

To: **Tim Farron, Nick Clegg & Norman Baker** (via Tim Farron), and all Liberal Democrats (open letter).
cc: **Simon Hughes**
From: **Dr Henry Adams** - Consultant Ecologist & member of the [South Lakes Action on Climate Change](#)
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Keywords: **FQD, tar sands, climate change, Nobel laureates**
7th October 2013 (A Global Day of Action for Indigenous Sovereignty)

Dear Tim Farron,

21 Nobel peace and science laureates urge support for the immediate implementation of the European Union's Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) climate change legislation.

I would be grateful if you would forward this letter to both Nick Clegg and Norman Baker, together with your own views on the points made in the appended letter signed by 21 Nobel peace and science laureates. Note that these laureates include 2 who are members of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 9 other science laureates, and Desmond Tutu among others.

Having investigated the tar sands and the FQD over many years now, I most strongly welcome and support their letter, and also an earlier similar letter signed by Nobel laureates to the Heads of State of the European Union on 15th February 2012. In 2012 their words appeared to go unheeded by the UK government; I hope they are heeded now. (I append and attach copies of both these letters, as well as a letter pdf of this present email.)

I also personally urge Nick Clegg and Norman Baker to whole-heartedly support the FQD's climate legislation at the forthcoming EU Council of Ministers vote. Neither the climate nor infrastructure investment decisions will wait for any further unnecessary delays originating from fossil fuel and finance interests. There has long been sufficient evidence to support the obvious: that fuel from tar sands has significantly higher life-cycle emissions than fuel from conventional sources (on average), and continuing to echo pretences to the contrary will fool no-one with an un-blinkered mind-set.

With their high life-cycle emissions (and other huge externalities) the tar sands are an obvious case for fossil fuels to be left in the ground – as c.75 to 80% of reserves must be, if we are to keep below the threshold 2°C rise agreed at the Copenhagen climate summit. Furthermore, UK banks such as RBS should divest from the tar sands 'carbon bubble' or risk 'stranded assets'. (Refs IEA and [Carbon Tracker](#))

Norman Baker's decision on the FQD will be a signal as to the true effectual (as opposed to rhetorical or ostensible) stance of the LibDem MPs in coalition as to their regard for not just curbing carbon emissions with climate legislation, but also for the human and treaty rights of the indigenous First Nations, now suffering cancers etc from tar sands pollution, and for the vast scale of irreparable destruction of habitat – rightly labelled as ecocide (the proposed UN 5th crime against peace). The tar sands industry is totally unacceptable on each of these 3 counts individually. Together, the case is overwhelming, whatever the financial gains might be to some. The FQD is a crucial means of halting tar sands expansion.

As a LibDem voter for many years, I see it would bring huge shame on the LibDem party if their representatives in Government fail to support the FQD yet again. No "Faustian coalition pact", nor stooping to financial factors are acceptable excuses on this vitally important issue.

LibDem MPs in government should also heed their colleagues who have signed up in support of [EDM 240: TAR SANDS AND THE FUEL QUALITY DIRECTIVE](#) The motion is also appended below. Please follow it.

Yours sincerely,



Member of the [South Lakes Action on Climate Change](#)

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REF/links:

IEA: International Energy Agency www.iea.org

Carbon Tracker: 'Unburnable carbon 2013: Wasted capital and stranded assets'
www.carbontracker.org/wastedcapital#

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October 2013 from Nobel laureates:

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Letter to EU Commissioners and Environment Ministers re EU climate legislation and unconventional fossil fuels

The world can no longer ignore, except at our own peril, that climate change is one of the greatest threats facing life on this planet today. The impacts of climate change and extreme resource extraction are exacerbating conflicts and environmental destruction around the world. The extraction of unconventional fuels—such as oil sands and oil shale—is having a particularly devastating impact on climate change.

For this reason, we are writing to urge you to support the immediate implementation of the European Union's (EU) Fuel Quality Directive in order to fulfill its 6% reduction target in greenhouse gas emissions from fuels used for transportation by 2020. We have no doubt that the Directive must be applied fairly to unconventional fuels to ensure their climate impacts are fully taken into account. It follows that the fuel-producing companies should report their climate emissions and be held responsible for any emissions increase.

We welcome the EU's scientific analysis—as it is now proposed for the implementation of the EU Directive—that the extraction and production of fuels from unconventional sources including oil sands, coal-to-liquid, and oil shale leads to higher emissions and that this should be reflected in the regulations.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) is warning that unconventional fuel sources are especially damaging to the environment and climate, and is concerned that these fuel sources are now increasingly competing on a par with conventional fuel sources. In order to avoid catastrophic climate change, the IEA calculates that two thirds of known fossil fuel reserves must be left in the ground.

