

CLIMATE CRISIS NEWSLETTER

A fortnightly newsletter brought to you by XR Gairloch

ISSUE 115

9/7/22

Editorial

Will things get better now that Boris Johnson has resigned?.....

Eventually the inevitable happened and Boris Johnston's lying, cheating and mismanagement caught up with him, and not before time many would say. The question now is will his replacement be any better and especially so with regards to implementing policies (which were sorely missing under Johnson) on fighting the Climate and Ecological Emergency. Johnson was a master at greenwashing and making pledges and setting targets that seemed to insinuate that the UK was a world leader on environmental issues but as the most recent Climate Change Committee (the governments own advisory body) report suggests most of these pledges and targets don't have the policies in place to meet these pledges and targets.

But what now, the Conservative party is unfortunately riddled with MP's with corrupt pasts and links to the fossil fuel industry some of whom have already said they may run for leader . Who would have thought it possible that there maybe equally bad or worse MP's than Boris Johnson.



Potential candidates for Leader of the Conservative party and the country:

Nadhim Zahawi (Chancellor)

- While an MP, Zahawi took a second job with oil and gas company Gulf Keystone Petroleum, he was paid £1.3m in his time working there which included a final "settlement payment" of £285,000 when he became a government minister in 2018.
- Before being employed by Gulf Keystone in 2015, Zahawi advised the London-headquartered, Nigeria-focused oil company Afren, two of whose executives were sentenced to a total of 30 years in jail in 2018 following a Serious Fraud Office investigation.
- Zahawi had also been advising Talisman, a major Canadian oil sands producer, through the consultancy, and held shares in Genel Energy, an Anglo-Turkish oil and gas firm.
- Ahead of the 2017 general election, Amjad Bseisu, CEO of EnQuest, which produces an estimated seven percent of the UK's oil and has stakes in 40 North Sea oil and gas

licences, gave £2,000 towards Zahawi's fighting fund in his constituency of Stratford-on-Avon.. Bseisu, who has talked up the potential for new fossil fuel discoveries to be made in the region, has made numerous donations to the Conservatives, including during a critical period when the government was drawing up plans to "decarbonise" the sector

Revealed: officials raised 'flag' over Nadhim Zahawi's tax affairs before he was appointed chancellor. [Read article.](#)

Sajid Javid (former Chancellor)

- While an MP Javid also took a second job in 2020 with J P Morgan Bank as a senior adviser. He had also previously worked with them in the 1990's. J P Morgan are by far the largest funders of fossil fuels in the world.

Sajid Javid: Why has the ex-chancellor been allowed to work for JP Morgan? [Read article.](#)

Other Conservative MP's who will be influencing the choice of leader:

Jacob Rees-Mogg (Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency)

- who recently said (7/7/22) that he wants fracking for shale gas in the UK to start again.

Steve Baker (Back Bencher)

- the founder of the Net Zero Security Group (NZSG) a group of Conservative back benchers who opposed many of Boris Johnston's Climate Change and net zero pledges and targets. He is also a trustee of the Global Warming Policy Foundation who are a pro fossil fuel and climate change science denial organization.

Ending the Energy Charter Treaty.....

Investor-state dispute settlements (ISDS), are the fossil fuel industry's "secret weapon" where private courts enable fossil fuel companies to receive billions of dollars in compensation from countries that choose to tackle the climate crisis by stopping oil, gas and coal projects.

The most recent estimate puts the future costs to governments for ending projects currently being developed by fossil fuel companies at up to \$340bn (depending on the oil price). Other estimates looking up to 2050 suggest the compensation bill for governments to pay out could be as high €1.3tn.



Models of an 'ECT-Rex', European Council head Emmanuel Macron and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen pose in Brussels during the ECT reform talks

The latest report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says ISDS can be used by fossil-fuel companies to "block national legislation aimed at phasing out the use

of their assets", and "may lead to countries refraining from or delaying" action to cut emissions.

The latest analysis of fossil fuel ISDS cases identified 231 to date, although that is a modest estimate due to the secrecy of the corporate courts. The average compensation being paid to fossil fuel companies is \$600m. Per case

The five countries with the greatest potential losses from ISDS are the UK, Russia, Venezuela, Guyana and Mozambique, the researchers found. The most problematic treaty is the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) which was signed in 1994 to protect foreign investors in Russia and the post-Soviet republics. But since 2014 more than two-thirds of ECT cases have involved EU companies suing EU governments.

ECT members meeting on the 24th June reached a watered down compromise to reform the Treaty that the EU and UK will end protection for new fossil fuel investments from August 2023. However, most existing fossil fuel investments will continue to be protected for 10 years from the date the modernised treaty is officially ratified.

Energy treaty update fails to address climate crisis, activists say. [Read article.](#)

Young people go to European court to stop treaty that aids fossil fuel investors. [Read article.](#)

G7 decide to continue fossil fuel imperialism over poorer global south nations....

Taking place in the shadow of the war in Ukraine, this year's G7 leaders' meeting was always going to be a fraught affair. But where the global climate is concerned, this year's meet proved even worse than expected, reversing progress made in recent years and leaving the outlook for global climate action increasingly uncertain



G7 countries agreed at Schloss Elmau in Germany that they would continue to offer finance for the exploration of fossil fuel reserves, giving a green light that is directly contrary to expert advice.

