

## A critical assessment of Norman Baker's statement in Liberal Democrat Voice regarding the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD)

Henry Adams, Kendal, 14dec11

In this document I have copied Norman Baker's statement in full and interspersed some of its paragraphs with comments. To help readers distinguish these, I have converted *Norman Baker's words to italics*, **text based on collations from Environmental Campaigners in green**, and my comments in **bold**. Subsequent sections give several related comments as shown beneath the statements by Norman Baker and Chris Davies MEP in LDV. Relevant references with links are appended.

### SUMMARY COMMENT:

Norman very wrongly misrepresents both the Fuel Quality Directive (repeatedly echoing Canada Government myths) *and* environmental campaigners in his statement in Liberal Democrat Voice and elsewhere. Furthermore – he ignores the great **urgency** to implement the FQD with a tar sands value, and downplays the dangers of **delay** that his alternative methodology will cause (regardless of whether delay is unintentional on his part.)

The tar sands industry is pushing hard to get its products to the sea in sufficient quantity for export (including to Europe) and to invest in infrastructure both for this and for increased production – which needs access to markets abroad. They may not wait for Norman's comprehensive methodology! [The text box expands on this]

However comprehensively effective his alternative methodology for the FQD might potentially be (and he does little to reassure environmentalists of this) - it runs too great a risk for the FQD being too late in implementation (or of being again diluted by oil interests) – because it increases the likelihood of being pre-empted by powerful investment-related decisions for increasing tar sands infrastructure based on the export of tar sands products beyond America – including to Europe. With the effectiveness of the FQD on a knife edge, further delays in implementation are likely to be interpreted by the industry as a green light – particularly if caused by a government regarded as supportive of the Canadian government's promotion of the Tar Sands industry (i.e. the UK Government). Such oil industry decisions are likely to increase pressure on EU Governments to dilute the FQD to prevent their investments failing. Norman appears to be oblivious of these dangers that he increases.

### Liberal Democrat Voice links:

Norman Baker: <http://www.libdemvoice.org/norman-baker-responds-to-tar-sands-campaigns-26074.html#comment-190023>

Chris Davies MEP: <http://www.libdemvoice.org/chris-davies-mep-writes-slipping-deeper-into-the-tar-sands-26115.html>

## Norman Baker responds to tar sands campaigns

By [Norman Baker MP](#) | Published 2nd December 2011 - 9:00 am

*Over the last week or so, visitors to the Lib Dem Voice may have seen articles purporting to outline my position, and that of the government's, on the EU Fuel Quality Directive and the treatment of tar sands within it. These articles have been misleading to say the least. We in the Lib Dems have a proud history of fighting climate change and campaigning for environmental causes. This is no different in the coalition and no different to the approach I am taking on the Directive. I wanted to take this opportunity therefore to provide some facts which will, I hope, alleviate concerns that some may have, and also clarify my position on this.*

*I first got into politics because of my concerns about the way in which the environment was being treated. My first campaign ever, in 1987, was about pesticide misuse. I was campaigning on climate change when most people had never heard of it and those who had denied it existed. I have spent my political life arguing for, and winning, measures to protect the environment and bring about a more sustainable future. Only this week, I have succeeded, to take just two examples, in persuading the government to cut rail fares by 2%, and to allocate another £20m for new green buses.*

*It may be helpful if I provide some background to the Directive. The EU Fuel Quality Directive requires that fuel suppliers reduce the greenhouse gas emissions per unit of energy (“GHG intensity”) by 6 per cent by 2020. The European Commission, with the engagement of member states, is currently assessing options for the accounting of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels under this.*

*The articles have reported that I am lobbying against the Directive. This is categorically incorrect. First, it is not a question of lobbying for or against the Fuel Quality Directive. It already exists, and I support it. What is at issue is what carbon values the Directive gives to different sources of fuel or feedstocks as they are known. Some say they have grave concerns about the highly polluting nature of Canadian tar sands. So do I. But unlike them, I am also concerned about other highly polluting crudes, such as those from Nigeria, Angola and Venezuela. I think Lib Dems would agree that we should not take a backwards step on tackling these other highly polluting crudes.*

**Norman here very wrongly misrepresents environmental campaigners by adding the words “But unlike them”:** He says that those who have grave concerns about the highly polluting nature of Canadian tar sands are not concerned about other polluting crudes – which is very untrue – as will be explained below Norman’s next paragraph. Campaigning strongly against the highest emitters – such as tar sands – does not mean lack of concern for others (has he forgotten the campaign against Shell’s flaring in Nigeria?). Thus his last sentence also has false implications. And with regards tar sands in other nations (Venezuela has some as well as very heavy crude) Chris Davies states “There is no attempt to single out tar sands from Canada, which would be illegal as well as politically inappropriate, and some of us are getting tired of hearing the false claims that it does.”

