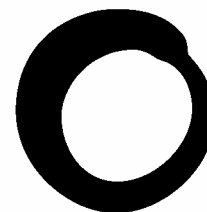


Briefing Note



**Friends of
the Earth**

Carbon capture and storage

1. Summary of Friends of the Earth's position

- 1.1 In the past Friends of the Earth has been opposed to carbon capture and storage because it was technically unproven and because it risked diverting attention and economic support away from energy saving, renewable power and the development of a low carbon economy. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has now produced a draft report assessing the technological potential of carbon capture and storage.
- 1.2 Friends of the Earth is still of the view that the political, technological, social and economic focus must remain focused on reducing dependence on fossil fuels and developing a low carbon economy.
- 1.3 The draft IPCC report does now suggest that there are no insurmountable technological hurdles to implementing carbon capture and storage but rightly suggests that legal, regulatory and liability issues need to be resolved. Also, in Friends of the Earth's view, there needs to be internationally agreed criteria on storage standards, site selection and leakage. Friends of the Earth can not support large-scale implementation of carbon capture and storage until these issues have been addressed.
- 1.4 There are some storage options which are less understood and some which, in Friends of the Earth's opinion, pose unacceptable environmental risks. For example, while the petroleum industry has experience with the injection of CO₂ in oil and gas fields, there is limited experience of injection into saline aquifers and limited geological knowledge of potential sites. Also, the use of marine storage poses significant environmental impacts on little understood and vulnerable ecosystems. As the IPCC draft report states, the suitability of storage sites can only be determined on a case-by case basis. Friends of the Earth will consider each case on its merits. It will oppose all marine storage proposals.

Friends of the Earth inspires solutions to environmental problems, which make life better for people.

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- the most extensive environmental network in the world, with almost one million supporters across five continents and over 60 national organisations worldwide**
- a unique network of campaigning local groups, working in over 200 communities throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland**
- dependent on individuals for over 90 per cent of its income.**

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1.5 Should the technical, regulatory, legal hurdles and site selection hurdles be successfully overcome, Friends of the Earth recognises that within the UK there could be a role for carbon capture and storage as part of a transition to a low carbon economy. This recognition is based upon the following understanding:

- That the latest scientific research suggests that deeper cuts in carbon dioxide are needed sooner than envisaged ten years ago.
- The need for these bridging technologies is also increased because the UK Government has failed to make progress in cutting emissions (carbon dioxide levels are higher than when the present Government came to power in 1997).
- The UK needs to simultaneously wean itself off nuclear power whilst shifting from fossil fuels and although the UK has a huge potential to provide its energy through renewable sources it will take some time to realise this potential.

2. Our recommendations

2.1 Friends of the Earth therefore recommends that the Government:

- Redoubles its efforts domestically and through European Union legislation to tap into the very large and cost-effective potential for reducing demand for energy and to promote renewable power.
- Develops, with others as necessary, the legal, regulatory, and liability regimes needed.
- Contributes to the adoption of international standards for site selection and monitoring to ensure that there is no leakage or that leakage rates are negligible and that environmental impacts are minimal.
- Ensures that fossil fuel power plants are modified to ensure they are using best available technology, and that they incorporate the ability to implement carbon capture and storage once the various hurdles have been overcome.
- Ensures that when carbon capture and storage is ready to be introduced that regulatory and trading regimes ensure that fossil fuel plants implement carbon capture and storage without government subsidies or other forms of public support (which should focus instead on promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy).
- Ensures that the promotion of carbon capture and storage at an international level is not seen as an alternative to binding international agreements on climate change or to the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable power and does not divert attention and resources from the latter.