G7 countries want to exploit fossil fuel resources in other countries, particularly the developing world, to ease that crunch and bring down prices. Developing countries are also keen for this finance. But new exploration will only lock in high carbon dioxide emissions from these fossil fuel resources for years to come, long after the immediate consequences of the Ukraine war have passed.

In an illustration of how fluid the situation is, G7 energy ministers had agreed to stop taxpayer-funded fossil fuel financing overseas by the end of this year, at their meeting in May. But at the insistence of German chancellor Olaf Scholz, this commitment - which would have sent \$33bn to help with renewable energy development - was reversed on Monday.

Germany, Italy push G7 to water down pledge to end overseas gas finance. [Read article.](#)

Climate Change Committee latest report.....

The CCC says of the UK governments Net-Zero Strategy "contains warm words but little progress" on efforts to reach net-zero, and that its new progress report states that there are only "credible" Government plans to deliver around one-third of the emissions reductions needed to meet the Sixth Carbon Budget. Also the CCC state "There is a shocking gap in policy for better-insulated homes," and that the governments have a "significant risk" of failure due to a reliance on yet unproven technologies such as hydrogen and carbon capture.

CCC progress report: What sectors (if any) are on course to reach net-zero emissions?
[Read article.](#)

'A shocking indictment of inaction': UK's green economy reacts to latest Climate Change Committee report to Parliament. **[Read article.](#)**

CCC Progress Report: UK making 'scant progress' towards net-zero, with home energy efficiency a major pitfall. **[Read article.](#)**

BP paid tax to UK on North Sea business for first time in years.....

BP paid tax on its UK North Sea business in 2021 for the first time in at least six years, according to the company's latest payments to governments report.

For 2021 BP paid a total of \$127.3 million to the UK's HM Revenue and Customs, Crown Estate and Oil and Gas Authority. In 2020 the company received a tax refund of \$42 million.

The announcement comes amid tension between the UK fossil fuel industry and the government over a new 25% Windfall Tax that is supposed to fund programs to ease the pain of high energy costs on households, after several major oil and gas companies posted record profits. But unfortunately on the back of the Windfall Tax the UK government also announced massive (91%) tax incentives for companies to invest in new oil and gas developments in the North Sea.

BP, like other oil and gas companies in the UK, often don't pay tax on their North Sea businesses because of losses tied to investments in fields and also due to receiving rebates for decommissioning oil and gas platforms as the UK government normally is bound to pay 75% of these costs. This means that in recent years they've received more money from the UK government than they've paid out. Last year, BP received refunds of around \$50 million linked to decommissioning, the report shows.

BP's payments in 2021 were boosted by a settlement of \$178 million related to historical tax matters including previous over and under payments, according to the report.

The Reports on Payments to Government Regulations were signed into law in 2014, requiring oil, gas and mining companies incorporated in the UK to disclose annual payments made to countries in relation to extractive industries.

Coal is still King.....

Every year, energy supermajor BP Plc performs a much-needed service for economists, analysts and long-term planners everywhere with its annual Statistical Review of World Energy. Published since the 1960s, it's a treasure trove of statistics on energy production and consumption and power generation but unfortunately it also highlights how little we have moved forward in the last 35 years.

In 1985, coal-fired power was 38% of global electricity generation. Hydro was 20%, nuclear, 15%; natural gas, 14%; and oil, a bit over 11%.

Three and a half decades later, coal is still king at 36%, and gas has increased to almost 23%. But every other major generation source of the mid-1980s has lost relative share. That is because renewable power (wind, solar, geothermal, biomass and small hydropower) has grown from 0.8% of the world's electricity mix to 13%. Renewables passed the 10% mark in 2019 and have added 0.8% of market share — the same amount that they accounted for globally in 1985!

UK government coal lies....

The UK government pledged to lead international efforts to phase-out coal at the last UN climate summit. But it wants to EXPAND a disastrous coal mine in Wales – and now the UK coal regulator has approved the hair-brained scheme!

It could spark a wave of copycat coal mining schemes across the country, driving up emissions just as we need to be slashing them.



The Aberpergwm coal mine extension is the favourite scheme of a hardcore group of Tory MPs, who are trying every tactic to block action to cut emissions and ramp up fossil fuel production.

With the energy crisis and war in Ukraine, these voices are gaining ground – winning support for dirty fuel projects just as we need to be closing them down. It's crucial they don't succeed.

Welsh Government Are Allowing Fossil Fuel Companies To Destroy The Planet. [Read article.](#)

The UK government is poised to approve the Cumbria coal mine in the next few months relying on the debunked myths about the need for new UK coal for steelmaking. Now even the chair of the UK's climate change committee has stepped out, saying that approving the mine would be 'absolutely indefensible'.

Cumbria coal mine proposal is indefensible, says UK climate chief. [Read article.](#)

About time the way we calculate energy prices changes.....

Boris Johnson had before his resignation indicated that, as more renewable electricity generation comes online in the UK, wholesale wind and solar prices should be taken into account to a greater extent in electricity pricing.