*Some ‘green’ campaigners want a specific value to Canadian tar sands but only a general default single value to all conventional crudes, despite the fact that the greenhouse gas impacts vary enormously across conventional crudes. Yet there is at present virtually no fuel derived from tar sands in Europe, and they would be in effect ignoring probably 99% of the fossil fuels we use. I want to use the Fuel Quality Directive to drive down the use of all heavy crudes, not just one source. I simply cannot understand why some environmentalists seem completely uninterested in conventional crudes.*

**Norman misrepresents the FQD:** It is not true that the FQD singles out 'just one source'. It is proposed that all the different unconventional feedstocks have specific values, including tar sands, oil shale, coal to liquids and others. Although there is currently only one default value for conventional crude oil feedstock the review clause will add further values for more intensive conventional extraction methods when they become available. [For details see Transport & Environment link in REFERENCES appended]

**Norman here again very wrongly misrepresents green campaigners:** It is just not true that we only want a single default value for conventional crude; we support the EU proposal to include a review clause that will add values for high intensity conventional crude extraction methods no later than 2015, e.g. with flaring (Nigeria, Angola). Research to identify additional values is already out to tender. Capturing intensive conventional extraction methods has been a campaign objective from the start (FQD campaign briefings – Co-op, Greenpeace, WWF, T&E and FoE Europe) and we are happy with the present EC proposal as being the quickest and best way forward. In any case, Venezuela’s bitumen reserves will have the same tar sands value assigned as Canada’s, so Canada is not specifically targeted. It is noteworthy that higher intensity crudes are nowhere near as carbon intensive as tar sands.

*“Yet there is at present virtually no fuel derived from tar sands in Europe”*

This spectacularly misses the point as tar sand production is expanding rapidly and will end up here unless the EU sends clear market signal now that it has no role to play in low carbon economy. Production is being ramped up now, billions are being invested. This cannot end well. We will either have runaway climate change on one hand or billions of dollars of stranded assets (useless infrastructure) on the other, risking pensions and savings. We must not delay.

Although it is true that import of tar sands derived fuel is now relatively small, Norman's statement is misleading as it tries to distract from the fact that powerful efforts have been, and are ongoing RIGHT NOW to try and get pipeline infrastructure for exporting tar sands products worldwide including to Europe (does he think we are oblivious to the purpose of Keystone XL?!). Also that the Tar Sands industry's desired doubling over the decade of tar sands production is very dependent on reaching export markets, and decisions to expand production infrastructure have to be made in advance – like NOW! For example – only recently TOTAL stated that it will be deciding “in the near future” on a massive tar sands mining project in Alberta (how will you think that might affect the French government's attitude to the FQD?) [source appended]. Valero plans to export tar sands products to the UK [source below]. Also – another European oil company has eyes on exploiting Congo's tar sands (as if Congo hasn't had enough resource-related massacres!). It is clear that there is an URGENT need for the FQD to be implemented with the tar sands value – to send a worldwide strong signal to oil companies (and banks) regarding their investment plans, and to Obama regarding Keystone XL.

