

From: [redacted – personal data]  
Sent: 26 March 2019 17:32  
To: First Minister <[firstminister@gov.scot](mailto:firstminister@gov.scot)>  
Subject: Please end the fracking story with a full legal ban

Dear First Minister

What you are about to read is, I admit, a letter put together by Friends of The Earth. But I say "Thank goodness for organisations like Friends of the Earth" and I fully endorse every word that this letter contains.

Furthermore, as a child born in the 1950s, I am ashamed and sorry that climate change has reached the dangerous levels that it has, in my lifetime.

Living in the borders, I went along to support the climate justice event organised by an 11 year old girl in Peebles on Friday 15th March. This is just the kind of thing I would like to think that you or I might have done at her age, if we had found the planet then, to be in the state it is now.

First Minister, you and your government are now in a position to respond positively to the demands of these young people. If you are indifferent to their calls for climate justice and action, or respond in a lukewarm ineffective way, it is they who will have to live with the drastic consequences. Such consequences are avoidable if you are true to the words you spoke in October 2017.  
"Fracking is being banned in Scotland. End of Story".

But just months after you said that, what your Energy Minister Paul Wheelhouse described as an 'effective ban' on fracking was exposed in court as having no legal force.

I understand your Government is now moving into the final stages of its decision making process on fracking, with a Strategic Environmental Assessment and partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment of the preferred policy position of no support for fracking, out for consultation, and a final decision expected in the new year.

You and your Government have won praise from around the world for taking a stand against fracking, and I want to thank you for taking a strong personal interest and stance on the issue.

However, the time has come to draw a line under the issue for good by legislating to prohibit fracking. Without legislation any policy position of no support for fracking could be torn up by a future Scottish Government with no recourse to Parliament or the will of the people. Putting the policy position into the National Planning Framework, as your Government has already agreed to do, will make little difference since Parliament has no power to vote down any changes to it.

With powers over onshore oil and gas licensing having transferred to Holyrood earlier this year, it is clear that the devolved Government can act to ban fracking.

With over 60,000 people calling for a ban on fracking - the largest number of people ever to express a single opinion to an official Scottish Government consultation - there is clearly a strong mandate to do so.

Communities across Scotland who have been fighting the industry for 7 years, particularly in the central belt frontlines where it is proposed, deserve no less than full legal protection from this harmful industry. The severity of the climate crisis demands it.

A ban should cover all forms of unconventional oil and gas extraction, with no new licenses issued and existing licenses revoked. The French Government did this in 2012 and no legal challenges against that ban have been successful. Many other governments at national, regional and local level have since followed suit.

It's time for Scotland to do the same, and put an end to the story with a full legal ban on fracking.

I understand that you cannot act to ban fracking until the end of the SEA process, but I look forward to an announcement that your Government will legislate in the New Year.

I hope that in spite of the pressures we all face with Brexit indecision, and a possible Inde 2 referendum on the horizon, you will not be swayed from taking the correct environmental and moral decision regarding climate change policy.

Fossil fuels **MUST** stay under ground where they belong. The world has at least four times more supplies of fossil fuels in reserve than the planet's atmosphere can possibly cope with, before the climate crisis spirals out of control.

Make Scotland proud and do the right thing for us. Be a great example for other leaders to follow.

Yours sincerely

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