"People are being charged for their electricity prices on the basis of the top marginal gas price, and that is frankly ludicrous," said Johnson. "We need to get rid of that system and we need to reform our energy markets as they have done in other European countries. That is one of the ways, by reforming the market, by changing the way things work, you can get prices down.

Boris Johnson planning energy market shake-up to end 'ludicrous' electricity prices for homes and businesses. [Read article.](#)

Price of offshore wind power falls to cheapest ever level in UK. [Read article.](#)

Stephen Fry telling us "Something has to be done".....

A video has been released by actor and comedian Stephen Fry who calls on the British public to support Extinction Rebellion! He says "Reasonable people, I think, understand that something has to be done about fossil fuels, most of all about our insatiable appetite for them."

Something has to be done. [See video.](#)



We must eject plans for a new gas-fired power station at Peterhead....

If we want everyone to have a safe future, we have to stop burning the oil and gas that is driving the climate crisis. However, incredibly, energy giant SSE wants to build a huge new additional gas fired power station at Peterhead.

This project will keep Scotland locked into an expensive fossil-fuelled energy system for decades to come. It will come at an enormous cost to our climate and will encourage oil and gas companies to keep on drilling in the North Sea.



Developers claim that they will add carbon capture technology to this polluting plant at some unspecified point in the future. Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) at the Peterhead site has a long history of repeated failure (over 10 years they first proposed a CCS scheme) and even the Scottish Government has admitted that this technology will not happen this decade. Despite this, the whole Peterhead project is to be built on the rotten foundations of unreliable CCS.

The new gas plant would be built on a site next to the existing gas plant to the south of Peterhead, near Boddam. SSE's existing gas plant was Scotland's biggest single climate polluter in 2018, 2019 and 2020, emitting 1.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2020.

Building a new fossil fuel power station at this point in the climate emergency is the last thing we should be doing. This will impact everyone in Scotland, as the climate crisis hits harder and we have to find carbon savings elsewhere.

SSE have already submitted a planning application to the local Aberdeenshire Council. While the ultimate decision lies with the Scottish Government, the local Council has a big influence over whether or not this development goes ahead and therefore as individuals and groups we should petition the local councilors to vote against this dirty development and work to support the transition away from fossil fuels and for decent green jobs in the area.



Ministers urged to reject new Peterhead gas plant. [Read article.](#)

Greenwash, misinformation, hypocrisy and deceit

Make BP tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth. [See video.](#)

Is TerraCycle Greenwashing the Waste Crisis? [Read article.](#)

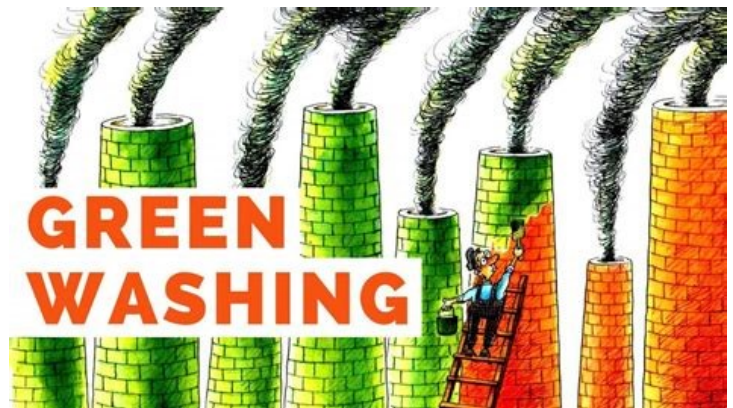
Greenwashing: how ads get you to think brands are greener than they are - and how to avoid falling for it. [Read article.](#)

Banks and UK supermarkets accused of backing deforestation in Brazil. [Read article.](#)

Bank group accused of exploiting loopholes and 'greenwashing' in climate pledge. [Read article.](#)

Flood of net zero vows suffer 'credibility gap': report. [Read article.](#)

Mining billionaire Twiggy Forrest slams blue hydrogen and carbon capture 'greenwash. [Read article.](#)



Corrupt Politicians and Climate Criminals.....

Lois Perry (Director of CAR26) and John Mappin (Supporter and sponsor of CAR26)

Climate Denial Group Criticised For Ties to Pro-Putin Millionaire. [Read article.](#)

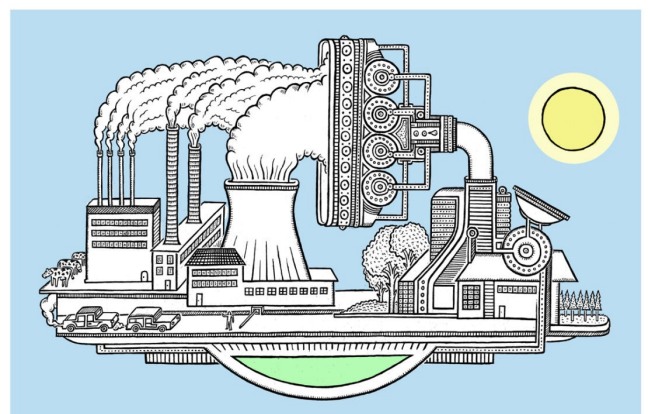


Technological Advances

Artificial photosynthesis can produce food without sunshine. [Read article.](#)