*But it is because I am, that I persuaded the British government to put to our EU partners a system whereby all fossil fuel sources were placed in either a high, medium or low band, with specific values being advocated as and when the detailed information became available. Under my scenario, such a value would be given to Canadian tar sands right away but within this banding arrangement that captured all other fossil fuel sources from day one.*

This paragraph is confusingly self-contradictory as regards timing. On the one hand he says “as and when...become available” i.e. “right away” for tar sands then says “but” all other fossil fuel sources from day one”!!! The values for tar sands and other unconventional sources are available right now – so why doesn't he unambiguously promote their inclusion right now. He doesn't even dare state categorically which of his categories tar sands should go in – which hardly inspires any reassurance. This ambiguity hints that he is yielding to compromise with Canadian Government / oil industry pressures. (He also makes an error in the last sentence by adding the word ‘Canadian’ before ‘tar sands’: the FQD cannot single out nations - only feedstock types! [a fact that he keeps ignoring])

...This makes no sense. Tar sands either gets a specific value straight away or it gets put in one of the three generic crude values, which is it? If the latter it would delay overall implementation to facilitate the 3 band approach and then specifically delay a tar sands value beyond that, despite the data being available now. Instead tar sands would be recognised as a conventional crude oil, which it isn't, it is an unconventional fossil fuel feedstock (according to IEA) used to produce synthetic crude and on average results in significantly more emissions and should have a separate value (according to EU's Stanford University peer reviewed study). But of course this is what the Canadian Government and oil industry want.

*The articles have suggested that the government is “attempting to kill this legislation by delaying it for years”. Yet my officials at the Department for Transport advise me that a banding system could be up and running within six months to a year. By contrast, if the EU fails to put a system in place now to cover all crudes, it is unlikely that the matter will be revisited for years, and all we will have is a specific value for one source that at the moment barely exists, as far as Europe is concerned.*

...again not just 'one source', this has been repeatedly pointed out to the minister. Similarly the review clause, why does he repeatedly ignore? He has said he has no faith in the EU to implement the review clause, even though it has already commenced work on it. He doesn't say this in public - he just regurgitates Canada's misinformation. Why does he believe the EU will introduce specific values after his 3 band approach has been implemented but not as part of existing proposals with its review clause?

There is no doubt that presenting alternative methodologies is highly likely to delay implementation of the FQD and will thereby send out the wrong signal, even if unintended. “within six months to a year” at best is too long – and that probably assumes all member states will adopt his methodology without delay – rather than the existing one. How long will debate delay the process if there is a fine balance of opinion between different methodologies? Surely this is playing into the wishes of the Canadian Government.

Bear in mind that the Canadian Government has been vigorously opposing the inclusion of a separate value for tar sands in the FQD since late summer 2009 (FoEE report) and in March 2010 they were successful in getting the tar sands value dropped. 1½ years later – in spite of further intense Canadian lobbying, the Commissioners re-instated a tar sands value

in October this year, and a member states vote on this was planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> December – prior to Obama’s programmed decision on the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline later the same month. So how could Norman Baker be so oblivious to the urgency to give a timely signal to Obama – to say no to a pipeline to facilitate export to Europe and elsewhere – by promoting an alternative methodology roundabout the same time as the Commissioners were deciding on whether a tar sands value should be re-instated? If it hadn’t been for Obama postponing the decision in 10th November until 2013 – then Norman’s spanner in the works could have had worse consequences.

*Incidentally, the only reason we have a specific value for Canadian tar sands is because the Canadians keep proper records in an open way that allows that figure to be calculated. Such transparency is a positive thing and we should not be encouraging secrecy amongst those heavy polluters who would have no incentive whatsoever to produce accurate data under their preferred approach.*

....not true, Canada repeatedly misrepresents emissions data, funding dubious studies as part of its global campaign to derail climate change legislation that threatens the tar sands. Noteworthy that Canada GHG reduction targets are now 90% less than Kyoto and they’re still likely to miss. They even left out tar sands data to COP to hide rocketing emissions earlier this year - hardly transparent. Also key that the FQD requires oil companies to report the source of their crude feedstock and carbon intensity, so there is not just an incentive, there is a requirement on oil companies to produce accurate data by country in the proposal.

*So I want a system brought in as early as possible that covers all crude sources. I have asked the pressure groups for their views on how that might be achieved. So far the only response I have met is silence. It seems the policy they want is to clobber the Canadians and to hell with the rest. What kind of an environmental policy is that?*

....not true, the minister has repeatedly had the facts of the Commission's proposal explained to him. We have been anything but silent but Baker chooses to ignore us and the facts and instead repeats the myths being put forward by the Canadian Government and oil industry.

