

Bergen, Norway

28 May 2009

One North Sea

Joint Ministerial Statement on Climate Change and Energy Security

As neighbours linked by a common sea, Norway and the United Kingdom have long enjoyed exceptionally warm relations underpinned by close economic ties. In recent years, the development of oil and gas on the UK and Norwegian Continental shelves has added a new dimension to the benefits we both gain from our co-operation. Norway is now by far the UK's largest single supplier of gas outside of the UKCS. UK and Norwegian energy and supply companies are active within and across each other's sectors. Both our countries are also seeking solutions to the issues of climate change and have worked very closely, through the North Sea Basin Task Force, to identify the potential contribution of Carbon Capture and Storage to mitigate the impact of CO₂ emissions. The UK has therefore especially welcomed the initiative of the Norwegian Government in hosting the important international conference in Bergen.

The two Ministers agreed today to intensify their co-operation, in particular to:

CCS

- Commission a joint study, as an input to the North Sea Basin Task Force, with the aim of establishing a clear vision of the potential role of the North Sea in the future deployment of CCS in Europe by the end of the year;
- Follow up the Bergen Conference by campaigning for international recognition of the role that CCS can play, including through their joint hosting of the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum (meeting in London on 12-14 October);
- Exchange information on national CCS demonstration plants and to engage other countries as appropriate in developing the necessary technologies and in the North Sea deployment study;

Energy

- Further develop the valuable relationship between Norway as gas supplier and the United Kingdom as an important gas consumer;
- Seek further enhancement of the amount of oil recovered from existing and future fields;
- Encourage energy companies in both countries to exploit new opportunities.

Renewables

- Strengthen the collaboration on areas of joint interest related to the development of offshore wind and marine energy. In this context, they warmly welcomed the recent decision by Statkraft and StatoilHydro to construct a new offshore windfarm at Sheringham Shoal;
- Encourage the Transmission System Operators to explore the potential commercial viability of a new interconnector between the UK and Norway, facilitating the future export of renewable electricity;
- Strengthen cooperation on environmentally friendly energy research.