Now is the time to transition swiftly away from fossil fuels, with a special focus on those that pollute the most. We must all move toward a future built on safe, clean and renewable energy. Fully implementing the EU's Fuel Quality Directive will send a clear signal that the European Union is committed to action that supports the rights of future generations to a healthy planet.

It is not too late to avert our actions that only amount to palliative care for a dying planet. The time for positive action is now. The European Union can demonstrate clear and unambiguous leadership by upholding its climate principles. We look forward to working together as we move forward to confront this frightening challenge to our global survival.

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Prize, 1976, Ireland

Roger Guillemin, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1977, France

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize 1980, Argentina

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize 1984, South Africa

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Prize, 1992, Guatemala

Richard Roberts, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1993, United Kingdom

Paul Crutzen, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1995, Netherlands
Harold Kroto, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1996, United Kingdom
José Ramos-Horta, Nobel Peace Prize, 1996, East Timor
John Walker, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1997, UK
Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize, 1997, USA
John Hume, Nobel Peace Prize, 1998, Ireland
Paul Greengard, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2000, USA
Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize, 2003, Iran
Gerhard Ertl, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 2007, Germany
Mark Jaccard, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Nobel Peace Prize, 2007, Canada
John Stone, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Nobel Peace Prize, 2007, Canada
Martin Chalfie, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 2008, USA
Thomas Steitz, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 2009, USA
Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize, 2011, Liberia
Tawakkol Karman, Nobel Peace Prize, 2011, Yemen

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- See more at: <http://nobelwomensinitiative.org/2013/10/nobel-peace-and-science-laureates-calling-for-eu-action-on-tar-sands/?ref=204#sthash.P4ZgtwGQ.dpuf>

February 15, 2012

Support the European Commission's Fuel Quality Directive

Dear Heads of State:

We—a group of Nobel Peace Laureates—are writing today to ask you to do the right thing for our environment and support the European Commission's effort to keep highly polluting tar sands oil out of Europe.

Climate change is the gravest threat to the wellbeing of our planet. We now stand at a turning point. The Fuel Quality Directive proposed by the European Commission is an example of a policy that, if implemented properly, can move us away from our destructive dependence on oil, coal and natural gas to renewable energy sources and clean transportation sources. It is designed to help Europeans make cleaner fuel choices.

Tar sand development is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, and threatens the health of the planet. As the tar sands have contributed to rising emissions, Canada recently stepped away from the Kyoto Protocol. Europe must not follow in Canada's footsteps.

Dr. James Hansen, at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, has said that unrestricted exploitation of high carbon tar sand oil would mean "game over for the climate".

Large reserves of tar sands exist in Canada, Madagascar, Russia and Venezuela. In

Canada, production of tar sand oil is not only contributing to climate change, but is also causing widespread environmental damage and harm to local people and indigenous communities. The production process has polluted the Athabasca River, poisoned the air with toxins and turned farmland into wasteland. Large areas of the boreal forest have been cut down to make way for tar sand mining.

For these reasons we commend President Obama's decision to reject the proposal to build the Keystone XL pipeline, which would have dramatically increased the amount of tar sands oil produced and transported from Canada to the United States. We urge you to support the European Commission's proposal and say no to highly polluting tar sands oil—in favor of cleaner fuels.

Sincerely,

Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate (1976) – Ireland

Betty Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate (1976) – Ireland

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Laureate (1980) – Argentina

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Laureate (1984) – South Africa

Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Nobel Peace Laureate (1992) – Guatemala

President José Ramos-Horta, Nobel Peace Laureate (1996) – East Timor

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Laureate (1997) – USA

Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Laureate (2003) – Iran

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EDM 240: TAR SANDS AND THE FUEL QUALITY DIRECTIVE

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/240>

That this House notes that oil from tar sands produces on average 23 per cent more carbon emissions than conventional fuels from extraction to consumption, according to peer reviewed scientific analysis from Stanford University; further notes that tar sands exploitation causes severe local environmental harm including deforestation and pollution, which threatens the lives and livelihoods of indigenous communities; supports the EU's modest aim of reducing emissions from transport fuels by six per cent by 2020 through the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD); considers accurate labelling in the FQD of oil from unconventional fuels as more carbon-intensive than conventional oil to be a sensible measure; believes that this labelling would discourage the import of unconventional fuels such as tar sands oil into Europe and contribute to the shift to cleaner fuels; further notes that the exploitation of unconventional fossil fuels is incompatible with the achievement of the UK Government's repeated commitment to keep global warming below a two degree increase and thus to avoid catastrophic climate change; is concerned at the intensive lobbying against accurate labelling of unconventional fuels in the FQD from the Canadian government and British oil companies with tar sands interests such as Shell and BP; and urges the Government to support proposals for separate default values for unconventional fuels, including oil shale and tar sands, during negotiations and in the vote in the EU Council of Ministers later this year.