

Fracking Matters Newsletter 40-13 (130) – 18 December 2013

Contact details: [Web Fracking Free Ireland](#) and [Fracking Matters Newsletter](#)



Ban Fracking on the Island of Ireland

YOUR BAN – MY VOTE

UPCOMING EVENTS - CAMPAIGN NEWS- National

PEOPLE OF IRELAND, WAKE UP!!!

Please everyone email all the Leitrim County Councillors tonight and tomorrow morning and **into the new year to demand that a ban on fracking be put into the county development plan.**

The important day to put in your diary is **Jan the 13th**, Leitrim will be voting on the county development plan, we will need everyone their children, friends and nieghbours to be outside the offices to say NO BAN means NO VOTE .

Even more important is **9th of Jan** We need to be outside Fermanagh county council on Jan the 9th as Tamboran will be making a presentation to the council that day **they have said they will start test drilling in Big Dog Forest in the next few weeks.** We need feet on the street that day to impress upon the council that every day of drilling is going to cost them alot of money, and that there is no love for fracking in Fermanagh.

All about [Big Dog here](#)

TAKE ACTION

SIGN THE PETITION(S)

Also on the homepage www.frackingfreeireland.org (right column)

EMAIL LEITRIM CO. COUNCILLORS and ask TO add 'Ban Fracking' in the County Development Plan

greynolds@leitrimcoco.ie; sineadguckian@leitrimcoco.ie; tmulligan@leitrimcoco.ie; info@kilranelaw.ie; smcgowan@leitrimcoco.ie; estenson@leitrimcoco.ie; jmccartin@eircom.net; orourke_paddy@eircom.net; ghughes@leitrimcoco.ie; callian_ellis@eircom.net; sinnfeinliatroma@eircom.net; fergusonm@eircom.net; mcdermott_sean@eircom.net; frankdolan03@eircom.net; fdolan@leitrimcoco.ie; siobhanmcgloin@eircom.net;comary_bohan@eircom.net; gilmartin_francis@eircom.net;john_mcternan@eircom.net;dolan_gerard@eircom.net; emcgloin@leitrimcoco.ie;
Please note
comary_bohan@eircom.net; email is bounced back.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Leitrim Co. councillors received a **proposed wording** for the draft development plan, (section shale gas) omitting the wording ban fracking? - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/11Cq8wi8eEgWjH863DSo50Mt44ohPI7DOaXMgPeY5qqw/edit?pli=1>

Bord Gais is for sale -

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/bord-gais-buyer-put-uk-prices-up-by-9pc-29834582.html>

The proposed buyer Centria, has tight connections to Cuadrilla (fracking the UK)

KENTZ

Kentz, an Irish company has a deal with Valerus Field Solutions.

Valerus is a gas-handling specialist owned by US tycoon David Bonderman's TPG, with activity in Brazil, Mexico, Columbia and Venezuela.

The deal adds 665 employees to Kentz's 14,500 workforce, much of which is sourced from Ireland.

Kentz deal with Valerus a real game-changer as shares up 10pc

<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/kentz-deal-with-valerus-a-real-gamechanger-as-shares-up-10pc-29823387.html>

LETTERS



SPECIAL TOPIC – REGULATE OR BAN (part 2)

How to fight the frack? Will strict regulations do, or do we have to call for a ban? This is an ongoing debate, national and international. People who prefer strict regulations have (a.o.) in mind that a ban is not legally feasible. For more details: see [FMN 39-13 \(129\)](#) (incl. A relevant excerpt of the Irish Constitution, and [here](#))

Visit the website www.frackingfreeireland.org for an impression how people in the world try to stop fracking, with the latest EU threats and resistance in the UK and [Romania](#). (see heading EU below and website button [UK](#) and [EU](#))

International campaigners are calling for a ban. Fracking is banned in various [countries and states](#). In [France](#) a ban on fracking is in the Constitution.

In Europe, during the international meeting in Brussels, presentations by various counties, were given and are in favour of a ban, Mike Hill, a chartered engineer is calling for strict regulations. An overview of the presentations you will find [here](#) (scroll down to BRUSSELS)

Geert Ritsema [presentation_EP_050113_FoENL](#).

John Armstrong [Brussels Presentation 2](#)

Gabrielle Petron – [een_EU_Petron20130905](#)

Mike Hill – The Greens SHale Conf EU Sept 2013 Mike Hill_ for print

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The situation in Ireland.

