

# Scotland says no to fracking

October 3 2017



Scotland's government said it would be banning fracking, extending the current moratorium "indefinitely" following a consultation that found widespread opposition to shale gas extraction.

Fracking will be banned in Scotland following a widespread public backlash against onshore drilling, the government said on Tuesday.

The government said "[fracking](#) cannot and will not take place in Scotland" after a [scientific review](#) and a comprehensive public consultation.

Over 60,000 people responded to the consultation, the second largest response to any consultation in Scotland, and 99 percent were in favour of a ban.

Scottish Energy Minister Paul Wheelhouse said the health impacts of fracking were unclear, insisted fracking would detract from Scotland's climate change targets, and would add just 0.1 percent to GDP.

But Conservative Party opponents said the ruling Scottish National Party had disregarded the potential jobs and economic benefits fracking could deliver.

The semi-autonomous [government](#) does not currently have the power to issue or revoke fracking licenses, but it can prevent fracking through the planning permission system.

The Scottish Government has now written to local authorities informing them that any applications for fracking in Scotland will be opposed by ministers.

Wheelhouse said: "This action is sufficient to effectively ban the development of unconventional oil and gas extraction in Scotland".

The decision is expected to be approved by the Scottish Parliament with the support of Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish Greens, but the centre-right Conservatives insist it is "a short-sighted and economically damaging decision" designed to appease nationalists in the environmental lobby.

Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative finance spokesman, said: "There's also a huge hypocrisy from the SNP here. It's happy to receive shale from the US to refine at Grangemouth—a major industry in itself — yet doesn't want to have that technology here."

Gary Smith, the GMB union's Scotland secretary, also accused the Scottish Government of being "dishonest" by banning fracking while "importing a huge amount of [shale gas](#) from Trump's America".

Friends of the Earth Scotland said the decision was "a victory for the environment and for local communities fighting fracking".

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