

Timeline of the Stop the Study campaign

August 2015	<p>Aedín McLoughlin was named a member of delegation to EPA from Environmental Pillar, to take place on 17th Sept. She asked for the following to be put on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the research study on Fracking administered by EPA to include the role of CDM Smith, the Dissemination Plan and methodology of Peer Review of the final report.
September 2015	<p>5th – 14th Aedín was on an international delegation to the US to examine the situation concerning fracking. They visited Washington, Pennsylvania fracking sites, Pittsburg, Ithica, Albany and New York, getting the perspectives of people from politicians to funding foundations to communities.</p> <p>17th – Aedín attended the meeting with EPA. The delegation was given a lot of documentation, including a full Progress Report that showed that the study was being largely carried out by CDM Smith and AMEC.</p> <p>27th - Press releases ignored by national press</p>
October 2015	<p>7th - Meeting held to brief attendees on the EPA report and to plan a campaign. Decided to call it “Stop the Study”. Campaign to include social media, a public meeting on 17th with supporters, politicians, etc., and a rally outside Leinster House. Campaign to be headed up by Fracking Free Network if groups agreed. Campaigners included members of many anti-fracking groups.</p> <p>8 – 15th Social media targeting of journalists and politicians to attend public meeting</p> <p>17th - Meeting in Glenfarne, over 100 attended, including many politicians. Panel included Vanessa Vine, Carroll O’Dolan, Tom White and Aedín. All politicians who attended promised to support the campaign. Included SF, FF, FG.</p> <p>Great urgency felt as the tenders for the on-the-ground monitoring were expected to be issued at any time.</p> <p>Agreed to hold rally outside Leinster House on 5th November. Press briefing planned for Buswell’s Hotel. Subsequently, found out that Buswell’s was not available. Michael Colreavy TD (Sinn Féin) said that he would organise a venue inside Leinster House. Social media storm continued. Document revealing CDM Smith and AMEC involvement circulated. Questions put to the Minister by Michael Colreavy (SF), Senator Paschal Mooney (FF) and Tony McLoughlin (FG). EPA to be called before the Joint Oireachtas Committee (JOC) again to answer questions.</p>
November 2015	<p>5th - Rally outside Leinster House. Well supported despite the weather. Michael Colreavy had organised the AV room for us, which was great, it held a lot of people and we could make presentations. The meeting was chaired by Michael and the panel included Oisín Coghlan (FOE), Tom White, Eamonn Ryan (Green Party) and Aedín. Presentations were followed by questions from the floor, ably chaired by Michael. Politicians from all parties attended. The room was packed.</p> <p>Following this meeting, further social media promotion of the campaign. Meeting with JOC now set for 2nd December. Briefing documents written for all committee members. Email campaign to encourage them to attend. Meeting held with Michael Colreavy re JOC meeting, also with Paschal Mooney.</p>
December 2015	<p>2nd – JOC meeting. Attended by Eddie Mitchell, Michael Gallagher, Aedín, GEAI volunteers and others. EPA grilled for 3 hours. All committee members used the information they were given to ask the EPA questions. Michael Colreavy and Paschal Mooney especially impressive. Richard Boyd Barrett (PBP) gave EPA a hard time and got some unexpected answers.</p> <p>2nd - Short meeting with Minister Joe McHugh arranged by Tony McLoughlin. Eddie, Michael G. and Aedín met the Minister, who was told that the research study was completely compromised and must be stopped, especially that the on-the-ground studies must not be tendered for; also that policy on hydrocarbon exploration and extraction must be revised. This was the only meeting held with the Minister.</p> <p>15th – Minister McHugh questioned by Claire Daly TD and Michael Colreavy. Minister</p>

	says "I will ask the steering committee to produce at an early date (<i>January</i>) interim findings on the significant body of work done. No decision will be made on the tendering process (<i>for Phase 2</i>) until that work is carried out." 17th – Richard Boyd Barrett introduced a Bill to Ban Fracking. Not adopted by Government.
January 2016	Interim Report not forthcoming by end of January. Tony McLoughlin TD requests clarification from DCENR officials.
February 2016	2nd – Tony McLoughlin received a briefing document from DCENR officials saying that Phase 2 would be put "on hold" and "the Consortium would be requested to produce a report pulling together the results of the research carried out to-date. It is anticipated that this report, could be completed and published by Q3 of this year." 4th - EPA press release confirms the above. (http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/research/ugeejointresearchprogramme/#.VsRoNtBSHEk) <i>In Q3, the 2-year contract with CDM Smith will be finished.</i>

Comment: This was NOT a Fine Gael campaign but completely cross-party. In fact, the main Oireachtas player was **Sinn Féin TD Michael Colreavy**, who put a lot of work into the campaign against fracking from the start and into this campaign in particular. Michael was instrumental in getting us the room in Leinster House, also (with Paschal Mooney) in calling the EPA before the JOC in December. He also made sure he was briefed properly before each event. Michael was very insistent that the campaign was cross-party.

Fianna Fáil Senator Paschal Mooney, also a member of the JOC, was very supportive during the campaign, especially through ensuring the presence of EPA with the committee and being briefed.

Fine Gael TD Tony McLoughlin supported the campaign by asking Parliamentary Questions and arranged a meeting with Minister McHugh.

People Before Profit TD **Richard Boyd Barrett** grilled the EPA with great effect and introduced a Ban Fracking Bill to the Oireachtas, thus increasing awareness of fracking among the politicians nationally. **Clare Daly** TD was also effective from the floor of the Dáil.

The Stop the Study Campaign workers acknowledge the support given by all of the above, without which its success could not have been achieved.

*The Study has indeed been stopped. Forever? Who knows. Without this campaign, the tenders for on-the-ground monitoring would be awarded by now. But the campaign doesn't end here. In the Press Release (6th Feb), it was stated that the campaign against fracking is not over, only **legislation** will prevent fracking from ever coming to Ireland. Our challenge now is to ensure that such legislation is drafted by the next government and gets cross-party support. Let 2016 be the year that Ireland officially bans fracking!*

16th February 2015