

AGREED STATEMENT BY UNITED KINGDOM AND NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENTS

CO₂ injection and permanent storage in sub-seabed geological structures as a means to tackle the challenge of climate change and to enhance oil recovery

1. At the meeting between Minister Enoksen and Minister Wicks on 30 November 2005 in London it was agreed to undertake a bilateral effort to explore possible areas of cooperation to encourage injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures. Both Ministers recognised the important role sub-seabed injection of CO₂ could have as one of the tools and approaches available to meet the challenges of climate change.
2. The Ministers noted that both countries have a huge potential for injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures in the North Sea, either in producing oil fields for enhanced oil recovery purpose (EOR), in depleted oil and gas fields or other geological structures.
3. The seminar on collaborative options for CO₂ capture and storage beneath the North Sea has looked into geological issues, monitoring and emissions trading and public perception. Also, the Department of Trade and Industry in the United Kingdom and the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy in Norway have discussed legal and regulatory issues at a meeting on 29 November. Building on these discussions the Ministers have agreed on a set of key principles that should be taken forward.
4. The Ministers:
 - Agreed that international co-operation is needed to develop cost-effective solutions for capture, injection and permanent storage of CO₂, the long term goal being the realisation of full-scale solutions for injection and permanent geological storage of CO₂. Major challenges in relation to injection of CO₂ include the cost of applying new technologies and the large amount of CO₂ needed at the injection site for the economic viability of the investment.

- Emphasised the need for public acceptance for injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures as a safe and secure method for reducing CO₂ emissions. There is a need for information dissemination activities as well as continued research and monitoring on the issue of CO₂ behaviour in underground reservoirs.
- Are persuaded that injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures can be done safely and reliably and that it is desirable to the benefit of the environment as a whole, and encourage further research.
- Recognised that it is appropriate to develop further an international legal framework designed to regulate injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures.
- Noted that the international conventions for the protection of the marine environment from pollution by dumping, notably the London Convention and its Protocol, and the OSPAR Convention were agreed before injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in geological structures was considered as a possible means to combat climate change.
- Noted that it is generally considered under both the London Convention, and its Protocol, and in the OSPAR Convention, that the use of CO₂ for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) is a purpose other than the mere disposal and would fall within the exemption from the definition of dumping.
- Welcomed the recent decision of the 27th Consultative Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the London Convention, that it was desirable to consider options for facilitating and/or regulating CO₂ injection and permanent storage in sub-seabed geological structures under the Convention and its Protocol, including amending these if appropriate.

- Encouraged the Parties of the OSPAR Convention in their process on clarifying the legal status for CO₂ storage under the Convention, and awaited decisions that further will help facilitating this technology.
- Welcomed the ongoing processes to clarify how to account for Carbon emission reductions from CO₂ capture and storage under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, notably the latest IPCC report, and under the European Emissions Trading System.
- Committed to, where appropriate, undertake the necessary actions to facilitate CO₂ capture and storage,

5. The Ministers agreed to:

- Establish a North Sea Basin Task Force made up of both public and private bodies from countries on the rim of the North Sea. This would have the aim of developing broad, common principles that could form a basis for regulating the storage of CO₂ in the North Sea to provide a consistent basis for managing this activity. The members of the Task Force shall share experiences from offshore petroleum projects and possible regulatory provisions that could be relevant when considering injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures.
- Contribute substantially through the carbon sequestration leadership forum (CSLF), the International Energy Agency (IEA) and cooperate with the European Commission, in order to facilitate implementation of Carbon Capture and Storage technologies.
- Collaborate in the work being conducted in the relevant international forums, including the London Convention and its Protocol, the OSPAR Convention, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, to facilitate injection and permanent storage of CO₂ in sub-seabed geological structures.

- Address public acceptance issues through information dissemination activities in both countries, and in the North Sea Region.

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