

Brazil discusses proposal to suspend fracking for five years, but government insists on auction of new extraction fields

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The Brazilian government is in the contraflow of history by adopting fracking as an energy alternative, as this technology is highly polluting and harmful to ecosystems, contaminates water, soil and air and intensifies [climate change](#). In a ripple effect, losses may be reflected in agriculture, tourism and foreign trade, as well as in the public health system, due

to the serious effects of toxic waste on human beings. This has already happened in several countries, and has already generated many protests.

But in Brazil, too, opposition to the use of this technology is growing. Aiming to raise the awareness of the population and the authorities about the dangers and irreversible impacts of fracking for shale gas exploration, Coesus - Coalition No Fracking Brazil, of which [350.org/Brazil](#) is a part, is receiving more and more support .

On July 2, several international studies about the environmental, social and economic impacts of fracking were presented by Coesus' coordinator, Juliano Bueno de Araujo, in a public hearing in the National Congress. The hearing was proposed by the Environment and Sustainable Development Committee to discuss Bill 6904/13, which proposes the suspension of shale gas exploitation through fracking for a period of five years. More than 15 political parties attended the event.

"It was an important step towards putting fracking on the political agenda of the National Congress. We will inform and enlighten the deputies about the dangers that we are all running towards and expand the support base for the approval of the moratorium," said Araujo. The discussion is continuing in the National Congress, since there is no legislation about so-called "unconventional" gas exploration.

While the options for low-carbon technologies for power generation - such as solar, hydro and wind - increases in other parts of the world, the Brazilian government is insisting on fracking. Worse, it is allowing the use of completely obsolete machines from the 70s. "Brazil doesn't need fracking", emphasizes Nicole Figueiredo de Oliveira, 350.org Brazil Team Leader.



Suspension

Two years ago, Coesus held an intense campaign against fracking in Brazil, which culminated with the judicial suspension of the 12th Auction Round for 240 blocks of shale gas exploration, organized by the National Agency for Oil and Natural Gas (ANP, in the Portuguese acronym) to be conducted in December 2013. This year, ANP has announced that on October 7 it will auction over 269 blocks. These reserves are situated on top of the Serra Grande and Guarani Aquifers in the states of Paraná and São Paulo, near the Abrolhos archipelago, in the state of Bahia, and in the southern part of the Amazon rainforest, in the state of Acre.

At this stage of the No Fracking campaign, 150 public hearings are scheduled in the cities affected by the ANP auction, and the movement is seeking support from political regional representatives and mobilizing millions of Brazilians in social networks.

Threat

Fracking is the technology developed for the extraction of shale gas through deep ground drilling, inserting a pipe that injects from 7 to 15 million liters of water and over 600 chemicals into the ground to fracture the rock and thus release the gas. Dozens of studies have already show that where fracking is used, the damage can be permanent. In the United States, researches have shown that 75% of the forest ecosystem has been destroyed, disintegrating the habitats of hundreds of species.

Protests against fracking grow day by day in the United Kingdom, the United States, southeastern Australia, Algeria, Argentina and Uruguay. In many cases, small communities are managing to delay or complicate the extraction plans, leading to many companies to give up on the business.

Defeats

As the protests grow, many countries have already banned or severely restricted fracking.

Recently, fracking defenders faced two major defeats on both sides of the Atlantic: in the United Kingdom, drilling for shale gas exploitation was denied by Lancashire's authorities, and in the United States, the state of New York formalized the ban on fracking technology.

Another setback has also come from the United States, with the announcement from a major Japanese trading company, the Itochu Corporation, that it will abandon its investments in shale gas production in the US, due to the lack of a positive industry outlook. "The forecasts for US shale gas prices are not very good, and its situation is terrible. Because of this, we made the decision to stop the collaboration," said a senior Japanese executive.

Learn more about fracking accessing the following links:

<http://www.naofrackingbrasil.com.br>

<http://world.350.org/fracking-brasil/>

Silvia Calciolari
Coalition No Fracking Brazil
4199673416
email us here

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