

continued from front page

down and remained closed this week. Some of the trouble, and the high emission levels, has been attributed to start-up challenges, and officials believe emissions under normal operation will be much lower.

StatoilHydro itself, though, has warned that as much as 600,000 more tons of carbon emissions may result from the next start-up, when Melkøya reopens. Officials admit they were too optimistic in predicting the far lower emissions levels that they did.

### Breaking promises?

Norway, after signing the Kyoto agreement, has promised that carbon emissions from 2008 to 2012 won't exceed 1 percent more than what was emitted in 1990. Last year's emissions in Norway, however, were fully 8 percent above 1990s levels.

Melkøya's emissions alone mean Norway is in danger of failing to fulfill its promise, unless the country is able to make dramatic cuts and buy enough climate quotas from other countries. It's an awkward situation for Norway's allegedly environmentally oriented left-centre government, and opposition politicians are on the offensive.

"This increase in emissions is intolerable," says Ivar Kristiansen of the Conservatives. "If we think we're going to teach other countries how to reduce carbon emissions, it's wise to keep our own backyard clean first."

[www.h-net.org/~esati/sdcea](http://www.h-net.org/~esati/sdcea)  
South Durban Community Environmental Alliance

[www.gcmonitor.org](http://www.gcmonitor.org)  
Communities monitoring industrial neighbours

[www.londonrisingtide.org.uk](http://www.londonrisingtide.org.uk)  
Battling climate change and fossil fuels

[www.struggle.ws/rsc/](http://www.struggle.ws/rsc/)  
Rosspoint Solidarity Camp Website

## LINKS & RESOURCES

[royaldutchshellplc.com](http://royaldutchshellplc.com)  
Global news stories on Shell activities

[www.artnotoil.org.uk](http://www.artnotoil.org.uk)  
Creativity against oil exploitation

[www.indymedia.ie/mayo](http://www.indymedia.ie/mayo)  
Open forum news and analysis

[www.shelltosea.com](http://www.shelltosea.com)  
Campaign website

[www.groundwork.org.za](http://www.groundwork.org.za)  
Environmental justice in southern Africa

[www.refineryreform.org](http://www.refineryreform.org)  
Cleaning up refineries in the US

[www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Natural](http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/Natural)  
Department of Natural Resources website

[www.mayococo.ie/en/News/GasTerminal/](http://www.mayococo.ie/en/News/GasTerminal/)  
Mayo County Council Corrib info

[www.corribgas.com/](http://www.corribgas.com/)  
Shell's pro-Corrib website

[www.mayogasinfo.com](http://www.mayogasinfo.com)  
Researched facts and figures on Corrib

[www.nigerdeltaawareness.com](http://www.nigerdeltaawareness.com)  
Oil and gas impact in the Niger Delta

[www.publicinquiry.ie/reports.php#ld196](http://www.publicinquiry.ie/reports.php#ld196)  
"The Great Corrib Gas Controversy" publication

[anghaeltacht.net/rosdumhach](http://anghaeltacht.net/rosdumhach)  
Rosspoint story in Irish / Sceal Ros Dumhach as Gaeilge

[www.remembersarowiwa.com/](http://www.remembersarowiwa.com/)  
Arts and human rights coalition in UK

[www.kensarowiwa.com/](http://www.kensarowiwa.com/)  
rights and environment campaign in Nigeria

# Shell To Sea

07 December 2007

Community Information - Erris, County Mayo, Ireland

## Melkøya emissions soar

[www.aftenposten.no](http://www.aftenposten.no)  
04 Dec 2007, 11:24

**Just as top government officials are gathering in Bali for the UN Climate Change Conference comes news that carbon dioxide emissions at a new gas power plant in northern Norway are exceeding all limits.**

Newspaper Aftenposten reported Tuesday that the new plant at Melkøya outside the Arctic city of Hammerfest spewed out 1.1 million tons of carbon emissions just in its first two months of operation.

That's what was planned after 10 months of operation, not just two. The plant that's handling gas from StatoilHydro's new Snow White [Snøhvit] field isn't exactly proving to be a showcase for Norwegian industry's environmental measures.

Hundreds of thousands of tons of new emissions are expected to be released when operations resume at Melkøya shortly after the conference in Bali is over.

Neither the technical operations at Melkøya nor emissions levels have gone as

planned. Aftenposten reported that the Snow White gas field is in danger of becoming "a climate-gas nightmare" for both Norwegian politicians and StatoilHydro officials.

In 2004, Statoil won permission from state anti-pollution authorities to emit no more than 15,000 tons of carbon gas a year under "normal operations" at Melkøya. As the plant opening drew nearer, studies showed that level was far too low. Earlier this year, Statoil re-applied for, and won, permission to emit 200,000 tons a year.



### Technical trouble

Snow White and Melkøya formally opened in late August, amidst much fanfare, and the entire industrial complex was billed as having the world's most climate-friendly technology. Emissions from the burn-off of excess gas from production, however, ended up reaching 1.099 million tons just between August 23 and October 23.

