarhus Convention. There is no provision to halt projects while court cases are pending: something which is both unacceptable and in breach of the Convention.

*"This proposal lacks any improvement regarding access to justice or public participation even though the case law of the European Court of Justice and the Compliance Committee of the UN-ECE Aarhus Convention both found that it should do", states **Thomas Alge**, Chair of the association Justice and Environment, representing NGOs focussing on environmental law and litigation in various EU member states. "Among other things it is not acceptable that NGOs are not explicitly entitled to participate and challenge screening procedures for projects. This means public participation rights remain in breach of the international obligations of the EU and its Member States."*

ENDS

[1] The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (85/337/EEC) came into force in 1985 and has served since then as a key instrument of EU environmental policy. The purpose of the Directive is to ensure that projects affecting infrastructure, dams, industrial plants, quarries etc which are likely to have significant effects on the environment are assessed and alternatives taken into consideration.

[2] 1998 Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, adopted under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

[3] European Commission Press Release: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1158_en.htm?locale=en

[4] EIA EC Homepage <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/home.htm>

[5] 2012 Justice and Environment study on Aarhus Conventions implications on the EIA directive:

http://justiceandenvironment.org/_files/file/2012/EIA%20analysis%202012.pdf

[6] Proposed amendment text of the EIA directive:

http://justiceandenvironment.org/_files/file/2012/EIA%20table%202012.pdf

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The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is the environmental voice of European citizens, standing for environmental justice, sustainable development and participatory democracy. We want the EU to ensure all people a healthy environment and rich biodiversity.

Austria

Dear fracktivists all around Europe,

I will share some photos of a really nice action our local group did at the end of September. After this action (maybe the reason or not) **the oil and gas drilling company in Austria announced to stop the shale gas project.**

<http://www.weinviertelstattgasviertel.at/blog-3/photos/index.html>

Andreas

www.weinviertelstattgasviertel.at

Spain

Spanish industry creates a platform to defend fracking industries interest

Reporter: Samuel Martín-Sosa Rodríguez

in Spain the enemy is also becoming organized...they created a platform to promote shale gas benefits, triggered by BNK Petroleum amongst others

<http://www.shalegasespana.es/>

Samuel Martín-Sosa Rodríguez

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Comment by Antoine (Friends of the Earth Europe)

They are definitely well-organised.

As you can see, they set up an equivalent platform at the EU level:

<http://www.shalegas-europe.eu/en/>

Same logo, same design.

And behind it, all the usual suspects working hands in hands: Chevron, Cuadrilla, Halliburton, Shell, Statoil, Total (<http://www.shalegas-europe.eu/en/index.php/about-us/about-shale-gas-europe>)

fotografías de manifestación de Vitoria



Denmark

Information about the current situation on shale gas in Denmark (in Danish):

<http://frederikshavn.dk/Sider/Skifergas.aspx?topemne=9746ec49-3fc4-49f6-b97e-6af0721e2212&emne=4827400e-296f-426b-b322-75760ece0eab>

Signatures are being collected (both on paper and electronically) to be sent to Frederikshaven Municipality, where Total recently received permission to drill two water wells, which will support the exploration process.

More links:

<http://www.skifergasnejtak.dk/>

<http://www.skifergas.dk/en.aspx>

FYI

It does not seem like a big event, probably intended for local brainwash: <http://www.geus.dk/>

It is described in Danish, but presentations will be held in English. I am planning to attend.

Google translate:

Theme meeting on shale gas in Geocenter Denmark on 30 October. You will hear about shale gas in the U.S. and assessments of the global shale gas resource, and learn about Danish shale geology and ongoing studies in North Jutland.

In Denmark, as in Europe, there is great interest in developments in unconventional energy resources, particularly in light of recent significant development of shale gas-extraction in the U.S. and Canada.

In recent years, the production of shale in North America has risen dramatically, such that the non-conventional energy sources now contributes approx. half of the total domestic gas.

This has had a major impact on the supply and price developments and the global context also been changed investigative focus and shifted investments from conventional oil and gas projects for shale gas. However, there have also been some critical discussions, especially, it has been argued that there may be several negative environmental and climatic consequences of this.

