

PLAN

MEDIA ALERT

UK Government to torch Paris Agreement tomorrow

On Monday, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, in launching the new IPCC report, [said](#):

"Some government and business leaders are saying one thing - but doing another. Simply put, they are lying. And the results will be catastrophic ...

it is moral and economic madness to invest in fossil fuels... the truly dangerous radicals are those countries ... increasing the production of fossil fuels".

Tomorrow, Thursday 7 April 2022, the UK Government will set fire to the Paris Agreement. Under cover of the brutal war in Ukraine, it will publish an energy strategy that aims to "[maximise domestic production in the North Sea production \[of oil and gas\]](#)".

It does so while still president of the UN COP process, sending a signal for others to follow.

The Government knows that increasing oil and gas production will cause the 1.5°C limit to be breached

The International Energy Agency (IEA), the expert energy advisory body to industrialised nations, [issued a report in May 2021](#), stating that for consistency with 1.5°C there should be "*from today, no investment in new fossil fuel supply projects*".

In February 2021, [UCL research confirmed that new oil and gas licences were incompatible with 1.5°C](#).

On 24 February 2022, the Government's own statutory adviser, the [Climate Change Committee wrote to Kwasi Kwarteng](#), the Business Minister, saying:

"An end to UK exploration would send a clear signal to investors and consumers that the UK is committed to the 1.5°C global temperature goal."

The Government knows the consequences of breaching the 1.5°C limit are catastrophic

As the floods, wildfires and droughts we witnessed in the Northern summer of 2021 so painfully demonstrate, 1.2°C warming is already too much. Beyond 1.5°C, the peer-reviewed science implies:

- [Multiple crop failure](#), leading to famine
- Whole regions of the world (including the tropics, home to 40% of the world's population) being [too hot to live](#) in
- Passing [critical tipping points](#) in the climate system.

The Government's own [Net Zero Strategy](#), published in October 2021, explains the catastrophic consequences of passing 1.5°C:

“People are rightly concerned, with the latest IPCC report showing that if we fail to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the floods and fires we have seen around the world this year will get more frequent and more fierce, crops will be more likely to fail, and sea levels will rise driving mass migration as millions are forced from their homes. Above 1.5°C we risk reaching climatic tipping points like the melting of arctic permafrost – releasing millennia of stored greenhouse gases – meaning we could lose control of our climate for good. But the good news is that there is, still, a path to avoid catastrophic climate change.” [Executive Summary, p.14, emphasis added]

The Government knows expanding North Sea oil and gas production doesn't provide a short term fix to the current energy crisis

It is not true that increasing North Sea oil and gas production will help British people to pay their bills (see [Uplift briefing](#)):

- The geology of the North Sea means that, after nearly 50 years of production, 70% of what's left in the basin is oil not gas – and not the type of oil that we use in UK refineries, which means that we export 80% of it.
- To put North Sea gas reserves in context, as Europe seeks to slash its dependence on Russian gas, even extracting all proven UK reserves and resources from new fields would only meet about 1% of European gas demand each year to 2050, according to the Climate Change Committee.
- It takes on average 28 years to go from discovering a new field to getting any oil or gas out of the ground, according to official figures. So, even if the government were to licence a new gas field today, it would likely be 2050 – the year the UK has pledged to be net zero – before it produced anything we could use in our homes.

If the Government really wanted to help ordinary people it would subsidise and incentivise home insulation and renewables, which can be put in place quickly.

So why is it doing it?

We have seen, time after time, how moments of political crisis are exploited by vested interests to advance corporate-friendly policies that would otherwise meet popular resistance. 9/11, for example, became the pretext for a deadly war in Iraq, which was motivated, as we now know, by the determination [to open up Iraq's nationalised oil fields](#) to Exxon, Shell, BP, Chevron and others.

The share price in [fossil fuel](#) companies, such as BP and Shell has been soaring on the wings of war. Shell is [reconsidering its decision](#) to pull out of the Cambo oilfield in light of the rising price of oil.

This is the policy of a corrupt and dishonest Government, supporting its corporate sponsors.

There is no democratic mandate for this

Nobody voted for the destruction of the conditions which make the planet habitable and nobody ever will.

The public wants to see the Government adopt policies which both break the addiction to Russian oil and gas, and meet the extreme threat from the climate crisis:

[“Exclusive polling: Brits want more climate action as energy prices bite”](#)

The Government, in thrall to vested interests, is about to torch the Paris Agreement by stealth and with it the future of our young people.

We urge the media to ask the right questions tomorrow:

“The Government knows that increasing fossil fuel production is inconsistent with the 1.5°C temperature limit (because all its expert advisers have said so); it knows that breaching that limit will be catastrophic for this country and a potential death sentence for our young people. So why is it pressing ahead with that anyway? What example does that set for the rest of the world?”

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