**“clobber Canadians” – What a ridiculous accusation! – especially bearing in mind that by no means all Canadians support the tar sands industry – and many are against it such as The Council of Canadians and the indigenous First Nations. He again ignores our concerns also for tar sands elsewhere than Canada, and that the FQD values do not single out nations.**

*The reports have also suggested that I am “a good man being forced to tow the Conservative party line.” This appears to be based on the fact (which I found out from a pressure group) that David Cameron has recently met the Canadian Prime Minister. This explanation was then given oxygen by the Guardian, which listed the meetings ministers, including me, have had with oil companies. Nudge, nudge, wink, wink. What the Guardian did not list, of course, were all the meetings, far more numerous in number, that I have had with the green pressure groups.*

*And let me make this absolutely clear. I have not had any contact, or any pressure on me, from the Prime Minister or anyone else at No10 about this issue. Nor has any other Tory, bar the then Transport Secretary Philip Hammond, even discussed the matter with me.*

*The position now is that discussions are ongoing within the EU on the best approach to the measuring and treatment of fossil fuels within the Fuel Quality Directive. Countries like the Netherlands have made their own creative suggestions. My aim throughout has been, and is now, to use those discussions to get the best deal possible for the environment. I am not going to be blown off course for the sake of an easy life by these inaccurate campaigns, and neither should the Lib Dem party.*

**Norman mentions the Netherlands and the word ‘creative’ is ambiguous. It is worth bearing in mind that Shell is a big player in the Alberta Tar Sands – with about a fifth of the total production there, and no doubt keen to increase export potential.**

**Norman appears to be stubbornly oblivious to the truth and reality. He appears to be aiming for his own compromise solution that tries to address Canadian Government’s myth of being “singled out” by delaying implementation of the FQD until emission values have been ascertained for high emission conventional oil values – without acknowledging that Canada wants indefinite delay.**

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I wrote the following comment beneath Norman Baker's piece in libdemvoice:

- [Henry Adams](#)

Posted 5th December 2011 at 4:57 pm | [Permalink](#)

Norman Baker again misrepresents (here in as many as 9 sentences) the stance of environmentalists, the FQD and the big picture (such as the potential for import of tar Sands fuel into Europe). This will become clearer if you read the following articles I refer to. The most obvious relates to the myth of singling out of Canada's Tar Sands:

I recommend that LibDems read the 30nov11 comment of Chris Davies MEP, Liberal Democrat environment spokesman in the European Parliament, beneath the article 'Minister tries to defend UK secret tar sands help for Canada - and fails' Damian Carrington Environment guardian.co.uk 30nov11[http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/nov/30/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel?CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/nov/30/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel?CMP=tw_t_gu) . Damian Carrington in his summing up states "Baker wrongly claims the EU proposal single out nations [Canada], says he is not delaying action while the government admits in private its proposal would lead to delay", and Chris Davies states "There is no attempt to single out tar sands from Canada, which would be illegal as well as politically inappropriate, and some of us are getting tired of hearing the false claims that it does." Do also read Norman Baker's letter to the Guardian linked to in Damian's article above.

For a brief summary description of the FQD - especially in relation to Canadian Government claims (echoed by the UK Government) of Canada's tar sands being "singled out":[http://www.transportenvironment.org/Publications/prep\\_hand\\_out/lid/659](http://www.transportenvironment.org/Publications/prep_hand_out/lid/659)

Also read People & Planet webpage: 'NGO's respond to Norman Baker's tar sands claims':<http://peopleandplanet.org/tarsands/takeaction/eu-ban/baker-ngo-response>

Presenting an alternative methodology for the FQD - which will inevitably delay in its implementation even if such delay is unintended - fails to understand the urgency to send out a strong signal against exploiting the highest emissions sources not just from the Alberta Tar Sands but also from tar sands elsewhere such as in Madagascar and the Congo - before infrastructure is decided on. The urgency regarding the proposed Keystone XL pipeline linking the Alberta Tar Sands to the sea for worldwide export such as to EU seems to have been ignored or given lesser priority by Baker (see e.g. "The Valero UK connection" on my website home-page <http://www.dragonfly1.plus.com>):

Norman Baker above states "Yet there is at present virtually no fuel derived from tar sands in Europe" reminds me of a much repeated statement by the Canadian Government that tries to give a false impression that tar sands fuel is most unlikely to come to the EU or UK - hiding the important fact that the tar sands industry has been vigorously trying to get infrastructure in place ASAP to greatly increase the export of Canada's tar sands products worldwide (including to the EU and UK) - necessary for its desired doubling-over-the-decade expansion. Regarding this - it had been urgent for the EU member states to vote last week FOR the FQD in its present state, because Obama was programmed to make a decision this month on the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, until he announced on 10th November to delay this decision. Thus Norman Baker's push for his alternative methodology - however perfect - narrowly avoided being disastrous in failing to give a timely good signal to Obama.

