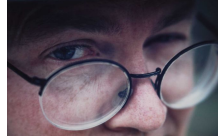


# **FRACK EU: UNCONVENTIONAL INTRIGUE IN POLAND**



## **A Preliminary Investigation of the Fracking Assault on Poland**



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January 23, 2012

(For the complete report chapters index, refer to the B.C. Tap  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (and Table of Contents)**

# FRACK EU: UNCONVENTIONAL INTRIGUE IN POLAND

## A Preliminary Investigation of the Fracking Assault on Poland

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(and Table of Contents)

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January 23, 2012



<http://www.bctwa.org/FrackingBC.html> (*Stop Fracking British Columbia*)

Why has a western Canadian, concerned about the numerous environmental and health consequences from fracking unconventional oil and gas shales in British Columbia and Canada, written a multi-themed report about petroleum corporations out to exploit and frack Poland's unconventional hydrocarbon sources? Mainly for two reasons, among many others.

First. As fracking has become one of the world's prominent issues, some of the same corporations that are unconventionally fracking the Canadian provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, through the promotional support of federal and provincial government agencies and politicians, they also want to frack Poland. As described in chapter 10, *Harper's Men in Poland*, both federal and provincial Alberta government agencies have deployed staff and means to quietly and cooperatively facilitate Canadian corporations to do so, with Alberta government representatives specifically encouraging the Polish government to adopt weak and pro-cosy-corporate Albertan-style hydrocarbon regulations and laws.

In turn, these Canadian companies, some of which also operate in the U.S. and internationally, are participants in a U.S. State Department international program which unofficially began in late 2009, called the **Global Shale Gas Initiative** (GSGI). That unconventional motivated program was not only focussed on fracking Poland and Europe in general, but globally. Poland, with large shale reserves, is merely one of many recent nation targets on the unconventional fracking front, in which industry wants to develop favourable, harmonized international regulatory structures. The history, fundamentals and applications of the GSGI program are discussed in three chapters: chapter 7, *D-Day Poland, The April 8, 2010 Warsaw Conference*; chapter 8, *The U.S. State Department - The GSGI Double Whammy*; and chapter 11, *the Poland Portal Party*.

Second. The growing pool of documented evidence amassed over the last 30 years or more from within U.S. and Canadian jurisdictions shows that industrial drilling and brute-force fracking of thousands and thousands of wells for unconventional oil and gas will have critical short and long-term harmful environmental and social consequences. Much of these concerns relate to something called "well-bore integrity," which is discussed in chapter 14, *Integrity on Trial: The Liability Nightmare*. It concerns the extremely difficult and unsolvable cumulative problems associated with fugitive upward migration of toxic gases and liquids from far underground into regional and continental onshore groundwater aquifers, and up to the earth's surface soils, water and atmosphere, problems from mechanical failures associated with drilling holes. If the petroleum corporations and the corporate friendly Polish government get their way through the proposed development of thousands of wells, Poland's citizenry of now some 39 million, and possibly other EU states, will face the same dire future and unnatural legacy as we have here in North America, primarily the large-scale ruination and contamination of groundwater sources, which many Polish people also greatly prize and cherish (chapter 15, *What is the Fate of Poland's Water?*).



governments, and muffling the voices of reason, wisdom and vision. More than ever, nation states throughout the world have very difficult and pressing choices to make in legislating the conservation and diminishing use of non-renewable and global-warming hydrocarbons.

In public relations themes introduced and covered in chapters 11 and 12 (*Operation Synergy: Fracking the World, Poisoning Our Minds And Hearts - the Emerging Global Dilemma of Petroleum Sponsored Strategic Messaging*) of this report, North American and international petroleum companies, largely frustrated and stymied by public opposition and concerns about its multiple fracking and related operations over a period of decades, resorted to developing manipulative and synergistic programs in North America to influence individual, community, and governmental psychologies. Many of these programs, such as the *Synergy Alberta* program that evolved since the early 1990s, were developed through a variety of strategies often made by contracted communications and public relations experts and enforcers in order to bring about and re-engineer societal acceptance and complicity. Leaked executive briefing documents from the government of Alberta in August 2011 exposed how the most powerful petro association, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, proposed having three western provincial and federal governments assist the petroleum sector in promoting fracking through public ‘education.’