The plant has also been plagued by technical trouble, so much so that it had to shut

continued on back page

**Recent events at the Snow White (Snohvit) gas development in Norway show how technology can be unreliable no matter how much planning you do. This is a particular worry for the people of Mayo and Ireland, who face similar experiments conducted by the oil industry.**

**The Snohvit plant combines a sub-sea tie-back offshore pipeline (as with Corrib) with a land-based refinery and Liquefied Natural Gas plant (like the one planned for the Shannon estuary) and has proved to be a nightmare project for both Norway and Corrib gas partner Statoil.**

**Unfortunately it is currently left to local communities in Ireland to prevent similar disasters here.**

**S2S**

## The Brent Geese Chorus

On the seventh day God rested  
and North Mayo was fashioned  
and it had no likeness anywhere in the world.  
And on the eight day along came Shell  
at first with wheels and then with wings  
and later with dozers, a lot of dozers,  
two-legged and four-legged.

They took long strides across your fields  
measuring profit with every step.  
Then they flew over, looking down, coveting.  
A voice in Wellingtons and a suit said,  
"People of North Mayo, you will be rich.  
You will have jobs a-plenty  
the gravy train is coming  
but we want your fields to park it in".

Those who didn't hear about it then  
read about it later in the parish newsletter  
"Gravy train heading at break neck speed.  
First stop Erris. Last stop Clover Hill prison".  
At first Shell worked through  
the priest and the bishop  
like the Holy Spirit  
"The gas is coming  
alleluia alleluia".

And it won't be ordinary gas  
this will be great gas  
raw and riveting  
it will trawl through your lives and your land  
like a plague. It will wreck families.  
Wives will feel the stress  
brothers and sisters will too  
husbands will go to jail, for ninety and four days.

Why Erris! you asked in ainm Dé?  
When we looked down on you, which was often  
we decided that you were the chosen ones  
We saw a few geese, a whale or two  
an old dolphin on his last legs  
and all that unspoilt beauty  
waiting to be spoiled  
and god knows we can spoil.

And the letters started coming  
loving letters, mister and missus letters  
and everyone in Rosspport was getting letters  
how is your cat and your dog and your budgie  
our name is shell and we care  
our name is shell and we want what you have.

After a while loving letters changed from  
we would like, to, we will have.  
and what you don't give  
we will take. and what's yours is ours.  
and to hell with your budgie.

Wellingtons in the suit told you  
he talked to you neighbours  
and your neighbour signed  
sign here on the dotted line  
and don't look foolish on the ninth day  
when all Erris will have signed but you

The suits were grinning and saluting  
waving and hooting ,  
and chanting at the crossroads  
God is good but gas is greater  
sign here and be happy  
na bac leis an dirty dolphin  
what did he ever do for you?  
Sign here like your neighbours over there.  
sign here and have great gas  
God is good but gas is better.

We'll dig a few trial holes in your field.  
They took first, and asked second,  
"We're from Shell on earth  
we'll make life hell on earth for you and yours.  
if you don't sign".  
And there was a chorus of Brent geese  
singing all over Erris  
"Shell to Hell, to Hell with Shell".  
and that chorus ran in and out of the bog  
and it was everywhere in North Mayo.

We'll have insult-ations meetings  
with you and your neighbours  
and you can all come at different times  
a divided people is better to us than a united people  
come on your own so we can insult you on your own.  
come together and we can insult you together.

As for your fields  
let us in and let us at them  
we'll even seed them for you  
they will be in better shape when we finish  
than when we started  
a little hole here and a bigger hole there.  
Pipe down here and away we go  
or pipe down here and away we won't go".

Obscene words melted into Pollatomish  
and other words sprouted  
they had muck on them too.  
Words like refinery, pipelinery, raw gas  
terminal, three stage payment,  
enterprise, outerprise, no prize, jobs my eye words  
no risk, no danger, no landslides  
we can walk on stilts if we choose words.  
And the government concurred.  
God is good but gas is better  
and if you don't sign we'll take you to court.  
and the Brent geese chorus started again.

And the Rosspport Families worried,  
about the land and lake, the community  
Broadhaven Bay, the Brent geese and the whale,  
the dolphin and the seal.

And the wellies in the clouds spoke again  
our worthless word we give you freely  
you won't even see the pipes going through your land  
and the geese will live three hundred years.  
we have great power we can walk on stilts.  
and the Brent geese chorus never stopped.

All Erris was angry, the deception was clear.  
a ring of support was growing there  
they flung it far, they spun it wide  
and the Brent geese chorus never lied  
And Shell on Earth made Hell on Earth  
for a lot of people living there  
and many in the community considered flight  
until the Rosspport Five got up to fight.  
and the brent geese chorus never died  
and the ninth day promised never arrived.

Shell on stilts with a swagger they stalk  
onto your land without permission they go.  
But can they drill on water?  
That's what Erris wants to know.

Rita Ann Higgins

*Performed at the Goldman Prize Concert Nov.2007*