He mentions “creative suggestions” by the Netherlands. Do bear in mind that Royal Dutch Shell is one of the biggest players in the Alberta Tar Sands (about 20% of total TS production if I recall rightly) and wishes to hugely expand its production. The Canadian government know that getting the tar sands products to the sea and exporting them is important for the industry’s target increase in production.

Bear in mind also that though the life-cycle emissions of the tar sands fuels are 23% greater than from conventional crude sources, this figure includes combustion in the vehicles. If you focus on the extraction emissions - these are a whopping 4.9 times higher (Prof. Brandt’s peer-reviewed report for EU). Thus an urgent signal for restriction of trade in tar sands products is a top priority - it is the worst offender. (But this in no way implies that flaring and high emissions heavy crudes should be ignored).

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One of comments beneath Chris Davies MEP’s article:

**Colin**

Posted 7th December 2011 at 6:38 pm | [Permalink](#)

Hats off to Chris Davies, as a Lib Dem voter I expect all elected reps to stand up for the environment and have some integrity in how they conduct themselves. Whilst Norman Baker has a great track record on the environment his parroting of the Canadian and oil lobby’s myths about tar sands, and his disingenuous attempts to stall the Directive and exempt tar sands fuels (the world’s most climate polluting transport fuel - 3 times the production emissions and 23% more lifecycle emissions than conventional crude) is an absolute shocker and difficult to fathom from an ‘environmentalist’. Is he being leaned on? He claims not. Does power corrupt? Maybe. Chris Davies and other Lib Dem MEPs have been instrumental in ensuring tar sands are included in the EU proposals despite one of the largest lobbies of the EU ever seen, and well done to them for that, it should in part be considered a Lib Dem victory, but it is being put at risk by a Lib Dem Minister! Norman has had the facts of the matter explained to him repeatedly by NGOs and no doubt MEPs but he just ignores and continues to regurgitate the pro tar sands propaganda. Unfortunately it has come to very public criticism, and unfortunately it is warranted. Norman needs to be reminded of the values he is supposed to represent.

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Another comment beneath Chris Davies’ article:

**Charlie Kronick of Greenpeace**

Posted 7th December 2011 at 1:30 pm | [Permalink](#)

As Chris Davies points out, the position of the Coalition- acting as advocates for international oil companies and the Canadian oil industry - in undermining the objectives of the Fuel Quality Directive in the EU would be lamentable, even if it just were the result of a naïve acceptance of the complaints and special pleading of the industry and the Canadians. But to describe Norman Baker’s justification of his position as naïve would be to ignore his persistent mis-statements about the legislation and the tar sands industry in general have been regularly exposed in correspondence with his office - and in the media.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/nov/30/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/dec/06/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel>

The question that really remains is how can the Liberal Democrats continue to claim that they represent the “green” conscience of the Coalition? From the Russian Arctic, where Chris Huhne rushed to endorse the BP’s abortive adventure with Rosneft (<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c8154164-2291-11e0-b6a2-00144feab49a.html#axzz1fr3g8hi8>), to his ongoing efforts to weaken the EU regulatory regime for offshore drilling (<http://www.platformlondon.org/offthedeepend.pdf>), to Norman Baker’s weak performance on Tar Sands, the Liberal Democrats have been leading the charge to undermine what’s left of the UK’s “green” reputation.

Really it’s now up to Nick Clegg - if he wants to show real leadership, and to rescue what’s left of the Lib Dem’s green reputation, he can take a first step by insisting that the his Minister - and the UK Government - support the position of the Commission and to support the immediate inclusion of specific value for tar sands in the Fuel Quality directive.