Due to a growing and much larger inter-organized community opposition and general resistance to the escalating developments of unconventional resources in the United States and Canada since about 2009, petroleum companies are resorting to develop new and more aggressive public relations counter strategies and tactics. As detailed in chapter 12, these concerns prompted recent industry-sponsored conferences held in Alberta and Poland in September, and in Texas in November 2011, to help coordinate a unified industry front on addressing the public relations problems, internationally. Described in chapter 12, information leaked to the U.S. media in early November 2011 helped publicize how at least two petroleum corporations, Anadarko Petroleum and Range Resources, were using and adapting U.S. military anti-insurgency, or psy-ops tactics to control U.S. communities and citizens, facilitated through hired military-trained personnel. An Anadarko spokesman even labelled U.S. citizens opposing the development of unconventional gas as conspiratorial enemy “insurgents.” These corporate and inter-corporate communications officers encouraged other communications officers and other corporations gathered at the conference center in Houston, Texas to adopt their unorthodox methodologies.

It is this sleazy North American public relations legacy and cumulative inter-corporate experience developed over the last two or more decades which the industry is undoubtedly and adaptively exporting to Europe, and more specifically, to Poland, if not everywhere on the fracking front. In order to implement the new unconventional ‘revolutionary’ era of gas and oil internationally, governments and societies will have to be elaborately managed, controlled, bullied and bribed, plain and simple. Unconventional fracking, by way of powerful inter-linked diesel engine brute forces, is not just about cracking up geologic shales far underground. It’s much more than that! It’s about using other unconventional brute forces to crack governments, communities and people! In other words, in order to frack the earth, it means literally fracking everything!

As evidenced in many industry documents and media news stories, the fracking industry faces considerable societal challenges and opposition in highly populated and educated Europe. During the recent early exploration years of fracking in Europe, some, like the people of France, have managed to curtail the unconventional ‘revolution,’ whereby organized citizens have so-far managed to control the controllers. In chapter 6, *Royal Dutch Shell Fracks Sweden First but Suffers Shell Shock - Swedes Kick Shell’s Ass out of Sweden*, is a story on how the will of Sweden’s citizens vigilantly and tirelessly fought against Royal Dutch Shell’s attempts to influence local governments

to frack southern Sweden. The citizens were quick learners and understood that, among many related concerns, their groundwater would be in jeopardy and sacrificed for the new era of shale gas, disturbing consequences to be passed on to future generations. By early 2011, after almost three years of public opposition, Shell, which had been granted vast exploration concessions in southern Sweden by Swedish national agencies, announced that it was leaving Sweden to frack more favourable regimes in the Ukraine and China.

*At Damme, the groundwater table sits at a depth of 30-40 meters, Söntgerath says. 'So between the frack and the groundwater lie several hundred meters of rock and clay,' he says. 'It's virtually impossible that frack fluids make their way into the groundwater via the geological formation.'*

*So what if Germany, or even the whole of Europe, turns out to be too hostile to shale gas exploration? The oil companies will simply move somewhere else, says Blakey from Eurogas. 'They will look to Indonesia, or China or Australia.'*<sup>1</sup>

In May 2010, while it was unsuccessfully attempting to control the Swedes, Shell began an elaborate public relations strategy to promote its unconventional international intentions by having the National Geographic become its public sponsor. Inter-woven and integrated strategies by other petroleum corporations during this time seduced some top U.S. environmental organization executives in helping to facilitate the unconventional gas (not focussing on oil) revolution.