An overview of the 'fracking history' you will find in our [Campaign leaflet](#) (a hard copy can be ordered: ineke@frackingfreeireland.org)

Co. Donegal did insert the word 'ban' in its Co. Development plan
<http://frackingfreeireland.org/politics-related-info/#MINUTES%20and%20MOTIONS>

Leitrim County Council wrote a draft Development Plan and will in January 2014 come up with a final County Development Plan. Will be the word BAN FRACKING into the plan? Campaigners are lobbying the councillors to follow the decision of Co. Donegal, (put the word BAN into the Development plan) but others are calling for strict regulations. (no wording of a BAN)

Please find below some thoughts about how to prevent fracking in Ireland.

CAMPAIGNERS FOR A BAN (in the development plan)

There is nothing stopping Leitrim Co Co from banning fracking.

There are two important questions here.

1. If **Donegal County Council** can insert a ban on fracking in their development plan, then why can't Leitrim County Council do likewise with their development plan?
2. There is **no legal impediment stopping Leitrim County Council inserting a ban** on fracking into their development plan precisely because the Gov't doesn't have an official position on fracking as of yet. **Leitrim County Council is free to adopt their own position on fracking in the absence of Gov't policy. Failure of Leitrim county councillors to adopt their 'own' position on fracking would be a complete abdication of their own responsibility as county councillors.** The making of the development plan is a power reserved to the councillors alone

DRAFT WORDING proposal (without a BAN)

(source: facebook NO FACKING IRELAND

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

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11Cq8wi8eEgWjH863DSo50Mt44ohPI7DOaXMgPeY5qqw/edit?pli=1>

Comment on NO FRACKING IRELAND facebook page

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

This proposed wording for a section on Fracking in the Draft Leitrim County Council Development Plan is (despite the manipulative use of language reminiscent of campaign language around the idea of a ban) at base a restatement of present government policy and **DOES NOT and WILL NOT constitute an ongoing ban on Fracking in Leitrim.**

It is a handwashing exercise to allow councillors en masse in advance of local elections to seem like they are on the right side wrt Fracking while in actuality doing nothing - but it basically kicks the can down the road with the government mantra of 'no fracking UNTIL the EPA reports'.

What campaigners want is their County council to insert a clear ongoing prohibition on Fracking into the draft development plan and the final development plan.

Councillors are being given an escape plan to allow them to fudge on this basic issue.

What is also very concerning about this document is the fact that it is apparent that a **tiny number of purported anti-fracking campaigners with close ties to Fine Gael** - have fed into and given legitimacy to this draft. (See link in first comment below). One of these campaigners has also taken it upon himself to canvass a councillor who is and has been strongly in favour of a clear ban being inserted to accept this shoddy and transparent distraction.

The key point from the draft below is representative of the slippery language of the draft generally.

"1. It is the policy of the Council to consider it necessary, reasonable and prudent to await the outcome of the second phase of the EPA research and the formulation of national policy which the Council understands will follow from this. It is the policy of the Council to deem any planning application/proposal for development relating to UGEE involving the use of hydraulic fracturing as premature pending the outcome of the further research, the determination of national policy and any subsequent variation of the Development Plan and, therefore, for the avoidance of doubt, any proposed development involving the use of hydraulic fracturing will not be permitted."

POLITICAL NEWS – EU/IRELAND

"Glorified piss" for water in Roscommon says **Ming**. And that's before fracking ever even starts. I also fondly remember Ming's comment about the cross-border issue of fracking, if it is allowed to go ahead in Fermanagh and that is ignored by Irish government, he said it would be like having a "pissing section in a swimming pool". LOL These piss analogies are good, down to earth Roscommon talk, although if given an ultimatum, I'd swim in piss and drink it before I'd drink the shit in that glass from Elphin, or swim in a river or drink water from an aquifer beside a fracking pad.



Picture of water from Elphin this evening. Anyone got other pictures or stories of water problems in the County Roscommon area before I discuss with big Phil how we have no intention of paying for what is glorified piss.

-----Dáil

questions on fracking

Sinn Fein Leitrim TD Michael Colreavy brought a number of questions about fracking to the Dáil last week.

<http://frackingfreeireland.org/2013/12/14/dail-questions-on-fracking/#more-8161>

IRISH NEWS(LETTERS)

Is Ireland paving the way for development of shale gas (and wind energy as well in the Mid lands and at the coast) and so It will be ready within two years when the EPA report is issued ...?????!!!