Researchers develop the first ever gas turbine powered by pure hydrogen. [Read article.](#)

CorPower launches its first commercial-scale wave energy converter. [Read article.](#)



The Fight Against Fossil Fuels

War in Ukraine is driving demand for Africa's natural gas. That's controversial. [Read article.](#)

Oil companies invest billions on green hydrogen as the future of energy. [Read article.](#)

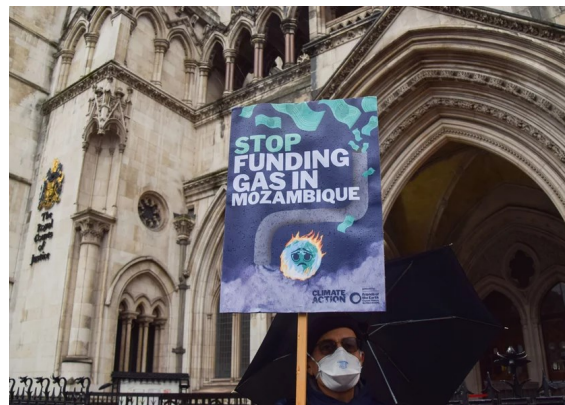
Exxon Sees \$5.5 Billion Refining Windfall as Gas Prices Soar. [Read article.](#)

Britain may stop supplying gas to mainland Europe if hit by shortages. [Read article.](#)

Sunak urges banks to keep funding oil and gas firms after windfall tax. [Read article.](#)

UK's largest carbon capture plant opens in Northwich. [Read article.](#)

World's largest direct air carbon capture facility will reduce CO2 by .0001%. [Read article.](#)



The Amazon Rainforest Is Still Burning

'Amazon landscape change study highlights ecological harms and opportunities for action. [Read article.](#)

Brazil sets new six-month Amazon deforestation record. [Read article.](#)

Ecuador National Strike 2022 - Amazon Frontlines. [Read article.](#)

My people have lived in the Amazon for 6,000 years: You need to listen to us. [Read article.](#)

New hope for the Amazon Rainforest—Securing Colombia's natural heritage. [Read article.](#)



The Circular Economy

Ask the Government to create a strong circular economy in Scotland. [Read article.](#)



Sustainable Farming/Food

A food system hooked on fossil fuels is bad for farmers and families. [Read article.](#)

Long-standing systems for sustainable farming could feed people and the planet—if industry is willing to step back. [Read article.](#)

Sustainable irrigation can feed billions, make agriculture resilient to climate change. [Read article.](#)



The Scales of Justice

'Condemning everyone alive': outrage at US supreme court climate ruling. [Read article.](#)

New mandatory climate impact measurements to be introduced for UK pension schemes. [Read article.](#)

EU plan to halve use of pesticides in 'milestone' legislation to restore ecosystems. [Read article.](#)

UK government to scrap European law protecting special habitats. [Read article.](#)



Eco'nomics Recovery—Building Back Better (Mostly Not)

Report: UK lagging behind EU on green finance. [Read article.](#)

UK businesses planning to invest £13.6bn in electric vehicles this year, survey finds. [Read article.](#)

The Actual Cost of Preventing Climate Breakdown - 2% of Global GDP. [See video.](#)



There's a simple way to unite everyone behind climate justice – and it's within our power

By George Monbiot

Cancelling poor nations' historic debts would allow their governments to channel money into climate adaptation.

It has proved too easy to stop people uniting around the crucial issues of our time. Those who demand better pay and conditions for workers and justice for poor people have been pitched by demagogues and corporate lobbyists against those who demand a habitable planet.

For years, we have struggled with the question of how to overcome this division and create a social and environmental justice platform that could unite vast numbers of the world's people. Only one thing was clear: any such campaign had to be led by activists from poorer nations. Now, I believe, the breakthrough has arrived.

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To understand this proposal better, let's begin with the poorer world's debt, now largely forgotten in the rich world. The powerful campaigns to cancel it in the 1990s have all but vanished from public view. This is not because the crisis has abated. Far from it: between 1990 and 2019, external debt in the global south (the poorer nations) rose on average from roughly 90% of their GDP to 170%. The pandemic has accelerated the crisis: 135 out of 148 nations in the poorer world are now classed as "critically indebted".

Campaigners often talk of "odious debts", which means loans agreed by dictatorships, that provide no benefit to the nation. But all the debts deemed to be owed by poor nations to the rich world and its corporations could be seen this way. The idea that the global south, looted and enslaved for centuries, should owe money to its exploiters is grotesque.

An analysis in the journal *Global Environmental Change* suggests that \$10tn of value is extracted from poorer countries by richer ones every year, in the form of raw materials, energy, land and labour. That's 70 times as much money as would be needed to end extreme poverty worldwide. This extraction provides rich nations with a quarter of their GDP: much of our apparent wealth depends on exploitation.



