

## Unconventional fuels/Tar Sands Proposal

### **Please briefly outline your proposal:**

Please answer these questions in relation to your campaign proposal: (1000 words max)

1. Does it focus on a significant human rights, poverty and/or environmental injustice

It has a focus on 'extreme energy' and environmental injustice. This injustice is both for those in the areas where oil extraction takes place and the consequent environmental impact once these fuels have been used.

2. Is an issue raised by those affected or in solidarity with them

The initial Tar Sands campaign was centred around a youth exchange to a community affected by tar sands extraction in Canada. On the fracking side of things, it would aim to work in solidarity with local people trying to push the authorities and companies to conduct transparent, peer-reviewed research (for a start) on the issue of fracking. This could be expanded to other unconventional fuels.

3. Can be tackled by People & Planet as a student network

Absolutely. It offers opportunities for people involved in the 'fight' against injustices, and for environmental sustainability, accountability, transparency and rights (such as clean water). Whilst the Tar Sands are mainly focused in Alberta, Canada, raising awareness among students of the issues and what they can do about it can be very campus and college-focused.

4. Could include a variety of campaign goals and targets developed.

The overarching campaign goal would be to stop the relationships between UK universities, schools and colleges and companies active in tar sands, shale gas extraction or unconventional fuel extraction and begin institutional shift towards sustainable alternatives. Some of the relationships educational establishments can have with tar sands or shale gas companies relate to:

- Pensions
- Research funding
- Courses
- Banking
- Public events
- Sponsorships
- Careers events
- Links with unions
- Staff in decision-making positions (board members, etc.)

With regards to fracking: three main campaign objectives could be to lobby councils and ensure that no licenses are given for fracking, or anything that could lead to fracking; to get a moratorium on fracking in the UK, stopping existing sites; to raise awareness in the general public of the dangers of fracking, so it becomes an unacceptable form of energy

extraction in the UK, Europe, and the wider world.

### **Timelines: 2013 - 2016**

Breakdown:

- Year 1:

- \*Project planning and research - how much of a focus do we want
- \*Development of materials (leaflets, etc)
- \*Focus on banking, ethical investment, careers events
- \*Links w/ sustainable energy companies (Ecotricity, etc)
- \*Develop w/ activists and communities affected by fracking in the UK (Reaf in Blackpool?)
- \*Skype links at events w/ Beaver Lake Cree

- Year 2:

- \*Focus on research funding, courses (curriculum) and public events
- \*Sustainability commitment that unis can sign up to

- Year 3:

- \*Evaluation
- \*Focus on pensions and links w/ unions

5. Is meaningful to students across the People & Planet Network, by age, geography, interest experience and skills

There are many issues that are raised by tar sands, unconventional fuels and fracking that fit with People & Planet's goals, overarching and overarching aims that are meaningful to the network. These include; Indigenous rights, environmental issues, peak oil, colonialism, sustainable energy, involvement of people from the North of England fracking sites (often badly represented in P&P), bringing global issues to the UK, alternative technology. There's lots of shocking photos and the speeches and interviews the members of the Beaver Lake Cree did whilst at Shared Planet this year that could be used as a way of encouraging people to empathise with those directly affected by the Tar Sands. It's important to show people that there is something we can do about it.

6. Has opportunities for cooperation with other groups, including those in the Global South

The Green League could be linked up to this campaign as an incentive for universities to be active. We would want to link with people affected by fracking, tar sands and unconventional fuel operations testing in the UK and abroad, and ask "is there something better?" We could ask IfNotThenWhat (youth group in Nottinghamshire) whether they'd like to link up with this campaign. Other partner organisations could be: Scientists for Global Responsibility, Engineers Without Borders, Centre for Alternative Technology and Practical Action.

The campaign already has links with groups campaigning against tar sands extraction in Alberta and has the potential to link up with groups in the global south in places where tar sands extraction is happening. These are both from 2007, but offer an idea of countries an relative sizes of resources.

<http://energy.cr.usgs.gov/oilgas/addoilgas/WEC07NBEHO.pdf>  
<http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2007/1084/OF2007-1084v1.pdf>

7. Can be contributed to by People & Planet in a unique way and plays on our

strengths as a student network

Students in the People & Planet network are uniquely placed to fight against tar sands and unconventional fuel extraction. Students will be able to apply pressure to their institutions to invest sustainably, getting them to pledge not to invest their money in any companies working in Tar Frak industries and instead invest in renewable energy projects

This campaign also has the advantage of a committed group of activists who visited Beaver Lake Cree nation and who have already visited many universities to educate people on the issue.

There could be an office (or home-based) position for a volunteer one day a week who could be a main contact for the interim research and campaign building an linking?

8. Has a body of research and resources available to us in order to develop the campaign.

We do need to be wary of immediately condemning fracking as it hasn't been extensively researched in the UK - however, permits will be handed out over the next few years and we need to show that there's already pressure (same with arctic drilling/clathrates, which will be pushed when/if these types of industry expansions happen) so we aren't perceived as being reactionary.

9. Fits in with and draws from current and past People & Planet's campaigns.

This campaign does build on previous People & Planet campaigns such as Reclaim Research, Tar Sands-Free, Ditch Dirty Development and Going Greener by changing the practices of educational establishments. The overarching campaign goal would be to stop the relationships between UK universities, schools and colleges and companies active in tar sands, shale gas extraction or unconventional fuel extraction and begin institutional shift towards sustainable alternatives.

10. Is likely to or able to be funded

There is a possibility of some funding from the Co-op bank for an anti-fracking campaign. The time between the start of the campaign and the decision by the network also allows for other funding sources to be investigated.