Proposed acquisition of Valerus Field Solutions

<http://www.kentz.com/media-centre/press-releases/proposed-acquisition-of-valerus-field-solutions.aspx>

- Valerus FS is a US-based integrated oil and gas surface facility solutions provider which provides a full suite of products and services from the well head to the pipeline as well as an integrated services capability
- The Acquisition is consistent with Kentz's strategy of establishing itself as a recognised market leader in providing highly skilled process engineering, EPCM and EPC services for small and medium sized oil and gas processing facilities worldwide.

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/business/kentz-expands-us-focus-in-316m-buy-252170.html>

(...)Irish-headquartered construction and engineering firm Kentz, has taken over a US-based Valerus Field Solutions for \$435m (€316m) in what is a major expansion for the company. Kentz, whose head office is in Clonmel, Co Tipperary, said the benefits of the deal include an increased exposure to high value, high-margin contracts; expanded offering through the addition of 665 employees including 198 personnel with demonstrable experience in gas handling and processing; diversified and expanded operational footprint with Valerus FS strongly positioned in the US onshore oil and gas market, **including shale gas, a new market for Kentz.**

Kentz deal with Valerus a real game-changer as shares up 10pc

<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/kentz-deal-with-valerus-a-real-gamechanger-as-shares-up-10pc-29823387.html>

(...)Earlier this year, Kentz boss Mr Brown said the company was tracking what's happening for the likes of exploration companies Providence Resources and Fastnet off the Irish coastline with interest. (...)

Full article at the end of the newsletter

Bord Gais wind farms rebuff for Mainstream

<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/bord-gais-wind-farms-rebuff-for-mainstream-29838644.html>

Bord Gáis Energy set to be sold for €1.12bn

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/bord-g%C3%A1is-energy-set-to-be-sold-for-1-12bn-1.1625990>

Greatest gift we have is the Earth

VALERIE ROBINSON'S
ENVIRONMENT
v.robinson@irishnews.com



IT IS almost impossible not to get caught up in the glitz, glare and consumerism that has come to characterise the celebration of Christmas in the western world. We can often fail to see the tree for the glittered baubles.

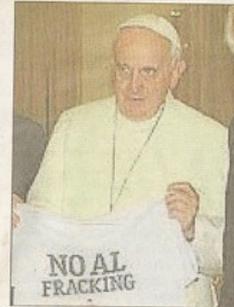
People today tend to think they are more clued-in than those who went before but we all have an important lesson to learn from our ancestors.

Ancient peoples across the globe had a deep connection with and understanding of their natural environment. They may not have used the kind of lingo we have today but they would realise the importance of sustainability – that in order to eat tomorrow, they had to conserve today.

In the west, references to Mother Nature appear in Mycenaean transcripts in the pre-Christian Greek world but the sense of nature as a female caregiver and nurturer was prevalent in many cultures.



At Christmas we bring a touch of greenery into our homes but holly and pine trees are more than decorations – they remind us of our spiritual connection to nature itself



MESSAGE: Pope Francis urged people to be 'protectors of creation'

the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Ireland. Its vision is to see churches throughout Ireland celebrate the gift of God's creation, recognise the interdependence

humanity and nature in God. They suggest that the survival of the Celtic Church might have guarded against the schism that would later occur between nature and Christianity. That broken connection allowed westerners to become materialistic and avaricious, with a desire to dominate, own and colonise others and to pillage the Earth's resources. Change comes slowly but it is never impossible. After decades of listening to global leaders pay lip service to issues such as global warming, pesticide use, air quality, deforestation and over-fishing, environmentalists were given a glimmer of hope last March.

Pope Francis, whose saintly namesake is the patron saint of the environment and who leads 1.2 billion Catholics, used his installation Mass in St Peter's Square to warn that when mankind failed to care for creation and for the weak, then "the way is opened to destruction and hearts are hardened".

■ A BETTER WORLD: Human activity is damaging the planet and future generations will suffer the consequences

He urged "all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life" to become "protectors of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment".

