

10 October 2014

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon
Secretary General of the United Nations
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017

CC: Kandeh Yumkella, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and CEO, SE4ALL
Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP
Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UNEP

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

On the eve of the 2014 Global Frackdown, and in the wake of the largest climate change mobilization in history— an event in which you participated— we call on you to establish unequivocally that hydraulic fracturing has no role in the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4All).

Tomorrow, numerous events will take place in communities around the world to oppose hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” the process of injecting millions of gallons of water, sand and toxic chemicals underground to extract oil and natural gas.

Mounting scientific evidence shows that fracking is not only inherently unsafe for both public health and ecosystems, but that fracking may actually drive global warming more than conventional fossil fuels due to methane leakage from oil and gas drilling operations and their attendant infrastructure. According to the 2013 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Synthesis report, methane from oil and gas is 87 times as powerful at trapping heat as carbon dioxide, pound-for-pound, over a 20-year period and 36 times more so over 100 years. So, while natural gas may burn relatively cleaner than oil or coal, the cumulative effect of extracting gas and building the necessary transport infrastructure is a greater threat to the planet. What’s more, such short-sighted investments only serve to delay the mandatory transition to truly renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

A 2012 UN Environment Program report concluded that, “fracking may result in unavoidable environmental impacts even if UG [unconventional gas] is extracted properly, and more so if done inadequately.”¹ Yet at a press briefing last year, your spokesperson stated that, “natural gas has an important role to play as we transition to lower-carbon sources.”² We implore you to look beyond carbon dioxide to the serious global warming threat posed by methane and instead commit to a program aimed at promoting 100% renewable energy, complemented by conservation and efficiency.

¹ http://www.unep.org/pdf/UNEP-GEAS_NOV_2012.pdf

² <http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2013/db131018.doc.htm>

There is well-documented scientific evidence, furthermore, that fracking contaminates water, pollutes air, threatens public health, causes earthquakes, and harms local economies. As far back as 2008, more than 1,000 cases of water contamination near drilling sites have been documented by courts, states and local governments in the United States³, and many more since then. What's more, the U.S. Geological Survey has reported a link between earthquakes and fracking wastewater injection, including a 5.6-magnitude quake that struck Oklahoma in 2011. Where Oklahoma once only experienced a handful of earthquakes a year, the number spiked over 1,000 as gas extraction ramped up in the state. Hazardous air pollutants have been found at fracking sites including benzene⁴, methanol, formaldehyde and carbon disulfide.⁵

Under the guise of achieving energy independence, some nations are moving forward quickly to frack while others, including Bulgaria, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, as well as hundreds of municipalities globally, have instituted bans or moratoria. Given the inherent risks and harms, fracking should have no role in an initiative that endeavors to achieve sustainability.

While we appreciate the SE4All emphasis on scaling up renewables, we are deeply concerned that the crucial terms "modern energy" and indeed, "sustainable," have gone undefined, thus leaving room for broad interpretation that may include natural gas, fracking and other harmful practices. The SE4All initiative has already been used by some states to justify nuclear energy, mega-dams, and increased natural gas extraction, while the private sector uses SE4All as a UN and state-sanctioned vehicle for investment in such unsustainable practices, many of which are constructed in communities that do not have access to basic energy services.

Positioned as we are in the first year of the 2014-2024 Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, there is an opportunity to yield real climate leadership at the highest level. That cannot be achieved, however, while ignoring scientific evidence, nor by allowing an "anything goes" framework of energy policies including natural gas, mega-dams, biofuels and industrial bioenergy that are working counter to the stated goals of providing truly sustainable energy for all.

Secretary General, we are requesting that natural gas from fracking not be permitted in the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative. Please advise us whether fracking is currently permitted within the parameters of SE4All and, if so, whether you will be taking steps to rectify the matter. You may contact Darcey O'Callaghan to follow up at docallaghan@fwwatch.org or +1.202.683.2523. We look forward to your response.