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## **REFERENCES**

(In addition I have been logging much useful Tar Sands and FQD information on my website [www.dragonfly1.plus.com](http://www.dragonfly1.plus.com))

**4-page pdf** explaining the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) by **TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT**

‘Pollution fears as UK blocks European ban on fuel from tar sands’ - The Independent 1jun11  
<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/green-living/pollution-fears-as-uk-blocks-european-ban-on-fuel-from-tar-sands-2291598.html> Relevant extract: ‘In a letter to The Co-operative on 5 May, **Mr Baker said the UK is opposed to the inclusion of tar sands in the directive until all crude oil sources with above-average emissions are also included.** A spokesman for the Department of Transport said: “The Government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport fuels. Be in no doubt, we want to address the higher emissions of fuel derived from all heavy crudes, **not just single out one particular source.** Politicians and campaigners called this a “**simple stalling tactic**”, which could take years to complete.”’

**TOTAL** Total's Alberta oil sands project gets approved Reuters 8dec11 TOTAL SA Written in Calgary, Alberta [http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/08/us-total-canada-idUSTRE7B71SU20111208?feedType=RSS&feedName=environmentNews&utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2Fenvironment+%28News+%2F+US+%2F+Environment%29](http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/08/us-total-canada-idUSTRE7B71SU20111208?feedType=RSS&feedName=environmentNews&utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+reuters%2Fenvironment+%28News+%2F+US+%2F+Environment%29)

“Total, the French oil major, and its Canadian, U.S. and Japanese partners aim to start production in 2018, hitting a peak of 100,000 barrels a day. While the company welcomed Ottawa’s go-ahead, following a six-year regulatory review, it has yet to make its final decision on whether to proceed with the massive project. The decision will be made “in the near future,” Jean-Michel Gires, the head of Total’s Canadian unit, told reporters.”

**VALERO** ‘The Valero [UK] connection’ article in [www.dragonfly1.plus.com](http://www.dragonfly1.plus.com) home-page (scroll-down) – refers to research by Lorne Stockman of OIL CHANGE INTERNATIONAL.

**FoE Europe** – re FQD: report on **extreme lobbying of EU by Canada Government** for tar sands oil interests - 8jul11 FOEE

[http://www.foeurope.org/publications/2011/FOEE\\_Report\\_Tar\\_Sands\\_Lobby\\_Final\\_July82011.pdf](http://www.foeurope.org/publications/2011/FOEE_Report_Tar_Sands_Lobby_Final_July82011.pdf)

**Chris Davies MEP** writes... Slipping deeper into the tar sands 6dec11

<http://www.libdemvoice.org/chris-davies-mep-writes-slipping-deeper-into-the-tar-sands-26115.html>

**Norman Baker** responds to tar sands campaigns in Liberal Democrat Voice 2dec11

<http://www.libdemvoice.org/norman-baker-responds-to-tar-sands-campaigns-26074.html#comment-190023>

Minister tries to defend UK secret tar sands help for Canada - and fails Damian Carrington Environment guardian.co.uk 30nov11 NB see Chris Davies MEP comment

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/nov/30/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel>

UK 'extraordinarily naive' over Canada's tar sands lobbying Damian Carrington Environment guardian.co.uk 6dec11 re eg Chris Davies MEP views FQD

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2011/dec/06/oil-sands-tar-canada-uk-fuel>

'Chris Davies, the MEP who is the Liberal Democrat environment spokesman in the European parliament, told me: "It is extraordinarily naive for ministers and officials to take the special pleading by Canada as though it were gospel truth, rather than what it is - an attempt to protect narrow financial interests."

Davies is savage about the UK government's position, for which fellow LibDem Norman Baker is the responsible minister: "The whole issue of tar sands is becoming a huge source of embarrassment to every Liberal Democrat who wants and expects a government of which we are part to be leading on environment issues and in the fight against climate change."