Program:

Peter Britze (GEUS) starts to give a brief introduction on the current European work. Then Donald Gautier (USGS) provide an overview presentation on shale gas in the United States and the USGS's ongoing assessments of global shale gas resources. Niels Schovsbo (GEUS) gives a general presentation of the Danish shale geology on the basis of recently completed and ongoing research. Finally, representatives from Total present the geological model and drilling plans from their prospectus in North Jutland.

AAPG: American Association of Petroleum Geologists

DGF: Danish Geological Society

SPE: Society of Petroleum Engineers

GEUS: Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland

GLOBAL NEWS

Here a lesson how the right-wing is manipulating the internet => [Tea Party Imposters Undermining Internet Discourse](#)

New Ad Slams Fracking in New York <http://climatecrocks.com/2012/10/24/new-ad-slams-fracking-in-new-york/>

Some arguments to help undermine the economic success story of shale gas.
<http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/take/the-murky-future-of-us-shale-gas/157>

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/21/business/energy-environment/in-a-natural-gas-glut-big-winners-and-losers.html?_r=0

AUSTRALIA

Reporter: Marianna

Check out last night's ABC Lateline for the latest on the expansion of shale gas exploration in the Kimberly region of Western Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/lateline>

We were interviewed over the chemicals used there. There was so little knowledge about this among the community and local government, very worrying.

I can only wonder where the USEPA estimated water needs for standard Shale gas fracking - requires 7.7 - 38 megalitres (2-10 million gallons) per hydraulic fracturing and a well may be fracked many times - will come from.

Buru Energy provided no data on volumes of chemicals used in the 3 hydraulic fracturing they have already undertaken but based on standard 0.5-2.0% chemical additive to fracking fluid, (0.5 -2% of approx. 2,385,000 litres of water they stated they would use) it would mean approximately 12,000 – 47,000 litres of chemical additives were used in 3 small exploratory fracks.

Of course these are rough figures but give you an idea of the quantities used.

Find below the article in the Los Angeles Times on coal seam gas in Australia.



Lock the Gate appears to be a fitting name for Australia's protest movement against hydraulic fracturing. It took activists years to identify threats to public health from "fracking," a classic case of getting mobilized only after the proverbial horse has escaped.

Australians in the rural reaches of Queensland greeted fracking with gusto when the northeastern state's political leaders began about seven years ago to tout the profit potential of the unconventional extraction method that blasts sand, water and chemicals into coal and shale seams. Ambitious projects were drafted. More than 4,500 wells were drilled in barely two years, and work has begun on a 250-mile pipeline from the gas fields to Gladstone Harbor and a massive liquefaction facility there. Once construction of the port complex on Curtis Island is completed in 2014, gas will be converted to liquefied natural gas and shipped north to energy-hungry Asian neighbors.

It wasn't until the buildup got into full swing about three years ago that locals began complaining of distressing side effects of fracking. Activists claim drinking-water aquifers have been contaminated, groundwater depleted and greenhouse gases released along a three-mile stretch of the Condamine River, which at times appears to be boiling.

Dredging in Gladstone Harbor has been blamed for disease outbreaks among fish and mud crabs. Marine scientists attribute the sickness to toxic metals being stirred up from the seabed. Port developers say the defects and deaths were caused by an excess of fresh water from seasonal flooding.

"What was a wonderful fish nursery has turned into an industrial harbor, with ships that will be driving straight through the Great Barrier Reef," said Matt Landos, a University of Sydney researcher and private consultant in aquatic animal health.

A greater irritant for Australians, Landos said, is the lack of information being provided on the environmental and health costs entailed in the race to make Australia the No. 1 LNG exporter in the world by 2020.

Gas output in historically coal-dependent Australia took off in the last decade, beginning with undersea extraction off the northwestern coast. It quickly swept to the more populous east coast with the discovery of major coal-seam deposits in the Bowen and Surat basins that extend from Queensland into New South Wales.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration in its [2011 world energy outlook](#) reports that Australia, already the fourth-biggest exporter of LNG, has the largest proven natural gas reserves in the Asia-Pacific region, with 110 trillion cubic feet. It has nearly four times that volume in technically recoverable shale gas, the agency estimates, leaving it well positioned to fill the booming energy needs of the region.

Queensland's new premier, Campbell Newman, campaigned on a platform of support for the LNG buildup but insisted before his election in March that it wouldn't be "at any cost," that the agricultural state's farmland had to be protected.