Signed,

³ Lustgarten, Abrahm. "Buried Secrets: Is natural gas drilling endangering U.S. water supplies?" *ProPublica*. November 13, 2008.

⁴ <http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-fracking-benzene-worker-health-20140910-story.html#page=1>

⁵ United States House of Representatives. Committee on Energy and Commerce. [Minority Staff Report].

International & Regional Organizations

350.org, *International*

European Water Movement, *Regional*

Food & Water Europe, *Regional*

Friends of the Earth Europe, *Regional*

Health and Environment Alliance, *International*

IndyACT, *International*

International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *International*

Leave it in the Ground Coalition, *International*

Loretto Community, *International*

Medical Mission Sisters, *International*

Mercy Global Action, *International*

Mercy International Association, *International*

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, *International*

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary NGO, *International*

Oil Change International, *International*

Salesian Missions, *International*

Sisters of Mercy, Mercy International Association at the UN, *International*

National Organizations

350 Bay Area, *United States*

350 Colorado, *United States*

350Madison, *United States*

350NJ, *United States*

350NYC, *United States*

ABC VERDE, *Peru*

ADDEA, *Senegal*

Advocates for Morris, *United States*

Aitec-IPAM, *France*

Aktionsbündnis No Moor Fracking, *Germany*

All India Forum of Forest Movements, *India*

Allamakee County Protectors, *United States*
Alliance for a Green Economy, *United States*
Alliance for Democracy, *United States*
AMAR Environment Defense Association, *Brazil*
Americans Against Fracking, *United States*
APEDDUB, *Tunisia*
APROMAC Environment Protection Association, *Brazil*
Aquattac, *Germany*
Armidale Action on Coal Seam Gas and Mining, *Australia*
Asociacion de Mujeres Sapara y Nación Sapara Originarios, *Ecuador*
Associação Nacional dos Serviços Municipais de Saneamento, *Brazil*
ATTAC España, *Spain*
ATTAC France, *France*
ATTAC Mallorca, *Spain*
Back To Democracy, *United States*
Baldwin Hills Oil Watch, *United States*
Ballinlea Residents, *United Kingdom*
Ballona Creek Renaissance, *United States*
Benito Juárez SIN Fracking, *Argentina*
Berks Gas Truth, *United States*
Berkshire Environmental Action Team, *United States*
BI "Kein CO2-Endlager Altmark," *Germany*
BI lebenswertes Korbach e.V., *Germany*
Bio-Bras, *Brazil*
Bisbee & Cochise County People for Community and Environmental Rights, *United States*
Boulder County Citizens for Community Rights, *United States*
Breast Cancer Action, *United States*
Californians Against Fracking, *United States*
Camden Haven Anti fracking Group, *Australia*
Canonbie Residents Association, *United Kingdom*
Care for Creation Committee, *United States*

Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy, *United States*
Citizens Energy and Economics Council of Delaware County, *United States*
Center for Biological Diversity, *United States*
Centre County Green Party, *United States*
Centre for Civil Society, *South Africa*
Centre for Sustainable Development, *Lithuania*
CeViof-Centro de Violencia Fliar, *Argentina*
Chenango Community Action for Renewable Energy, *United States*
Citizens for Water, *United States*
Citizens United for Renewable Energy, *United States*
Citizens' Environmental Coalition, *United States*
Climaxi, *Belgium*
Comisión Nacional en Defensa del Agua y la Vida, *Uruguay*
Coalition to Protect Communities from Fracking's Collateral Damage, *United States*
Coalition to Protect San Benito, *United States*
Collectif, *France*
Collectif 07 Stop Gaz-Huiles de Schiste, *France*
Collectif 82 Non Aux Gas de Schiste, *France*
collectif anti gaz de schist, *France*
Collectif Causse Méjean - Gaz de Schiste NON, *France*
Collectif citoyen de Pézenas, Castelnau de Guers, *France*
Collectif Garrigue Vaunage, *France*
Collectif Montpellier littoral contre les gaz et huiles de schist, *France*
Collectif nonforages haut Jura, *France*
Collectif91 non au gaz et petrole de schiste, *France*
Collectif Stop au Gaz de Schiste Anduze, *France*
Committee to Preserve the Finger Lakes, *United States*
Community Rights Organization of Willits, *United States*
Concerned Citizens of McDonough NY, *United States*
Concerned Communities of Falkirk, *United Kingdom*
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, *Chile*
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, *Switzerland*