Letters Tar sands issue needs closer examination Environment The Guardian Brief flawed answer by Norman Baker – then countered by Linda McAvan MEP – Labour Spokesperson on climate change for European parliament

[http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/nov/29/tar-sands-needs-closer-examination?CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/nov/29/tar-sands-needs-closer-examination?CMP=tw_t_gu)

Canada's tar sands lobbying gets murky EurActiv 7dec11

[http://www.euractiv.com/climate-environment/canada-tar-sands-lobbying-gets-murky-news-509489?utm\\_source=EurActiv+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=1976bfd5d-my\\_google\\_analytics\\_key&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.euractiv.com/climate-environment/canada-tar-sands-lobbying-gets-murky-news-509489?utm_source=EurActiv+Newsletter&utm_campaign=1976bfd5d-my_google_analytics_key&utm_medium=email)

NGOs respond to Norman Baker's tar sands claims People & Planet

<http://peopleandplanet.org/tarsands/takeaction/eu-ban/baker-ngo-response>

Tar sands pressure builds, though EU vote delayed People & Planet dec11 <http://peopleandplanet.org/news/tar-sands-ban-delayed>

Shell & Tar Sands – UKTSN - Get the (S)Hell out of the Tar Sands

<http://www.no-tar-sands.org/campaigns/get-the-shell-out-of-the-tar-sands/>

McKibben Britain's Promotion of Canada's Tar Sands Oil Is Idiotic ThinkProgress 29nov11

[http://thinkprogress.org/romm/2011/11/29/377133/mckibben-britain-canada-tar-sands-oil-idiotic/?utm\\_medium=twitter&utm\\_source=twitterfeed](http://thinkprogress.org/romm/2011/11/29/377133/mckibben-britain-canada-tar-sands-oil-idiotic/?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed)

EXPOSED Canada's secret tar sands lobbying of UK ministers Greenpeace UK 27nov11

<http://www.greenpeace.org.uk/blog/climate/exposed-canadas-secret-tar-sands-lobbying-uk-ministers-20111127> Documents obtained by The Cooperative and Friends of the Earth Europe through Freedom of Information requests and shared with Greenpeace reveal

UK secretly helping Canada push its oil sands project Environment The Guardian 27nov11

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/nov/27/canada-oil-sands-uk-backing>

## **UK Government backing Tar Sands – PMs Cameron & Harper get “chummy” over trade and investment in Tar Sands**

### **Re Cameron's meeting with Harper in Canada (c. 26sep11):**

Ottawa's 'ethical' oil-sands campaign heats up - The Globe and Mail – 28sep11

[http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawas-ethical-oil-sands-campaign-heats-up/article2181234/?utm\\_medium=Feeds:%20RSS/Atom&utm\\_source=Politics&utm\\_content=2181234&utm\\_source=twitterfeed&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ottawas-ethical-oil-sands-campaign-heats-up/article2181234/?utm_medium=Feeds:%20RSS/Atom&utm_source=Politics&utm_content=2181234&utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter)

26<sup>th</sup> September **David Cameron visited Canada and Stephen Harper**, and the following quotes from the Canadian Press show well his intentions: *“Stephen Harper's chummy relationship with British Prime Minister David Cameron has begun to yield a friendlier view toward the oil sands, a potential influence in the fight over European standards that could label Alberta oil dirty.....Mr. Cameron's Conservative government now argues the oil sands should not be singled*

out as a dirty source in a world that will need oil, and increasingly heavy crudes, for the foreseeable future.” [NB: the EU does not just single out tar sands; other high emissions sources are likewise assessed].

**Re opening of new UK consulate in Calgary – by upgrading UK trade office within offices of Tar Sands oil company Suncor:**

New U.K consulate in Calgary sends 'clear message' on trade priorities - 23sep11

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/consulate+Calgary+sends+clear+message+trade+priorities/5450990/story.html>

Cameron's visit followed a recent opening of a **new UK Consulate in Calgary** – by upgrading a former UK trade office within offices of tar sands oil company Suncor (23<sup>rd</sup> Sept) : *“The opening of a full consulate in Calgary underscores the need for stronger trade ties between the U.K. and Alberta's oilpatch, according to Lord James Sassoon, the British Treasury Minister for Commerce. Sassoon has spent the past two days in Calgary meeting with politicians and oil executives to discuss ways to boost trade and investment between the two regions. It makes financial sense to upgrade the current U.K. trade office to a consulate staffed by a senior diplomat from London, given that Alberta is "one of the main focuses of British business," Sassoon said in an interview”*

Britain Backs Canada Over Tar Sands Fight The Price of Oil 27sep11

<http://priceofoil.org/2011/09/27/britain-backs-canada-over-tar-sands-fight/>