But activists charge that pursuit of the gas bonanza has been unbridled. And the acrimony has only intensified since the appointment of rancher John Cotter as "gas sheriff," charged with resolving disputes between landowners and gas industry interests. Cotter's son, John Jr., is founder of a private company that does consulting and project management in mining operations, including contracts with the multibillion-dollar Queensland Curtis Project expanding coal seam fracking and helping build an underground pipeline.

Lock the Gate Chairman Drew Hutton accuses the Cotters of having an "intolerable" conflict of interest and calls the appointment "a most appalling, short-sighted decision," the Sydney Morning Herald reported last month.

Landos accuses the Queensland government of being blinded to the environmental threats of expanded fracking by "starry-eyed economic forecasts" of Australia emerging as the new LNG global powerhouse.

"It's a false accounting that doesn't take into consideration the costs of environmental cleanup," the veterinary scientist complained in a telephone interview from Sydney. Expectations of jobs and export income, he added, "are leading to tremendous enthusiasm among our politicians to push the industry forward with minimal impediment."

He worries that the all-out drive for LNG dominance will destroy coastal fisheries and damage sites of natural beauty in exchange for an economy dependent on gas that could be exhausted in 25 years.

The U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization warned the Australian government in June that its rapid LNG development plan was posing "a significant risk" to the Great Barrier Reef, which has been under World Heritage protection since 1981. It extends from Gladstone Harbor northward along the Queensland coast and would be traversed by gas exporting ships headed for China, Japan and Taiwan.

UNESCO asked the Queensland government to provide assurances by February 2013 that port development will be brought under control and the reef protected, warning that otherwise the site may be designated as "in danger," a shaming censure for any First World national steward.

Campbell, the state premier, responded to the world body report with assurances that the environment would be protected, "but we are not going to see the economic future of Queensland shut down."

Lock the Gate and other anti-fracking groups have exploded over the last year as farmers have seen their water tables drop and their land littered with mine tailings, said Mariann Lloyd-Smith, a lawyer and senior advisor to the International POPs (Persistent Organic Pollutants) Elimination Network. The groups seek clarity on what is being injected into the coal seams. Companies often refuse to disclose such information, saying the formulas are industrial secrets.

Groups such as Australia's National Toxins Network have been collecting data on pollution and waste to use in legal challenges that have become so prevalent that some fracking companies are giving up and handing in their exploration permits, Lloyd-Smith said.

Unlike in the United States, where property owners hold the rights to resources beneath their land, the Australian government owns everything below the topsoil. The Gasfields Commission has the authority to compel landowners to accommodate energy exploration, typically resulting in compensation of about \$1,500 per well, Lloyd-Smith said. That's turning out to be too little to clean up the mess once drilling is over, driving up opposition across Australia.

Temporary bans on fracking in the two states south of Queensland -- New South Wales and Victoria -- have been enacted in response to public demands for investigation of environmental damage claims.

"When one farmer locks his gate, the companies have the right to take the case to arbitration or to the courts, and they often do. But when 100 farmers lock their gates, it's a case of diminishing returns for the companies," Lloyd-Smith said. "It's that sort of consolidation of the community opposition that to a degree is winning the battle."

"To a degree" may be the operative assessment, as energy industry leaders are fighting back. In [a speech in Melbourne](#) this month, ExxonMobil Australia President John Dashwood blamed the fracking bans on "those who run agendas on emotional messages." He pointed to reduced greenhouse gas emissions as a tangible benefit from replacing coal-generated power with natural gas from shale and coal seams.

With more than \$500 billion in LNG-purchase commitments from Asian neighbors already on the books, even the more vociferous cries of fracking opponents are being drowned out by the drilling and blasting from new wells cropping up by the dozens each week.

As Hutton of Lock the Gate recently warned, "The Queensland environment is going to die a death of 1,000 cuts with this industry that it cannot control."

Follow Carol J. Williams at www.twitter.com/cjwilliamslat

Photo: Protests against the proliferation of coal-seam gas fracking have swelled in size and number in recent months as farmers, ranchers and rural residents confront industry and government leaders over the alleged polluting side effects of the unconventional gas extraction process. This protest last spring targeted plans to frack in New South Wales. Credit: Courtesy of Andrya Hart

REPORTS - RESEARCH

Can it be real? CO₂ + H₂O = fuel.

