

Responses from Mrs Sylvia May MBE
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Consultation questions

Principles of the Checkpoint

Question 1: Are these the right principles? Are there others that should be included?

NO.

The IEA report (<https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050>) states there **should be no further licensing rounds issued** and focus should be on applying constraints to current production sites. **“There is no need for investment in new fossil fuel supply in our net zero pathway .** Beyond projects already committed as of 2021, there are no new oil and gas fields approved for development in our pathway, and no new coal mines or mine extensions are required. The unwavering policy focus on climate change in the net zero pathway results in a sharp decline in fossil fuel demand, meaning that the focus for oil and gas producers switches entirely to output – and emissions reductions – from the operation of existing assets.”

Checkpoint Tests

Question 2: Are there other things that the checkpoint could take into consideration?

The government’s “Net Zero Strategy” released on 19th October 2021 describes big ambitions but small commitments. The proposed oil and gas climate compatibility checkpoint system now not only threatens the delivery of the UK’s net-zero target but, more importantly, it is in direct contradiction of the principles of preventing global catastrophic climate change by halting all new fossil fuel exploration and production, both at home and abroad.

Potential test 1: Reductions in operational greenhouse gas emissions from the sector vs. commitments

Question 3: Should this test be part of the checkpoint as described? If no, please describe how it should be adapted to make it suitable.

Part 1 is acceptable since this checkpoint system should only be pursued and applied to transition existing active fossil fuel production sites and reducing their emissions. Again as outlined in the IEA report “The unwavering policy focus on climate change in the net zero pathway results in a sharp decline in fossil fuel demand, meaning that the focus for oil and gas producers switches entirely to output – and emissions reductions – from the operation of existing assets. Unabated coal demand declines by 98% to just less than 1% of total energy use in 2050. Gas demand declines by 55% to 1 750 billion cubic metres and oil declines by 75% to 24 million barrels per day (mb/d), from around 90 mb/d in 2020.

Part 2 is irrelevant as there should be no new licence rounds (see response at 1.)

Question 4: Question 5: Question 6: Question 7: Question 8: Question 9:

NO COMMENT FOR THE ABOVE

Potential test 3: Status of the UK as a net importer or exporter of oil and gas

Question 10: Should this test be part of the checkpoint as described? If no, please describe how it should be adapted to make it suitable.

No. This checkpoint system plan delays clear pathways for action to prevent the UK's additional increased emissions from more UK fossil fuel exploration and production. It has already acknowledged that the UK uses more reserves of fossil fuels than it can produce, and these, particularly gas, will have to continue to be imported over the coming decade to maintain fuel demands for the UK while we work to reduce our consumption and transition to energies that are less polluting. Therefore the UK will need to continue to acknowledge and bear the brunt of the levels of emissions due to necessary fossil fuel importation. However, it makes no sense to export any of our homegrown supplies of oil (which also has an impact on emissions) given the same discrepancy of supply and demand. In December 2021 the UK exported 2.6 million tons of crude oil worth but imported almost 4.2 million tons of crude oil, and resulting in a trade deficit of almost 1.6 million tons of crude oil in the same month. The income from the exports of fuels was (£29,652million) while the cost of imports was £53,259 [Trade in oil volume UK 2021 | Statista](#) .

Question 11: If the UK were to become a net exporter of oil and gas in the future for any reason, would this present a problem? If so, why?

Producing more fossil fuels in the UK to export is not the answer as this will create further emissions at all stages of the process from exploration, production and export. The Government should step up to the plate and control retention of our oil to reduce imports and commit finance to the development of more oil processing sites along with for the development of safe nuclear power stations, energy storage and zero emission hydrogen production and storage.

Question 12: **Question 13:** **NO COMMENT**

Potential test 4: Sector progress in supporting Energy Transition technologies

Question 14: Should this test be part of the checkpoint as described? If no, please describe how it should be adapted to make it suitable.

New offshore oil and gas exploration plans should be abandoned with immediate effect.

Government should focus on continuing to fund and develop immediate strategies to ensure that all current UK offshore and onshore sites reduce their fugitive emissions of air pollutants and administer hefty fines and penalties for historical and current pollution levels and lack of progress and implementation of action to rectify pollution. [Investigation: "Significant" methane emissions recorded at UK onshore oil sites – DRILL OR DROP?](#) Gained funds from these fines can be used by the treasury for funding more appropriate measures.

Question 15: **NO COMMENT**

Question 16: Are there other targets or pathways for Energy Transition technologies that could be used?

Lead by example! All Government tax breaks and subsidies to fossil fuel sectors removed by the end of 2021. Subsidy cancellation will signal that governments are not protecting and supporting inflated incomes of polluting industries.

Based on analysis of [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (OECD) data, between 2016 and 2020, £13.6bn from the UK government was paid to the oil and gas industry since the [Paris agreement](#) was drawn up in 2015. The research highlights that companies received £9.9bn in tax reliefs for new exploration and production of oil and gas, and £3.7bn in payments towards decommissioning costs. Last year, an International Monetary Fund [report found](#) the fossil fuel industry benefited from subsidies worth \$5.9tn in 2020, but the vast majority of this figure comes from the hidden costs of failing to make polluters pay for the deaths they cause and global heating.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/oct/06/fossil-fuel-industry-subsidies-of-11m-dollars-a-minute-imf-finds>

These financial savings made by the Government along with higher taxation of profits of the industry would provide at least a starting point for funding for developments in technologies .

The Government should consider the return of energy supply for the UK to the public domain in the future rather than being dependent on private companies who exploit the market purely for profit for the few.

Question 17: Question 18: Question 19: NO COMMENT

Potential test 6: Consideration of the ‘global production gap’

Question 20: How would a test that considers the world’s “production gap” be designed? Please detail your proposed methodology and state sources of data and projections that would be required.

Without greater international co-operation, global CO2 emissions will not fall to net zero by 2050.

Each country must do their part. I suggest you take the advice from and support of the IEA - See below

“Take international co-operation to new heights

This is not simply a matter of all governments seeking to bring their national emissions to net zero it means tackling global challenges through coordinated actions. Governments must work together in an effective and mutually beneficial manner to implement coherent measures that cross borders.

This includes carefully managing domestic job creation and local commercial advantages with the collective global need for clean energy technology deployment.

Accelerating innovation, developing international standards and coordinating to scale up clean technologies needs to be done in a way that links national markets.

Cooperation must recognise differences in the stages of development of different countries and the varying situations of different parts of society.

For many rich countries, achieving net-zero emissions will be more difficult and costly without international co-operation.

For many developing countries, the pathway to net zero without international assistance is not clear.

Technical and financial support is needed to ensure deployment of key technologies and infrastructure.”

END OF RESPONSES.