In Argentina, the International Monetary Fund has pushed for the development of the giant Vaca Muerta shale gas basin

Debt is imperialism by other means. It's equivalent to the hut taxes imposed by the British in their African colonies. These taxes, often levied in currencies Africans did not possess, forced them to surrender their resources or their labour to colonial projects. Today, foreign debt forces nations to hand their assets to rich countries and multinational companies.

For example, a report from Green New Deal suggests that debt has been used by the World Bank as a means of obliging Senegal to allow US, Australian and British companies to exploit its oil and gas. In Argentina, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reportedly pushed for the development of the giant Vaca Muerta shale gas basin, using similar leverage. Impoverished and coerced by debt, poorer nations have little choice but to allow destructive industries to exploit them. Campaigners have a term for this: debt trap diplomacy.

It's not just extraction that these debts enable, but also austerity. An analysis by Oxfam suggests that 85% of the Covid loans made by the IMF to poorer nations were connected to austerity programmes: the fund is using the power of debt to push nations into cutting wage bills and spending less on public services and support for poor people.

While poorer nations must surrender their wealth, they must also suffer the climate breakdown imposed on them by the rich. An analysis by Jason Hickel, in *The Lancet Planetary Health*, suggests that the former G8 nations are responsible for 85% of the CO2 emissions responsible for dangerous levels of heating. Yet the overwhelming majority of the deaths caused by climate breakdown happen in the global south. This represents a massive climate debt that cannot be expressed purely in financial terms.

Forced austerity and forced exploitation of fossil fuel reserves are threads that could draw together climate and social justice campaigns all over the world. Debt for Climate proposes a global revolt against debt and austerity, tied to the prevention of climate breakdown. It calls on poor world governments to refuse to honour their debts, and to channel the money they would otherwise have had to pay into public services, climate adaptation and a just transition out of fossil fuels. It calls on activists in the rich world to demand the cancellation of debt and an end to austerity, both at home and abroad, and reparations for the devastating loss and damage caused by our greenhouse gas emissions.

By reviving the question of who owes what to whom, huge constituencies, labour and green, north and south, can develop a common platform. Climate campaigns are indivisible from global justice.

From Piper Alpha to Piper Darvo —The Evil That are Fossil Fuel Companies

By George Gunn

On the night of the 6th and 7th of July 1988 the Piper Alpha oil production platform, 120 miles north-east of Aberdeen in the North Sea, exploded killing 167 men. Sixty-one workers escaped and survived, and thirty bodies were never recovered. The Piper Alpha remains the world's worst offshore oil disaster in terms of loss of life. In 1991 the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden was opened in Hazelhead Park in Aberdeen featuring an iconic sculpture by Sue Jane Taylor and 167 roses planted, one for each of the lost. The memorial rose garden was intended to function as a secluded spot where families of the disaster victims, and all of those who had suffered through the oil industry's malpractices, could come to reflect and to contemplate. Some of the bodies that were recovered in 1988 could not be identified, and the ashes from these were buried inside the granite plinth that supports the memorial. The ashes of several survivors who have subsequently died have also been scattered on the site making the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden sacred ground for many.



But this may be about to change. Yesterday, 29th of June 2022, the Aberdeen City Council are meeting to decide whether to accept the proposal by the Pound for Piper Trust to revamp the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden and to re-develop it as the 'North Sea Memorial Garden' and as "a place that the oil industry can be proud of". If this revamp is successful, if the Aberdeen City Council approve it, then it removes the strong association of the space with the disaster. Pat Ballantyne, whose late husband Bob was a survivor of the Piper Alpha catastrophe, has said,

"I was involved in helping Pound For Piper get charitable status in 2012. The original plan from two offshore workers was to ask every offshore worker to donate £1 towards cleaning the memorial and tidying the rose garden. Unfortunately, Talisman (the oil company who then owned the Piper Bravo, the replacement platform) decided to become involved and the two workers were keen for this to happen, so I had no option but to resign, just days after charitable status was granted."

On the 18th of May this year the Pound for Piper Trust told STV that it had made no attempt to consult with the families and survivors who were affected by the disaster about the revamp, in spite of the fact that the Trust's plans appear to have been in progress for some years. In the same interview they said it was because a consultation process "would have taken an inordinately long time". From what I can discover the appeal for funds by the Pound For Piper Trust appears to be aimed primarily at the oil companies themselves. The fact that the Pound For Piper Trust and Oil and Gas UK share an office would facilitate this. It appears that who pays the piper does call the tune. Celebrating oil companies - the very bodies that caused the Piper Alpha disaster - was never the aim of those who

fought long and hard to have the memorial rose garden at Hazelhead created. There is nothing Occidental Oil, the owners of the Piper Alpha in 1988, or any oil company for that matter, has anything to be proud of when it comes to the North Sea. Profit is all – humanity and the state of the planet are not a priority.

The Piper Alpha Memorial Garden was completely overhauled less than ten years ago. Currently, the original memorial is relegated to a single sentence in the middle of the sign at the entrance that does not attempt to explain the tragic events of July 6th and 7th 1988. On this new sign there is a long list of sponsors which, you might think, is hardly appropriate given that this is a memorial to the victims of a disaster caused by oil companies. One of the sponsors on the sign is the Wood Group, who lost more men on the Piper than any of the other companies yet who refused to contribute when the families were trying to fundraise for the 1991 memorial.