ConnFACT, *United States*
Coonabarabran Residents Against CSG, *Australia*
Coorination Eau Île-de-France, *France*
Corporación Ecologica y Cultural Penca de Sábila, *Colombia*
Corporacion La Ceiba, *Colombia*
Council of Canadians, *Canada*
Courage Campaign, *United States*
Cri-acl!, *France*
C.R.U.D.E., *United States*
Cultura Permanente, *Spain*
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, *United States*
Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition, *United States*
Earth in Brackets, *United States*
EarthVigil, *United States*
East Kent Against Fracking, *United Kingdom*
Ecologistas en Accion, *Spain*
Ekoloji Kolektifi, *Turkey*
Elder Creek Center For The Land, *United States*
Environmental Action, *United States*
Environmental and Social Change, *United Kingdom*
Equipo de Pastoral Social de la diócesis del Alto Valle, *Argentina*
Espace de Solidarité et de Coopération de l'Oriental, *Morocco*
First Presbyterian Church, *United States*
Food & Water Watch, *United States*
FoodShed Productions, *United States*
Foundation for Environment and Agriculture, *Bulgaria*
Frack Action, *United States*
Frack Free Culver City, *United States*
Frack Free Fernhurst, *United Kingdom*
Frack Free Genesee, *United States*
Frack Free Illinois, *United States*
Frack Free Mayfield and Five Ashes, *United Kingdom*

Frack Free North Yorkshire, *United Kingdom*
Frack Free Nottinghamshire, *United Kingdom*
Frack Free Ryedale, *United Kingdom*
Frack Free Somerset, *United Kingdom*
Frack Free Wales, *United Kingdom*
Frack-Free Butte County, *United States*
Frack-Free York, *United Kingdom*
Fracking Free Bulgaria, *Bulgaria*
Fracking Free Ireland, *Ireland*
Fractual, *South Africa*
Franciscan Action Network, *United States*
Freedom from Debt Coalition, *Philippines*
Friends of the Earth, *United States*
Friends of the Siberian Forests, *Russia*
Future We Need, *Ireland*
Gas Field Free Mendip, *United Kingdom*
Gas Free Seneca, *United States*
Gas Free Stoke, *United Kingdom*
Gasland I and II, *Josh Fox, United States*
General Practitioner, *Australia*
Good Shepherd, *Indonesia*
Good Shepherd Congregation, *Malta*
Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office, *United States*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *Korea*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *United Kingdom*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *Austria*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *Ireland*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *Austria*
Good Shepherd Sisters, *India*
Grassroots Environmental Education, *United States*
Groupe de Justice et paix, *Lebanon*
Human Nature Theater Company, *United States*