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, the pontiff had written in 2010 that if humans lost respect for nature "then ecological problems arise, like global warming". More recently, photographs of Pope Francis holding up an anti-fracking T-shirt went viral and made headlines around

the world. He has not publicly taken a stance on fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, but they do say that a picture speaks a thousand words. This summer Pope Francis met representatives of an indigenous tribe in the Amazon and listened to their experiences of deforestation by ranchers, dam builders and illegal loggers. In a speech delivered to the Bishops of Brazil, he called for "respect and protection of the entire creation which God has entrusted to man", adding that this creation should not "be

indiscriminately exploited, but rather made into a garden". WWF's Sacred Earth programme director Dekila Chungyalpa later said the Pope's comments sent a strong message to "all faiths across the globe" and had "empowered them to be the voice for the immense biodiversity and wildlife". Belfast-born minister the Rev Andrew Orr is chairman of Eco-Congregation Ireland, set up in 2005 and supported by the Catholic Church, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches as well as



"Who owns the world? According to the Bible it belongs to God. If we care for someone, we care for what belongs to them. It's as simple as that. Us Christians have no choice – if we believe in a loving creator God, we cannot but care for his world"

The Rev Andrew Orr

EU -NEWS

ROMANIA

Fracking, Pungesti, and the Destruction of European Democracy

<http://dissidentvoice.org/2013/12/fracking-pungesti-and-the-destruction-of-european-democracy/>

Horrific news from Bucharest, 15:30, December 15.12.2013.

Some minutes ago, **a man has set himself on fire** to draw attention of the abuses of the Romanian police against the people of Pungesti and for the fact that he was not allowed to organise a protest in front of the Government building, yesterday, despite him delivering all the necessary documents! He was not taken to hospital, but to the police station insted!

The media reported he did this because he was unemployed or that they don't know the reason, just to cover up for the real reason!

The fight down here is getting incredible accents!

This situation is turning insane here, someone do something before there's blood shed!

I know the person myself and I have ben just contacted by the people who were with him and have the films, they will be uploaded soon!

Maria Olteanu

Ion Ioan, the guy who set himself on fire, a labour union leader!!! (the labour union is called, ironically, Solidaritatea, like the one in Poland 33 years ago), was taken to the police station after the incident. He seems to have been rescued from the fire and not displaying serious wounds. Yet he was taken to the police station, after a mental health check. 3 lawyers went to get him and another person he was with out of the arrest. He was shortly released, then brutally arrested again. Here some images from the police station, where he is beaten and pulled on the floor, humiliated, with the lawyers aside. Right now he is still arrested, with a proposal for a long term research arrest of 29 days, usually used for criminals. His only "crime" was to try to commit the supreme gesture of dying for exposing the incredible situation in Pungesti.

This is Romania, a EU member state, 7 years after joining the EU. And the EU institutions keep a deep, disturbing silence that has brought the people here to despair and thinking that the only purpose of it is to expand markets! Which is by all means shown these days through the deafening silence we "hear" from Brussels.

Here the film of the incredible humiliation this labour union hero is subjected to!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6Jl-tYXFMM&feature=youtu.be>

UK

The government has today announced that roughly 60% of the UK is now available to fracking companies:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/266330/environmental_report.pdf

If you don't live in a license area now, it's very possible that you will at some point in the new year. Community resistance has dragged the industry into the spotlight & cost £millions in lost revenue over the last 2 years. An organised community is THE best defence against this or any other industry that threatens your health and environment. Is there a group near you? If not, start one!: <http://frack-off.org.uk/extreme-energy-fullscreen/>

This is a fight we cannot afford to lose. For support in setting up a new group get in touch via info@frack-off.org

Latest News: <http://frack-off.org.uk/barton-moss-latest-news/>

Directions: <http://northerngasgala.org.uk/map/>

Know Your Rights: <http://northerngasgala.org.uk/knowyourrights/>

More about Threat to North West: <http://frack-off.org.uk/fracking-threat-in-the-north-west/>

by: Frack Off (UK)

Two articles: (FULL ARTICLES AT THE END OF THE NEWSLETTER)

EU plan for fracking law threatens UK's shale gas boom

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10518120/New-EU-fracking-law-plan-threatens-Britains-shale-gas-boom.html>

Owen Paterson plots fightback against European Commission over dinner in Brussels to win support for Britain's fracking industry on eve of new shale gas drilling round

By Tim Ross, Political Correspondent

7:50AM GMT 15 Dec 2013

David Cameron's plan for a new fossil fuel bonanza from "fracking" underground gas reserves is under threat from draconian environmental laws being drafted in Brussels.