At a Society of Petroleum Engineers' (SPE's) conference held in Vienna, Austria in late February 2011, three engineers co-authored a paper called *Managing Environmental Risks from Shale Gas Exploration - Applying Lessons Learned in the US to New Ventures in Poland*. The "paper describes the specific environmental risks and potential impacts of shale gas exploration and how lessons learned from the US shale gas programs can be transferred to new ventures in Poland and other European countries." While the petroleum engineers examined and interpreted what those U.S. "lessons" were, their paper states that the overall aim is to "facilitate acceptance of shale gas exploration in Poland and Europe." As petroleum companies with licenses in Poland have recently stated, "thousands" of wells will have to be drilled just in the next ten years. Though not stated by the engineer authors, **regulations and mitigations will never make fracking safe!**

*Poland is quite densely populated, and in most regions split in numerous small parcels of land with different owners. Although most of the shale gas concessions are in rural areas, in most cases small villages or farms fairly close to the exploration camps. Poland, like most European countries, also has a relatively large number of protected areas, including cultural heritage sites, landscape parks and most importantly so-called Natura 2000 sites. The shale gas concessions in Poland are in **areas which previously have not been extensively exposed** to upstream (producing) activities, although this is also the case in many parts of the US, particularly in the northeastern US Marcellus play.*

*Environmental risks of shale gas exploration, production, and development as associated with drilling, fracking, temporary flaring of gas, and related activities which involve surface impacts / footprint, the management of large volumes of water, the management of waste and wastewater, truck traffic including related impacts and risks, air emissions and noise, visual impacts, the handling of chemicals (fracking fluid additives) including application of*

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<sup>1</sup> From chapter 4, *Germany Gets Ge-Fracked First*, page 4-4, a quote from an April 11, 2011 promotional article in the *European Energy Review*.

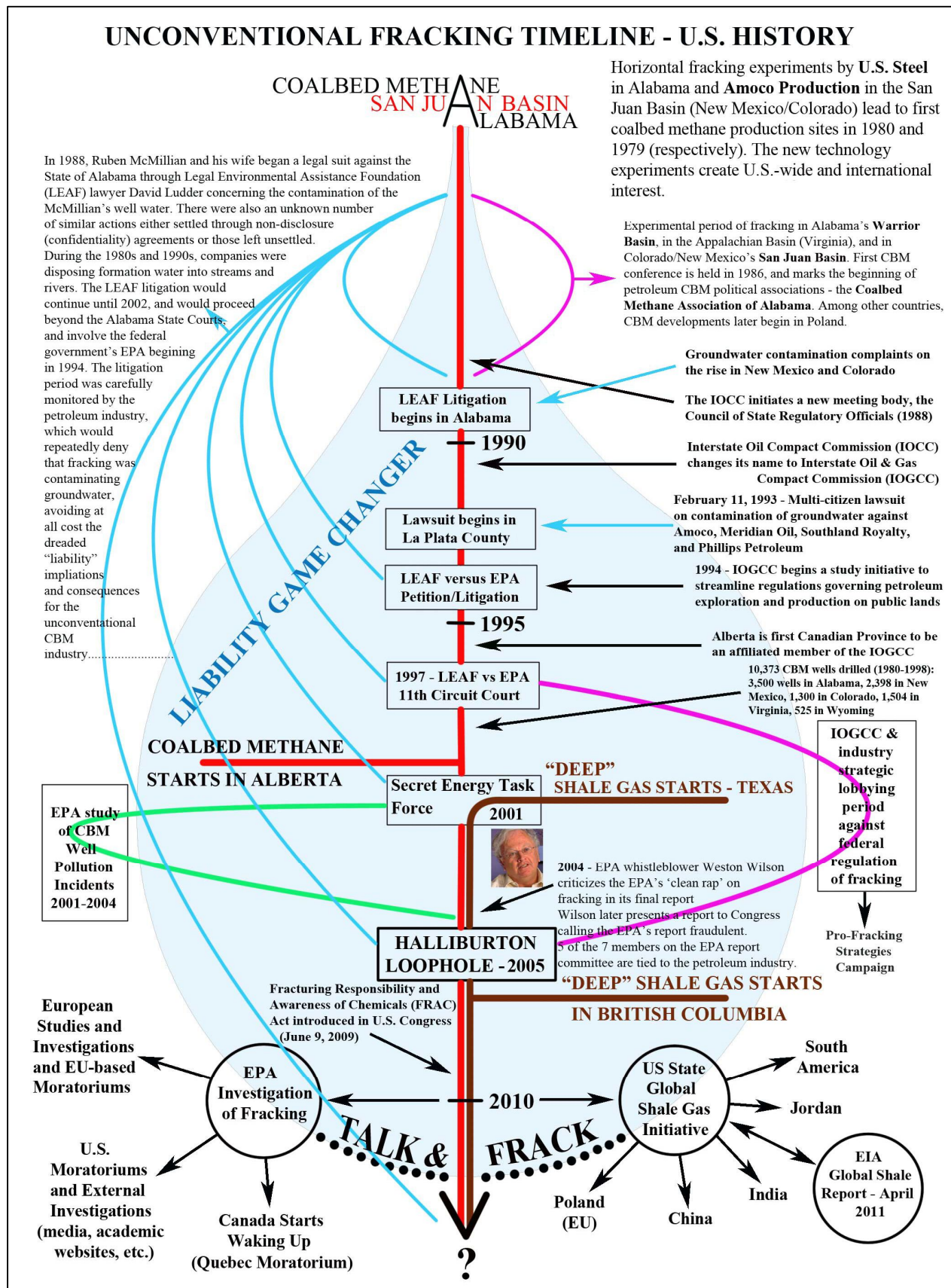
*fracking fluids under high pressure, **potential risks of impacting soil and/or groundwater resources**, surface impacts and vibration during seismic studies including potential impacts to sensitive protected areas and receptors. Whereas the overall impacts and risks may be relatively small during the early exploration phase, they multiply during field development and production, and are also multiplied by different operators working in parallel on neighbouring concessions resulting in cumulative impacts.*