Pat Ballantyne has said,

"Raising funds was problematic and took a very long time. Of the 28 companies who lost men in the disaster, only 21 contributed, most sending donations of around £50, with one sending £2000. The families were left to source funding and also to contribute to it themselves. This took many months. The families, including my own, fought long and hard for this monument and garden and paid for it to be built."

The business of "raising funds" was never an issue for Occidental Oil who walked out of the North Sea well rewarded for their services to tragedy, murder and pollution. The total insured loss was about £1.7 billion, making it one of the costliest man-made catastrophes ever. Out of it came the brand new Piper Alpha platform which Occidental quickly sold to Elf who then sold it to Talisman. As is normal in the oil industry everybody else is to blame when things go wrong. Occidental initially tried to pin the blame for the Piper disaster on two platform workers. But this was subsequently overturned after the smear was exposed by a BBC Frontline Scotland documentary in November 1988.

This is typical "darvo" behaviour which is employed regularly by industrial oil. In legal slang "darvo" is when you deny, attack and reverse victim and offender. The perpetrator or offender may deny the behavior, attack the individual doing the confronting, and reverse the roles of victim and offender such that the perpetrator assumes the victim role and turns the true victim – or the whistle blower or the oil rig worker – into an alleged offender. This occurs, for instance, when an actually guilty perpetrator, such as Occidental Oil, assumes the role of "falsely accused" and attacks the accuser's credibility and blames the accuser of being the perpetrator of a false accusation. This is how Big Oil re-writes history. As the shenanigans with the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden shows, we no longer have the Piper Alpha, but more accurately we have the Piper Darvo.

The Piper Alpha represents the human price of oil and we will continue to pay it until oil companies are forced to recognise their environmental responsibilities. But don't expect that to happen any time soon. Shell and BP made £12.3 billion in the first three months of this year alone. For them war is good. The cost of living crisis is good. The fuel price-hike is good. And this Tory government is very good. This week the Tories are rushing through a consultation which will mean that oil companies will be able to reduce the amount of "Windfall Tax" they pay. The UK taxes oil and gas company profits far lower than most of our European neighbours. The "Windfall Tax" needs to be increased and made permanent, not reduced. As things stand now, energy companies will be able to reduce the tax they pay if they invest more in polluting fossil fuels. This is called the 'investment allowance'.

More "darvo".

Oil and gas companies are expanding production less than a year since pledging to target net zero carbon emissions. Last February analysis by the campaign group ShareAction showed that 25 banks that signed up to reduce emissions have provided \$33bn (£24bn) in loans and other financing to 50 companies with large oil and gas expansion plans. The oil companies include America's ExxonMobil, which has tried to defy shareholder demands to cut emissions, state-owned oil company Saudi Aramco and London-listed Shell and BP whose profits continue to rise as the majority of the world's population suffers. Since 2016, the European banks have provided financing worth \$406bn. Rishi Sunak might kid us all on that a one off "Windfall Tax" on oil company profits will help solve the cost of living crisis and spiralling fuel costs, when in fact both his government and Big Oil are creating the crisis. Classic "darvo".

There is no shortage of former oil company scientists, lobbyists and public relations strategists who will lay bare, for example, how the US's biggest petroleum firm, Exxon, and then the broader petroleum industry, moved from attempting to understand the causes of global warming to a concerted campaign to hide the making of an environmental catastrophe. All oil companies and corporations have a playbook for the methods they use to deny science, sell lies, and literally when you consider the Piper Alpha, make a killing.

The world's biggest oil and gas companies, including Shell, Exxon and Gazprom, are projected to spend €857 billion on new oil and gas fields by 2030. This could grow to a staggering €1.4 trillion by 2040, according to new research from Global Witness and Oil Change International. All 20 of the companies investigated by the two NGOs claim to support the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global warming below the critical 1.5°C threshold. They will tell us that their "Targets must align with no/low-overshoot 1.5°C transition pathways as specified by credible science-based climate scenarios" or that "We are committed to working with our customers to achieve a transition towards a thriving low carbon economy." That particular piece of greenwash came for HSBC, but no matter what they say they don't mean it - it's all bullshit. It is all "darvo": deny, attack and reverse victim and offender. Then watch the priceometer whirl round.

The only good thing - other than the Memorial Garden - to come out of the Piper Alpha disaster was the formation of the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee (OILC) which was an attempt to set up a union for all off-shore workers. Unfortunately the STUC would not recognise the OILC because other unions were concerned that the OILC would attract their members. Paradoxically the only organisation to recognise the OILC was Margaret Thatcher's government. As a result the OILC is now a branch of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), having agreed to merge in April 2008. How deeply ironic is it that in the mid-1980's Thatcher used to rant on about how the miners' strike was led by a small band of revolutionaries whose ultimate aim was to bring down civil society as "we know it", and now it is the current Tory government who are the "revolutionaries" determined to destroy everything we know and it is the unions, the RMT for example, who are trying to protect what is good and useful in civil society as well as their members rights and welfare. They do it on behalf of us all.