European legislation could delay plans to 'frack' in the UK

<http://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/news/2013/12/16/european-legislation-delay-plans-frack-uk/>

New proposals to regulate potential risks associated with hydraulic fracturing could delay its potential implementation in Britain by several years

The government's hopes of opening fracking sites across the UK have been dealt a blow as the European Commission is looking to bring in environmental legislation aimed at regulating pollution risks.

REPORTS- RESEARCH

[Study Links Fracking Chemicals and Hormone Disruption](#)
[By Sarah Matheson, Epoch Times | December 16, 2013](#)

High levels of hormone-disrupting chemicals have been found in water samples near fracking sites in Colorado, according to research accepted for publication in The Endocrine Society's journal *Endocrinology*.

The chemicals "could raise the risk of reproductive, metabolic, neurological and other diseases, especially in children who are exposed to EDCs [endocrine-disrupting chemicals]," said one of the study's authors, Susan Nagel, of the University of Missouri School of Medicine.

Researchers took surface and ground water samples from sites with drilling spills or accidents in Garfield County, Colo. The area has more than 10,000 natural gas wells. Researchers also looked at control samples from sites without spills in Garfield County, as well samples from Boone County, Missouri.

The water samples from drilling sites had higher levels of EDC activity that could interfere with the body's response to the reproductive hormone estrogen, and androgens, a class of hormones that includes testosterone.

Drilling site water samples had moderate to high levels of the hormone-disrupting chemical. Water samples from the Colorado River, which is the drainage basin for the natural gas drilling sites, had moderate levels.

Researchers found little EDC activity in the water samples from the sites with little drilling.

"Fracking is exempt from federal regulations to protect water quality, but spills associated with natural gas drilling can contaminate surface, ground, and drinking water," Nagel said.

Researchers looked at 12 suspected endocrine-disrupting chemicals used in fracking. They measured the chemicals' ability to mimic, or block, the effect of the body's male and female reproductive hormones.

"More than 700 chemicals are used in the fracking process, and many of them disturb hormone function," Nagel said.

Research has linked EDC exposure to infertility, cancer and birth defects.

"With fracking on the rise, populations may face greater health risks from increased endocrine-disrupting chemical exposure," Nagel said.

EDCs can also be found in manufactured products, certain foods, air, water, and soil.

Other authors of the study include: C.D. Kassotis, J.W. Davis and A.M. Hormann of the University of Missouri, and D.E. Tillitt of the U.S. Geological Survey.

The study, "Estrogen and Androgen Receptor Activities of Hydraulic Fracturing Chemicals and Surface and Ground Water in a Drilling-Dense Region," was published online on Dec. 16.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/402033-study-links-fracking-chemicals-and-hormone-disruption/>

PRESS RELEASE

EU environmental assessment law must include fracking, says HEAL

Brussels, 17 December 2013 – New evidence published today has prompted renewed calls from the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) for the environmental impact assessment to address shale gas fracking in Europe. (1)

Research published in *Endocrinology* yesterday confirms fears that shale gas fracking can release harmful chemicals into the environment, and thereby menace public health, according

to HEAL. Ensuring that the EU environmental impact assessment law includes shale gas activities is a crucial step towards addressing human health threats associated with the release of fracking chemicals.

The study is the first to show that ground and surface water samples taken from hydraulic fracturing (fracking) sites in the USA where spills had occurred contain higher levels of endocrine-disrupting activity than areas with little drilling. (2) Endocrine disrupting activity is of concern because ground and surface water is often used for drinking and bathing.

Although fracking in the USA takes place under different conditions and laws, this study is equally relevant for Europe because spills can never be completely avoided. The study makes the link between fracking spills and water contaminated with higher levels of harmful chemicals, which may cause or facilitate chronic diseases. Endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are linked with various chronic diseases, such as infertility and sexual organ malformation, hormonal cancers (breast, prostate, testis), neurological impairments (e.g., learning difficulties), and metabolic conditions (e.g., diabetes and obesity). (3)

"More than 700 chemicals are used in the fracking process, and many of them disturb hormone function," said one of the study's authors, Susan Nagel, PhD, associate professor of obstetrics, gynaecology and women's health at the University of Missouri, School of Medicine. *"With fracking on the rise, populations may face greater health risks from increased endocrine-disrupting chemical exposure."* (4)

