



Fracking

# Fracking

- What is it?
- Why are we worried?
- What's going wrong?
- What do we do?

# Fracking

## (1) What is it?

- unconventional oil and gas
- onshore
- held in rock in tiny particles – not reservoir
- drill borehole – up to 3km
- pump large volumes of water and chemicals at high pressure
- fracture the rock / release the gas, oil

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(2) Why are we worried?

(a) climate carbon

- 260g / Kwh
  - nuclear: 2 – 10g / Kwh
  - wind / solar: close to zero
  - coal 800g / Kwh
- displacement effects
- “transitional fuel” – evidence?
- impact on investment / price
- NB: “if it’s properly regulated”

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## (b) Water contamination

- groundwater: well failure, chemicals, faulted rock
- proven cases
- disposal of waste
- full Environmental Impact Assessment / hydrogeology
- / 3D seismic survey

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## (b) Water supply

- water supply
- 8 – 20M [litres] per well
- 20% of energy usage in UK
- water stressed areas (south east)

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## (c) Air

- fugitive emissions
- flaring
- truck movements (50 per day during production)
- “industrialisation of the countryside” (Davies)
- cumulative impacts; background
- soil, agriculture, socio-economic etc

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## (d) Health

- endocrine disruption
- congenital heart defects (Colorado)
- Parr case

NB: fracking travels...



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## (3) What's going wrong?

- Public participation
  - notifying landowners directly
  - trespass
  - “standard permits”
  - planning guidance: “presumption in favour”
  - local examples eg: Lancashire, West Sussex

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## Access to justice

- JR as block to growth v public interest litigation
- Aarhus Convention - ACCC
- standing
- costs - fixed costs orders
- attacks on JR
  - Legal Aid
  - disclosure of members' financial position
  - time period for challenge
  - “highly likely” test
  - intervener's costs

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## Effective regulation

- lacking dedicated regulation
- ineffective assessment of impacts
- inexperience / attitude of regulators
- conflicts inherent
- smoothing the path:
  - \* oil permits
  - \* tax

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## Transparency

- chemicals?
- standard permits
- lobbying...
- social licence / protest

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- Precautionary principle
- effective environmental assessment
- involving local communities
- dedicated and robust regulation
- presumption against...?