The Albanian writer and academic, Lea Ypi, recently noted (The Guardian, Saturday 4th June) that,

"Hope is a moral duty - we have to act as though there is the chance of things going in a way that is favourable to what we want to achieve. If we were nihilistic, we couldn't uphold

that sense of duty. Freedom is also an awareness of duty, the thought you can do your duty however hard it is. The inner moral dimension gives me the foundation from which to criticise society. We live in a world of asymmetric power relations at all levels in which there is an exercise of power by the powerful and those who are weaker and more vulnerable are the passive recipients of that power. That dynamic of power relations is fundamentally inimical to freedom."

When it comes to issues like the re-framing of the Piper Alpha Memorial Garden I am reminded of a line from "Oideachadh Ceart agus Dàin Eile/Proper Schooling and Other Poems" by Aonghas MacNeacail,

"it wasn't history but memory"

which sums up the cruel events of July 6th and 7th 1988 perfectly. We cannot have our memory "darvo'd" by oil companies. Hope, indeed, is a moral duty. Especially now that that the complicated but vitally necessary journey to the referendum on Scottish independence has begun and we can begin the process of freeing ourselves from being possessed, exploited and impoverished. Independence will not necessarily make our lives better. But it will make our lives possible. Those lost on the Piper Alpha 34 years ago deserve no less.



Playing into the hands of fossil fuel companies

By Gary Jack

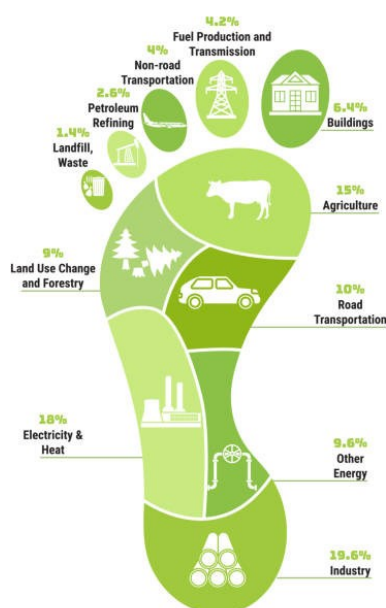
There was recently a letter in our local newspaper from a well intentioned member of the community entitled "We are all in the same storm but not in the same boat". I wholeheartedly agreed with the sentiments of the article and commended the writer's idealism regarding not letting the poor sink, sending a message to the powers that be (MPs, councillors etc.) and encouragements to one another especially so with suggestions of using LED light bulbs and solar power, turning the thermostat down, consuming less, recycling, plant more trees etc. All good and admirable things which we should all be doing as a matter of everyday life.

I also found another great example of this on the internet in a news report entitled "I planted a giant sequoia tree and offset the carbon footprint of my entire life". The article was promoting the tree planting scheme "One life, one tree" and again the project was obviously good intentioned but was misleading members of the public with statements such as -"I never thought I would be able to offset the carbon footprint of my whole lifetime, in one day" by planting a giant sequoia tree (sapling).

Great news, all we have to do is plant 8 billion sequoia trees and hey presto we've solved the climate catastrophe. I planted 5 giant sequoias a couple of years ago on our croft not knowing that I could have been flying everywhere, turning my heating up full, sitting in my T shirt and shorts and opening all my windows. I've really missed out but knowing this now I can go wild in the knowledge that I have accumulated 5 lifetimes of carbon offsets I can now use up.



I planted a giant sequoia tree and offset the carbon footprint of my entire life. [Read article.](#)



CARBON FOOTPRINT

But let's not kid ourselves on that these slight adjustments to our life style or offsetting our carbon by planting trees will stop global warming going above the target of 1.5 degrees. I have family members who believe this myth and that they are environmentalists and saving the planet by recycling regularly. Yes, all these things will help lower your individual carbon footprint (possibly a tonne or so of CO₂ emissions per year) but unfortunately not by much in the global scheme of things whereby the fossil fuel industry is spewing out over 33 billion tonnes of CO₂ every year. One such fossil fuel company, BP developed the concept of "individual carbon footprints" in the 1970's to move the onus of reducing their carbon polluting away from themselves and on to individual

members of the public. They knew (like most of the other major companies - Shell, Exxon, Total etc.) more than 40 years ago that the use of fossil fuels was causing global warming. Instead of trying to stop it they actively spent millions of pounds promoting the denial of this, and getting think-tank's to put out false and misleading information, similarly to the tobacco companies did in their campaign denying smoking caused cancer.

The UK government are equally culpable in knowing about the effects of fossil fuels and misinforming the public. This has been particularly evident recently. After hosting the COP26 UN Climate Change conference last year in Glasgow where they promoted the ending of fossil fuels, they are now actively promoting opening up new gas and oil fields, the most recent being Shell's Jackdaw field with a large amount of other fields to be given UK government approval in the next few months. To add insult to injury, under the recently announced Wind Fall Tax the government gave fossil fuel companies tax relief of 91% off any new fossil fuel investments in the North Sea. This was all under the guise of

high petrol and energy prices and energy security, which is nonsense. The recently approved North Sea Jackdaw gas field will not start producing gas for at least 3 years and as gas and oil are traded on the international market (hence the current high prices) there is no guarantee that the gas will ever come to the UK and may be exported abroad. Therefore, no price reduction and no energy security, unlike there would be with more renewable energy production and storage.