The types and amounts of toxic chemicals used in fluids injected into fracking wells are not always disclosed fully to the public. However, in 2011 The Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX) successfully identified 353 chemicals being used in shale fracturing for natural gas. The analysis showed that 37% of these chemicals were endocrine disruptors. The study also showed that exposure to more than 75% of the chemicals used could have immediate effects on the skin, eyes, and other sensory organs, and the respiratory and gastrointestinal systems. (5)

Lisette van Vliet, Senior Policy Advisor, HEAL says: *"This new paper shows we're right to be concerned about these chemicals contaminating our water – water for drinking and growing food – in ways that could contribute to chronic diseases like some cancers, obesity and infertility. Environmental impact assessment is a key process to address chemical uses so EU law must include all fracking activities. We look to the European Parliament to stand firm against the blocking minority in the European Council and continue to insist that all fracking activities be included in the law."*

Sandra Steingraber, PhD, Concerned Health Professionals of New York (6) says: *"This new study shows us three things. One, chemicals commonly used in US drilling and fracking operations include agents that mimic sex hormones. Two, in areas of intense drilling, these chemicals turn up in water supplies at levels that alter hormonal signalling in living cells. Three, pregnant women, mothers, fathers, children, breast cancer patients—and all those who love them—are right to stand up and say, very loudly, ENOUGH. With this study, the fracking industry, like the tobacco and lead paint industries before it, has very little ground left from which to wave the 'no proof of harm' flag."*

Notes 1. The European Parliament, Member States in the European Council, and the European Commission are currently negotiating the final text of the EIA law in so-called 'Triologue' talks.

2. "Estrogen and Androgen Receptor Activities of Hydraulic Fracturing Chemicals and Surface and Ground Water in a Drilling-Dense Region," 16 December 2013, Endocrinology <http://endo.endojournals.org/content/early/2013/12/16/en.2013-1697.abstract?rss=1>

3. WHO [State of the science of endocrine disrupting chemicals 2012](#); EU [State of the Art Assessment of Endocrine Disrupters, Final Report](#)

4. Dr Nagel is quoted in an article at <http://medicine.missouri.edu/news/0214.php>

5. The Endocrine Disruption Exchange (TEDX), Natural gas operations from a public health perspective, September 2011 <http://endocrinedisruption.org/chemicals-in-natural-gas-operations/journal-article>

More on **Chemicals in Natural Gas Operations** by TEDX at <http://endocrinedisruption.org/chemicals-in-natural-gas-operations/introduction>

Video here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXHI2jSg5pM>

6. Biologist Sandra Steingraber is a co-founder of Concerned Professionals of New York, as well as New Yorkers Against Fracking. In 2010, during a visit to the European Parliament she spoke out on the public health implications of fracking, and was cited in UK press. She is Distinguished Scholar in Residence at Ithaca College in New York.

More information from HEAL on fracking at <http://www.env-health.org/policies/other-issues/fracking/>

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HEAL is a leading European not-for-profit organization addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union. With the support of its more than 65 member organizations, which represent health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, patients, citizens, women, youth, and environmental experts, HEAL brings independent expertise and evidence from the health community to different decision-making processes. Members include international and Europe-wide organisations as well as national and local groups. Website: www.env-health.org

Concerned Health Professionals of New York is an initiative to amplify the voices of hundreds of health professionals in New York who have been calling on Governor Andrew Cuomo to conduct a comprehensive Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on high-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing. As health professionals who everyday serve and care for New Yorkers, it is critical that the public health and safety of our communities is taken into consideration before any decision is made on whether or not to lift the current moratorium on fracking in New York. Website: <http://concernedhealthny.org>

Lisette van Vliet

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Tel: +32 (0)2 234 3645 – direct

Website: www.env-health.org

FULL ARTICLES

Kentz deal with Valerus a real game-changer as shares up 10pc

<http://www.independent.ie/business/irish/kentz-deal-with-valerus-a-real-gamechanger-as-shares-up-10pc-29823387.html>

10 December 2013

Shares in Tipperary-based engineering firm Kentz shot up by 10pc after the London-listed company launched a \$435m (?317m) deal to takeover US gas services company Valerus Field Solutions.

Kentz will pay cash for the US business in a deal that will mean a big boost to the Irish company's earnings per share once it completes next year.

Kentz was heavily targeted in two acquisition attempts earlier this year, but the Valerus deal changes its prospects as a buy target, analyst Dan Slater of Arden Partners said.

