

EU MPs call for 'robust' oversight of shale gas development

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Protesters hold banner reading: "In solidarity, no to the shale gas" during a demonstration against shale gas exploration in Ardeche, central France in 2011. European lawmakers want tough regulation of shale oil and gas exploration and member states should be cautious as they proceed, especially over 'fracking' recovery systems, a statement said.

European lawmakers want tough regulation of shale oil and gas exploration and member states should be cautious as they proceed, especially over 'fracking' recovery systems, a statement said on Wednesday.

Developing deposits of oil and gas trapped in shale rock should be backed up with "robust regulatory regimes," the European Parliament said, citing non-binding resolutions adopted this week by its Energy and Environment committees.

"Each EU country has the right to decide for itself on whether to exploit shale gas ... Member states should have robust rules on all shale gas activities, including [hydraulic fracturing](#) of rock (fracking)."

By fracturing the rock holding the gas and oil, the fossil fuels can be extracted and brought to the surface, but there are concerns the procedure can contaminate ground water or even destabilise the surrounding area.

MEPs also want the EU "to learn from US experiences, with a view to using environmentally-friendly industrial processes and best available technologies."

The recommendations will go forward to the full parliament session in October.

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