Idaho Concerned Area Residents for the Environment, *United States*
Indian Social Action Forum, *India*
Institute of Sisters of Mercy, *Australia*
Instituto Bioeste, *Brazil*
Instituto Latinoamericano para una Sociedad y un Derecho Alternativos, *Colombia*
International Forum on Globalization, *United States*
IPÊ - Institute for Ecological Research, *Brazil*
ISP-Costa Rica, *Costa Rica*
K 136, *Greece*
KIFF, *Ireland*
Killeen NESF Pty Ltd, *Australia*
KKWG, *United Kingdom*
Les Amis de la Terre, *France*
Les Didons de la Farce, *France*
Mainstreet Moms, *United States*
Make Culver City Safe, *United States*
Martinez Environmental Group, *United States*
Mercy Professional Services, *United States*
Middlefield Neighbors, *United States*
Miss Revolutionaries, *United States*
Missionary Oblates JPIC, *Italy*
Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center, *United States*
Movimento Amigos da Cidadania, *Brazil*
Mullaley Gas & Pipeline Accord, *Australia*
Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company, *Kenya*
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, *United States*
National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, *United States*
National Ecological Centre of Ukraine, *Ukraine*
National Toxics Network, *Australia*
Nature Human Centric People Movement Nepal Kaski., *Nepal*
New Jersey Tenants Organization, *United States*
New Yorkers Against Fracking, *United States*

NJ Industrial Union Council, *United States*
Noi Per Loro, *Italy*
North Country 350 Alliance, *United States*
North Shore Audubon Society, *United States*
Northern Rivers Guardians, *Australia*
Nuclear Information & Resource Service, *United States*
NYC Friends of Clearwater, Inc., *United States*
NYH2O, *United States*
NYPIRG, *United States*
Opportunity Village, *Nepal*
Our Health Our Future Our Longmont, *United States*
Peace Action of Staten Island, *United States*
PECSD, *Bulgaria*
Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air, *United States*
People For Positive Action, *United States*
Physicians for Social Responsibility, *United States*
Presentation Justice Network, *Ireland*
Progressive Democrats of America, *United States*
Protect Laurens, *United States*
Protect Orange County, *United States*
Protectors Travelling Fund, *United Kingdom*
QUENCHNJ, *United States*
RAFT, *United States*
Richmond Valley Group Against Gas - Lock the Gate, *Australia*
Riverdale-Kingsbridge Coalition for Climate Action, *United States*
ROUSE, *United States*
Safe Energy Wales, *United Kingdom*
SanDiego30, *United States*
Santa Barbara Frack Back To Save The Central Coast, *United States*
SchalieGASvrij Haaren, *Netherlands*
SCHIEFESgas - Weinviertel statt Gasviertel, *Austria*
Shadowland Foundation, *United States*

Shaleshock, *United States*

Sharon Springs Against Hydrofracking, *United States*

Sisters of Mercy, *Australia*

Sisters of Mercy, *Canada*

Sisters of Mercy Congregation Parramatta NSW, *Australia*

Sisters of Mercy Kenya Province, *Kenya*

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Extended Justice Team, *United States*

Sisters of Mercy, *South Africa*

SLO Clean Water Action, *United States*

SOS Liverpool Plains, *Australia*

South Tyneside Green Party, *United Kingdom*

Southern Cayuga Anti-Fracking Alliance, *United States*

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, *United States*

Stop Fracking Brea, *United States*

Stop Fracking California State, *United States*

Stop Hermosa Beach Oil, *United States*

StopMCS, *United States*

Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible Energy, *United States*

Texas Drought Project, *United States*

The Green Democratic Club of Sacramento CA, *United States*

The Shalom Center, *United States*

Tierra Madre - Cinco Saltos, *Argentina*

Topanga Peace Alliance and MLK Coalition for Jobs, Justice and Peace, *United States*

TOXISPHERA Environmental Health Association, *Brazil*

Umphilo waManzi, *South Africa*

UNANIMA International, *United States*

United Church of Christ, *United States*

United for Action, *United States*

Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina, *Peru*

UWC Mostar, *United States*

Vicariato Apostolico de Aysén, *Chile*

Virginia Student Environmental Coalition, *United States*

WATERSPIRIT, *United States*

West 80s Neighborhood Association, *United States*

Western Heritage Group Inc., *Australia*

What the Frack?! Arapahoe, *United States*

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, US Section, *Earth Democracy*

Issue Group, *United States*

Young Friends of the Earth, *United Kingdom*

Za Zemiata, *Bulgaria*

Zelenite, *Bulgaria*