"It really builds out the earnings per share impact and makes Kentz less bite-size as an acquisition target," he said.

"People will keep talking about Kentz as a merger and acquisitions target but this is a major deal and is going to change the business quite a lot."

The Valerus acquisition will bring the US shale market and opportunities in Latin America into focus for Kentz, which as yet has had little activity there to date.

It also adds new clients and builds up the engineering procurement and construction side of Kentz's business, with plans to get both companies' sales teams working together as swiftly as possible.

Christian Brown, Kentz's chief executive (pictured), said the acquisition would give the company "a significant presence in the growing US market".

The Valerus deal has boosted Kentz's share price to such an extent that it is no longer trading at the bargain rate that previously attracted suitors.

"Now the price has come right up, trading at a premium compared to Kentz's UK peers, so that a lot of that good value that made it seem a cheeky acquisition has gone away," said Mr Slater.

Both FTSE100 player Amec and German M+W group were knocked back in approaches to Kentz in September.

Valerus is a gas-handling specialist owned by US tycoon David Bonderman's TPG, with activity in Brazil, Mexico, Columbia and Venezuela.

The deal adds 665 employees to Kentz's 14,500 workforce, much of which is sourced from Ireland.

Kentz, which started off as a Tipperary electrical contractor, has grown to be a ?790m market cap company with a ?10bn business pipeline. Shares rose by as much as 10pc during trading yesterday morning following the announcement.

Earlier this year, Kentz boss Mr Brown said the company was tracking what's happening for the likes of exploration companies Providence Resources and Fastnet off the Irish coastline with interest.

"We would look to bid and win any business there," he said. "We're going to continue to grow and grow in double digits and hopefully grow the workforce."

Irish Independent

EU plan for fracking law threatens UK's shale gas boom

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10518120/New-EU-fracking-law-plan-threatens-Britains-shale-gas-boom.html>

Owen Paterson plots fightback against European Commission over dinner in Brussels to win support for Britain's fracking industry on eve of new shale gas drilling round

By Tim Ross, Political Correspondent

7:50AM GMT 15 Dec 2013

David Cameron's plan for a new fossil fuel bonanza from "fracking" underground gas reserves is under threat from draconian environmental laws being drafted in Brussels.

The European Commission has been drawing up proposals for a new framework directive, which could take years to negotiate, in order to regulate the pollution risks of "unconventional" fuels, including shale gas.

Conservative ministers fear the move could severely damage the UK's shale exploration industry and are now plotting a fight-back against the Commission.

Owen Paterson, the Environment Secretary, has hosted a series of private dinners in Brussels in an attempt to persuade ministers from other EU countries to back Britain's case.

The dispute emerged as ministers prepare to announce next week that large swathes of Britain will be made available for shale gas drilling in the years ahead.

A new round of licences for fracking is due to be issued to drilling companies next year and the government expects "massive interest" from oil and gas exploration firms.

Mr Cameron has urged communities in every part of the country to embrace hydraulic fracturing, the technology known as "fracking".

This involves blasting pressurised water, sand and chemicals into shale beds deep underground, which then fractures, to release the gas and oil within.

Opponents of the technology have linked it to pollution of water supplies, gas leaks, small earthquakes, and even flames bursting from domestic kitchen taps.

Earlier this year, anti-fracking protesters in the West Sussex village of Balcombe, disrupted testing by Cuadrilla, the firm owning the licence to explore the shale potential at the site.

A number of Tory MPs fear their seats may be at risk from a local backlash if fracking is approved in their constituencies.

The Prime Minister has insisted that method is safe and has minimal impact on the landscape, while offering "massive" economic opportunities. Communities will be promised £100,000 in benefits for every new well where fracking takes place, under the government's new drive for shale gas.

Mr Cameron and the Chancellor, George Osborne, believe that Britain's shale reserves could

provide enough gas to meet the country's needs for forty or fifty years. They also hope the technology will create tens of thousands of jobs and reduce household energy bills, benefits which have been seen as a result of recent shale gas discoveries in America.

However, ministers fear that a new EU framework directive, driven by environmental groups, would put these plans in jeopardy.

Conservatives want to persuade the EU to allow Britain to "take the risk" of exploring whether shale gas reserves buried underground can be safely and viably extracted through fracking.

Mr Paterson returned from his latest dinner meeting of pro-fracking ministers on Friday. He was in Brussels attending a summit of environment ministers and hosted the talks on Thursday evening after the formal business of the day had concluded.

