

Norway angers climate activists with fossil fuel projects

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Norway's government gave the green light Wednesday to 19 oil and gas projects worth more than 200 billion kroner (\$18.6 billion), a decision

that outraged climate activists.

Petroleum and Energy Minister Terje Aasland said the projects would guarantee jobs and "provide the foundations" for the technology needed to develop [wind power](#), hydrogen, and [carbon capture](#) and storage.

"The projects are also an important contribution to Europe's energy security," he said in a statement.

A major oil and gas producer, Norway became Europe's biggest gas supplier last year when it overtook Russia which cut deliveries following its war in Ukraine.

The 19 projects involve the opening of new fields, the extension of existing oil and gas fields and investments to increase the rate of hydrocarbon recovery in the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea.

Most of the projects will be carried out by Norwegian groups Equinor and Aker BP, Germany's Wintershall Dea and Austria's OMV.

"With these projects, we will guarantee new production from the second half of the 2020s in order to be able to maintain Norwegian deliveries at a high level," Aasland said.

Environmental organizations blasted the decision, saying it flew in the face of the green transition and would slow efforts to develop renewable energy.

"A sad day for the climate", the head of WWF Norway, Karoline Andaur, wrote on Twitter.

"This is 200 billion kroner invested to reinforce the climate crisis and destroy our joint future," said Halvard Haga Raavand from Greenpeace.

In 2021, the International Energy Agency recommended that no new oil and [gas fields](#) be opened in a bid to reach carbon neutrality by the middle of the century and keep global warming in check.

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