*The Polish environmental regulations are not yet adapted to the specific shale gas activities, which imply considerable room for interpretation of existing laws and regulations if applied to shale gas operations. While this provides a weak planning ground for operators, the inexperience of the regulators in dealing with permitting shale gas operations and the ongoing regulatory changes contribute to the uncertainty and to the related planning risks. This situation is analogous to the status of regulation in New York State, which imposed a moratorium on fracking to more directly address these issues. To avoid a similar suspension of activity in other geographies, operators will benefit from addressing the environmental and social issues associated with shale gas development in the absence of regulation.*

***Although** Poland shale gas exploration is currently strongly supported by the public acceptance in conjunction with the wish to become self-sufficient and eliminate dependency on the Russian gas supply, **this will likely change when the downsides in form of actual or potential environmental impacts become more visual. This change should be proactively managed** by implementing the referred management plans including action plans for failures, spills and accidents, and by pro-actively involving and informing the public, community representatives and other stakeholders about the current situation, about planned activities and related impacts and risks. It is also recommended that operators proactively address critical questions, that are not yet raised in Poland, but which will certainly be raised in the near future.*

When the horizontal fracking technologies were first experimented with and developed in the late 1970s in the U.S. by Amoco Production Company and U.S. Steel (now USX) to extract methane gas that nature buried and sealed within unconventional coalbed shales deep underground, one of the sacred bodies the petroleum priests placed on their unholy sacrificial altar in the 1980s following was North America's and the world's groundwater. When U.S. landowners and citizens in Alabama, New Mexico and Colorado began to criticize and complain to their County, State and Federal governments in the 1980s about what the petroleum priests were doing as it all unfolded - the release of millions of cubic meters of tainted formation water onto surface lands and waters, the volatile contamination of groundwater, flaring balls of methane and atmospheric dispersal of coal associated particles through the practice of cavitation - some of the most powerful coal and petroleum corporation attorneys advised their wealthy clients and other companies out to do the same that they should, by all and any means, prevent and fend off foreseeable legions of legal liability actions associated with their unholy practices. If the U.S. courts would find the fracking companies liable, then such legal ruling(s) could most likely stymie and inevitably jeopardize their unconventional schemes and investments, both at home and abroad.