Exclusive: Pioneering scientists turn fresh air into petrol in massive boost in fight against energy crisis

Is scientific breakthrough a milestone on the road to clean energy?

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/exclusive-pioneering-scientists-turn-fresh-air-into-petrol-in-massive-boost-in-fight-against-energy-crisis-8217382.html#>

Steve Connor

Friday, 19 October 2012

A small British company has produced the first "petrol from air" using a revolutionary technology that promises to solve the energy crisis as well as helping to curb global warming by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Air Fuel Synthesis in Stockton-on-Tees has produced five litres of petrol since August when it switched on a small refinery that manufactures gasoline from carbon dioxide and water vapour.

The company hopes that within two years it will build a larger, commercial-scale plant capable of producing a ton of petrol a day. It also plans to produce green aviation fuel to make airline travel more carbon-neutral.

Tim Fox, head of energy and the environment at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in London, said: "It sounds too good to be true, but it is true. They are doing it and I've been up there myself and seen it. The innovation is that they have made it happen as a process. It's a small pilot plant capturing air and extracting CO₂ from it based on well known principles. It uses well-known and well-established components but what is exciting is that they have put the whole thing together and shown that it can work."

Although the process is still in the early developmental stages and needs to take electricity from the national grid to work, the company believes it will eventually be possible to use power from renewable sources such as wind farms or tidal barrages.

"We've taken carbon dioxide from air and hydrogen from water and turned these elements into petrol," said Peter Harrison, the company's chief executive, who revealed the breakthrough at a conference at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers in London.

"There's nobody else doing it in this country or indeed overseas as far as we know. It looks and smells like petrol but it's a much cleaner and clearer product than petrol derived from fossil oil," Mr Harrison told The Independent.

"We don't have any of the additives and nasty bits found in conventional petrol, and yet our fuel can be used in existing engines," he said.

"It means that people could go on to a garage forecourt and put our product into their car without having to install batteries or adapt the vehicle for fuel cells or having hydrogen tanks fitted. It means that the existing infrastructure for transport can be used," Mr Harrison said.

Being able to capture carbon dioxide from the air, and effectively remove the principal industrial greenhouse gas resulting from the burning of fossil fuels such as oil and coal, has been the holy grail of the emerging green economy.

Using the extracted carbon dioxide to make petrol that can be stored, transported and used as fuel for existing engines takes the idea one step further. It could transform the environmental and economic landscape of Britain, Mr Harrison explained.

"We are converting renewable electricity into a more versatile, useable and storable form of energy, namely liquid transport fuels. We think that by the end of 2014, provided we can get the funding going, we can be producing petrol using renewable energy and doing it on a commercial basis," he said.

"We ought to be aiming for a refinery-scale operation within the next 15 years. The issue is making sure the UK is in a good place to be able to set up and establish all

the manufacturing processes that this technology requires. You have the potential to change the economics of a country if you can make your own fuel," he said.

The initial plan is to produce petrol that can be blended with conventional fuel, which would suit the high-performance fuels needed in motor sports. The technology is also ideal for remote communities that have abundant sources of renewable electricity, such solar energy, wind turbines or wave energy, but little in the way of storing it, Mr Harrison said.

"We're talking to a number of island communities around the world and other niche markets to help solve their energy problems.

"You're in a market place where the only way is up for the price of fossil oil and at some point there will be a crossover where our fuel becomes cheaper," he said.

Although the prototype system is designed to extract carbon dioxide from the air, this part of the process is still too inefficient to allow a commercial-scale operation.

The company can and has used carbon dioxide extracted from air to make petrol, but it is also using industrial sources of carbon dioxide until it is able to improve the performance of "carbon capture".

Other companies are working on ways of improving the technology of carbon capture, which is considered far too costly to be commercially viable as it costs up to £400 for capturing one ton of carbon dioxide.

However, Professor Klaus Lackner of Columbia University in New York said that the high costs of any new technology always fall dramatically.

"I bought my first CD in the 1980s and it cost \$20 but now you can make one for less than 10 cents. The cost of a light bulb has fallen 7,000-fold during the past century," Professor Lackner said.