



UK Government Response to Peak Oil Petition

Posted by [Chris Vernon](#) on October 3, 2007 - 7:30pm in [The Oil Drum: Europe](#)

Topic: [Policy/Politics](#)

Tags: [government](#), [peak oil](#), [politics](#), [united kingdom](#) [[list all tags](#)]

In an attempt to engage with the electorate, last year the UK Government launched an e-petitions service on their website (petitions.pm.gov.uk). The petitions can be created by anyone and gained significant media attention earlier in the year when more than one million people signed the petition against plans to introduce road charging in the UK ([BBC News](#)).

One petition focused on peak oil, it read:

We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to acknowledge that global oil and gas supplies are peaking and will soon decline; a situation requiring immediate action.

[Link](#)

The Government have published their official response today (3 October 2007).

3 October 2007

We received a petition asking:

"We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to acknowledge that global oil and gas supplies are peaking and will soon decline; a situation requiring immediate action."

Details of petition:

"The world contains a finite quantity of oil and gas which will eventually 'run out' if we continue to use it. However, more important is to acknowledge that the rate of extraction (production or supply) of oil and gas will reach a peak from which it will decline, whilst demand continues to rise. There is growing concern in the scientific, business, ecological and other communities that the dates for peak oil and gas have already occurred, are currently occurring, or will occur in mere years not decades. We ask the Prime Minister to acknowledge and accept this argument, and to take immediate and responsible action to deal accordingly with the potential energy and associated crises it could create."

The Government's response:

The Government fully recognises that there is uncertainty around the issue of future global oil and gas production. However, on the balance of the available analysis and evidence, the Government's assessment is that the world's oil and gas resources are sufficient to sustain economic growth for the foreseeable future.

As the International Energy Agency (IEA) notes in its 2005 publication, Resources

to Reserves - Oil and Gas Technologies for the Energy Markets of the Future, the key problem is not the limit of geological oil resources: "The hydrocarbon resources around the world are sufficiently abundant to sustain likely growth in the global energy system for the foreseeable future". Rather, the challenge lies in bringing these resources to market in a way that ensures sustainable, timely, reliable, and affordable supplies of energy.

In this context, the [2007 Energy White Paper \(new window\)](#) noted (paragraph 1.18) a number of risks to oil and gas security of supply and prices, including factors that could defer or restrict investment in energy production and hence lead to slower-than-expected growth in production. However, the current high oil prices are already providing incentives for strong investment in alternative sources of transport fuels, such as non-conventional oil and biofuels, and driving energy efficiency improvements in the way the world consumes oil, e.g. in transport vehicles. Governments are also taking action - internationally and domestically - in support of this.

For example, as set out in the Energy White Paper, the Government is putting in place policies that will help ease the UK economy away from power supplied primarily through fossil fuels as well as bringing about reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. Our strategy is to work to liberalise international markets, create the right environment to attract investment in exploration and infrastructure and, through measures to improve energy efficiency, and our ongoing commitment to renewable and other low-carbon technologies, help reduce our dependence on fossil fuels .

The Government has also launched the [Low Carbon Transport Innovation Strategy \(new window\)](#) setting out a wide range of actions Government is taking to encourage innovation and technology development in lower carbon transport technologies.

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