With this in mind, the recent April 2011 lawsuit filed by Alberta's Jessica Ernst against Encana Corporation and the Alberta government's regulator and Ministry of Environment is not only a haunting symbolic threat to both the petroleum industry and governments on some thirty years of cover-ups in the United States and Canada, it may also threaten/challenge the very foundations of the current unconventional gas revolution promoted by industry. (<http://www.ernstversusencana.ca>)



By the early 1990s, after heated public debates, is when soft fracking “regulations” began to be implemented in the U.S., while corporations bought off landowners who were complaining: a large unknown number signed confidentiality agreements and got new pickup trucks, preventing court actions and legal precedent. The same patterns later emerged in Canada. Revenues/profits controlled the lawmakers, who in turn controlled the laws. As a result, the petroleum industry was allowed to continue on the bumpy road ahead. The U.S. Forest Service, already on a long road of corruption since the 1950s allowing the clearcut slaughter of public forestlands and protected drinking watershed sources, played along with the frackers along with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), while the EPA had its hands tied. The “buying off” formula kept the fracking machine going, and, as time marched onward, the consequences began reaching epic proportions, later documented in Josh Fox’s *Gasland* in 2010 seen by world audiences (people were already lighting their tap water on fire in 1989 - see chapter 14), scenes which the industry would refute and deny, the continuation of the legal denial advice strategy first applied since the late 1980s. By the late 1990s came the cooperative strategy developed between the U.S. Ground Water Protection Council and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission to deny, deny and deny.

After a long public review process by the Environmental Protection Agency beginning in late 2000 on groundwater contamination from unconventional coalbed methane mining, which occurred amidst constant denials and refutations by the industry complex that they were to blame, and blamed mother nature, the pro-fracking forces had the Republican Bush/ Cheney administration pass a legislative exemption in mid-2005, nicknamed the Halliburton Loophole, exempting underground fracking injections from the federal *Safe Drinking Water* and *Clean Water Acts*. During that period (2000-2005), the technological experimentations for developing unconventional oil and gas had broadened, whereby deeper shale oil and gas recovery was taking place in the State of Texas. The combination of these unconventional with coalbed methane experimentations, particularly following the Halliburton Loophole ‘green light,’ marked the uncanny proliferation of drilling and fracking in the United States and Canada.

Following 2005, the petroleum industry began setting its eager fracking sites globally, and by 2007 many corporations began making bold investment moves outside of the United States and Canada by bolstering and heralding the new technological era of unconventional, calling gas a “bridge fuel” to get the greens on side. Because of the environmental and social dilemmas that private industry faced from fracking in the U.S. and would face globally, it somehow managed to persuade the U.S. State Department in late 2009 to become the industry’s international partner, advocate, promoter and missionary sponsor to frack the world. As an engaging overseeing partner in the Global Shale Gas Initiative, the U.S. State Department enlisted a number of federal agencies to research and develop the international fracking program. That is how and why the U.S. Energy Information Administration eventually released its April 2011 promotional document on the world’s unconventional resources, *World Shale Gas Resources*.

By late 2009, the U.S. State Department, through its newly hired international energy envoy David L. Goldwyn, facilitated international unconventional gas/oil agreements with China and India. Other agreements later included Jordan and member states of South America. Many separate fracking operations were already taking place in Australia. Poland’s involvement included the energetic support of another energy spokesman the State Department hired in 2009, Richard Morningstar, and in June 2010 came the formation of the U.S.-Poland Business Council by the private sector.

As stated in U.S. government documents, these international agreements were made to promote U.S.-patented fracking technologies abroad, which were to be performed and managed for

petroleum corporations by the world's top three U.S.-based petroleum service corporations, Schlumberger, Halliburton and Baker-Hughes. And, in order to do so, to have a country's unconventional resources fracked by the petro corporations, government environmental and tax structured legislations and policies would have to 'change' to accommodate the frackers: deregulation and privatization.

The deep lingering irony behind the Global Shale Gas Initiative with its international fracking agreements was that it was done while American citizens and communities were loudly protesting against the fracking industry operating within the United States, while hearings on fracking were held in 2009, and while its environmental watchdog, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was conducting a national public review on the life-cycle of operational fracking. As stated in the report (Chapter 8-2):

*On the one hand, a federal environmental agency was supposedly undertaking a serious investigation of the life-cycle merits of fracking operations in the United States, while on the other hand the State Department was suddenly promoting its undertaking internationally. When pondering or weighing its significance, the GSIGI directive is a brilliant yet cunning and devious strategy: a classic two-birds-with-one-stone, or double whammy.*

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