He is understood to have won the support of countries including the Netherlands, Romania and Poland.

But France is leading the opposition to fracking and has banned domestic exploration through the technique.

A senior government source said: "It looks like the Commission is moving towards a framework directive, which is bad news. We wanted guidance but it looks as though they are moving against us. This is being pushed by the member states who don't want fracking at all.

"We are prepared to take all the risks and all the flack about fracking. The other member states ought to let us do all that and then see what they need to do in terms of legislation. We would be at our own risk."

Sources in Brussels suggested that shale gas companies operating across Europe were facing a tough new package of legislation which the European Commission is preparing to publish next month.

Industry experts believe this is likely to take the form of an "unconventional fuels directive" which would be based on similar legislation covering environmental impact assessments and waste water.

The draft laws being considered would lay down strict rules on dealing with the risks of seismic disturbances caused by fracking, the contamination of water supplies, the impact of noise and air pollution, and the "venting and flaring" of gases given off during the process, a process which is required to minimise the danger of explosions.

British sources suggested that the momentum in Brussels may be moving in Britain's favour, although no announcement has been made.

A government source said Mr Paterson had been "taking a leadership role in Europe" on negotiations over the new fracking rules. "We want robust, clear environmental regulation to protect the environment and also for the shale gas industry. That must protect the environment and allow the industry to move ahead without legal challenge," the source said.

"However, there are all kinds of other manoeuvres from green groups and others to try to slow this down. Owen has been holding these dinners to provide a platform for those countries who want to see shale gas move ahead to be allowed to do so and not to be blocked by those countries in Europe who don't want it."

On Tuesday, Michael Fallon, the Conservative energy minister, will publish a "strategic environmental assessment" for a new round of onshore gas and oil exploration, including shale gas. This will show the potential impact of future exploration on water supplies, the landscape and the economy.

The minister will also set out the regulations which apply to shale gas exploration and production, as well as a map of the sites where developments could be licensed in future.

Licences for fracking already exist for sites in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and the next round of licences is expected to see new exploration sites opened up across southern England.

Earlier this month, the Chancellor announced tax breaks for shale gas exploration firms, which will save companies 24p in tax for every pound they spend developing new projects. Mr Osborne said fracking could bring "thousands of jobs, billions of pounds of business investment and lower energy bills".

He hopes that the measures – which amount to cutting the tax rate on initial profits by about half – will "kick start" the exploitation of shale gas in the UK.

A fresh wave of protests over shale gas drilling saw demonstrators clash with police last week.

There were scuffles between officers and anti-fracking campaigners who were protesting against drilling at the IGas Barton Moss site near Manchester on Friday.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10518120/New-EU-fracking-law-plan-threatens-Britains-shale-gas-boom.html>

European legislation could delay plans to 'frack' in the UK

<http://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/news/2013/12/16/european-legislation-delay-plans-frack-uk/>

New proposals to regulate potential risks associated with hydraulic fracturing could delay its potential implementation in Britain by several years

The government's hopes of opening fracking sites across the UK have been dealt a blow as the European Commission is looking to bring in environmental legislation aimed at regulating pollution risks.

The Conservatives are worried the move could seriously delay plans and affect the fracking industry's prospects in the UK. Environment Secretary Owen Paterson has responded by organising a number of meetings in Brussels to try and persuade other nations to back the UK.

'We are prepared to take all the risks and all the flack about fracking'

A government source told the Telegraph: "It looks like the Commission is moving towards a framework directive, which is bad news. We wanted guidance but it looks as though they are moving against us. This is being pushed by the member states who don't want fracking at all.

"We are prepared to take all the risks and all the flack about fracking. The other member states ought to let us do all that and then see what they need to do in terms of legislation. We would be at our own risk."

A controversial extraction process

Fracking as long been controversial and recent exploratory drilling carried out by Cuadrilla in West Sussex, resulted in large protests being held close to the drilling site. Protestors are concerned about the effect fracking could have on the environment. Water contamination is a particular concern.

Fracking, or hydraulic fracturing, has been employed in the USA and has driven down local energy prices, but is unlikely to do so in the UK. This is because, unlike the USA, Britain is part of an integrated European energy market and fracking in one country would lead to minor price decreases

<http://www.uswitch.com/gas-electricity/news/2013/12/16/european-legislation-delay-plans-frack-uk/>

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