So therefore although reducing your carbon footprint has the feel good factor that you are making a difference, that difference is likely to be minuscule in the world wide scale of things. In fact, in real terms you are more likely to be funding the climate crisis. Fossil fuel projects are normally funded through Banks (using your savings), through Pension fund investments (from your work, council, university, church). So if you really want to make a big difference, starve the fossil fuel companies of funding future projects and change your Bank to an ethical bank and campaign for your work, council etc. to divest from fossil fuels. And also if you really want to make a huge difference in changing government policy on global warming there is always non-violent direct protest action, it certainly worked for the suffragettes getting the vote for woman.



Corporate net-zero goals don't add up

By Eric Roston

More than 5,200 businesses have pledged to cut their greenhouse gas pollution to zero by 2050, or reach "net zero" by cancelling out emissions with forestry or other projects that remove CO₂ from the air. They include some of the world's biggest companies across all sectors: Apple, Zurich Insurance, P&G, General Motors, and so on.

But as the corporate net-zero juggernaut powers on, the less sense it makes, critics say, and it may do more harm than good. Their reason is simple: the only net-zero goal that matters is the one that applies to the entire planet. At the largest scale, discussion of "emissions" and "removals," or drawing down CO₂ through forestry and other means, is grounded in Earth science, in the physical movement of carbon into the air and back down again. That's "net zero."

Companies can help. But companies can not be net-zero, and their pledges are more directly based on arithmetic than geochemistry, according to Carbone 4, a French consultancy that works with companies measuring their emissions and deciding what to do about them. "The idea of a carbon-neutral company is fundamentally dubious," they wrote last July.

They're not alone. The French government last year issued guidance that echoed Carbone 4's diagnosis of corporate net-zero goals. Nobody should claim to be "carbon neutral," wrote the Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME). A net-zero watchdog this month introduced a trial "code of practice" to help evaluate corporate net-zero claims, and the UN Secretary general has launched a group of experts to look at non-national net-zero pledges.

Carbone 4 provides several reasons for its skepticism "that an organization is capable of achieving individual 'climate virginity.'" At the heart of their critique are carbon "offsets," or purchases that grant the right to claim emission reductions generated by CO₂ drawdown projects elsewhere, and the firm advises clients not to include investment in CO₂ reductions, through forestry or other means, in its emissions accounting — even though doing so certainly makes the company look better on paper.

Instead, the firm advises clients to account for its climate efforts in three distinct categories: emissions reductions, drawing at least in part on the framework set out by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi); "avoided emissions" or how a company's products or services might contribute to decarbonization elsewhere; and financing or the removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere.

So companies can still brag about how much they spend on carbon removal — they just can't count it against their own emissions.

Carbone 4 gives several reasons why they separate offsets from corporate emissions accounting. They're skeptical that corporate net-zero plans, added up, will lead to global net-zero, for one. And when purchased offset credits are subtracted from company carbon ledgers, it veils the actual pollution rate, which matters most.

But none of the major groups that help define corporate emissions accounting have ever

seemed thrilled about offsets. The SBTi, a collaboration among several leading nonprofits, mandates that companies going through its rigorous process cut emissions at least 90% before 2050. The last 10% or so can be negated with "high-quality removals," a term the group is still in the process of defining.

The semantic point Carbone 4 makes is an important one: Only on a global or regional level can drawing down CO₂ physically neutralize past emissions, leading to "net zero," and companies that deliberately ignore that in their own strategy or marketing are being disingenuous at best.

This is reflected in the deliberate language in the major reports and pacts on climate change. For example, parties to the Paris Agreement — again, countries, not companies — "aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible." The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change repeatedly refers to "global net zero."

If, instead of aiming for their own on-paper emissions accounting target, corporations saw themselves as making "contributions" to a shared goal, consequences could be profound. It would require them to make many of the emissions reductions they're already planning — to do their share — and it would also require them to acknowledge and maybe even act on things that matter just as much if not more.

As of now, corporations spend vast sums on lobbying against science-based climate policy, on political contributions to elected officials who block climate legislation, and on a whole category of professional services that has yet to measure its own emissions, let alone set targets for reduction. None of those activities are reflected in standard emissions accounting, nor do they count against a company's own calculation of its progress toward net zero, and yet they all undermine the global effort to get there.

Climate change progress lurks in the spaces between companies and governments, between individuals and communities, between rich and poor, as everybody tries to steer complex, shared industrial systems away from the brink.

"No company can act on its own to solve the climate crisis," Derik Broekhoff, a senior scientist at the Stockholm Environment Institute, wrote in a post on the SEI site. "Companies that are truly committed to achieving net zero need to support climate policies — at all levels of government and internationally — that advance an equitable, comprehensive and coordinated global transition."

Dumping corporate net-zero language would be a small dose of humility that helps avoid much more humbling events down the road.

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Good and Bad News



Reports and Research

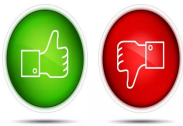


Plastic and Pollution



Land, Sea and Ecology

Good and Bad News



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