The Flame conference in Amsterdam will be opening its doors for the 25th time to the gas industry’s biggest climate criminals. The likes of Shell, BP, Anadarko, RWE, ExxonMobil and Fluxys will be in town for three days to lobby decision makers and secure more gas deals, keeping us hooked on dirty fossil fuels and trashing communities and the climate while they get filthy rich. Ooh, and don’t forget the cocktail parties!

Top sponsorship opportunities

Climate criminals with cash to spare (all of them!) can raise their profiles at the conference by:

- Hosting the speaker zone and getting backstage access to the elite of the gas world.
- Hosting a breakfast meeting, lunchtime briefing, champagne roundtable or gala networking event with their delegates of choice.
- Sponsoring the coffee house, smoothie bar or water bottles for attendees.
- Buying a meeting suite in ‘Flame Village’ with early access to the delegate list.
- Sponsoring the wifi stand (everyone will stop by for the code!).
- Sponsoring an e-newsletter or webinar, or making a personalised Flame video hosted by a BBC TV presenter with a soft spot for the gas industry.
Gas in Groningen
Discovered in 1959, the Groningen gas field in the north of the Netherlands is the largest in Europe. Operated by NAM, a joint venture between Shell and ExxonMobil, it supplies local homes as well as neighbouring countries. Years of community protest due to the resulting earthquakes and damaged houses finally forced the Dutch government to announce a production stop in 2030. Yet NAM continues to insist that “the Netherlands needs oil and gas, now and in the future.”

See you in court, Shell
Like ExxonMobil in the US, Shell is being sued for misleading the public about climate change despite knowing the truth since the 1960s. Dutch organisations and 500 co-plaintiffs have taken the company to court on behalf of more than 30,000 people from 70 countries. 40,000 Nigerian villagers are also taking Shell to the UK’s Supreme Court for refusing to clean up the oil pollution that has destroyed their land and waters. Court cases are quickly piling up for the oil and gas giant, which is also on trial in Italy (together with ENI) and likely soon in the Netherlands over alleged corruption in its Nigerian oil deals.

Dutch government smooths the way
Despite the mounting court cases, the Dutch government continues to lend a hand to Shell's criminal oil and gas extraction activities. Recently released documents show that the Dutch embassy in Mozambique was instrumental in helping Shell to win a public tender for the construction of a $5 billion gas-to-liquids plant in the country.

Gas as a false solution
The extraction and transport of both conventional and unconventional ('fracked') gas has severe social, environmental and climate impacts all along the supply chain: The push for gas infrastructure results in the displacement of communities and associated human rights violations. Fracking, which involves noxious chemicals and high volumes of water, pollutes aquifers and has extreme impacts on communities.

Although industry claims that gas is the ‘cleanest’ fossil fuel, fossil gas is composed largely of methane, which is over 100 times more potent than CO2 over a ten-year period. Large quantities of gas leak into the atmosphere during drilling, transportation, and particularly fracking, making gas as bad as coal for the climate (if not worse).
Mozambique LNG

The LNG terminal that Anadarko is attempting to build on the northern coast of Mozambique will displace communities and destroy homes and livelihoods.8 The government backs the $20 billion project, although only a fraction of the revenues are predicted to stay in the country and the promise of jobs has not materialised.9 Despite widespread signs of corruption and malfeasance, the project is also supported by numerous export credit agencies.10 Oil giants ExxonMobil, Shell and Eni are also planning to build LNG facilities here so they can exploit the Rovuma Basin gas discoveries.11

EU pushing LNG

The EU gives political and financial support to numerous LNG projects by awarding them the status of ‘Projects of Common Interest’. In Croatia, local communities are fighting one such scheme, a proposed floating LNG terminal off the island of Krk. As there are no buyers for the gas,12 this is yet another useless, public-ly-funded mega project (like the 28 other EU terminals that have been used at 23% of their total capacity since 2012).13 Although the EU claims that Krk in particular and LNG in general will reduce reliance on Russian gas, Russia became the EU’s biggest LNG supplier in February.

EU pushing pipelines

The EU is also promoting numerous new gas pipelines under the guise of common interest, including the controversial Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) that would bring Azeri gas to Italy. Fluxys, a Belgian gas transporter and owner of two LNG terminals, is a major shareholder and key lobbyist for TAP in Brussels. Instead of keeping fossil fuels in the ground and moving away from gas, the European Commission is positioned to play a major role in gas well into the future.

What is LNG?

Fossil gas, cooled until it becomes liquid, can be loaded into tankers and shipped across the ocean. The US sends its fracked gas around the world thanks to LNG, while Russia ships gas from the Arctic to Europe. Rather than moving away from fossil gas, industry is trying to create an even bigger market with LNG.

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9 https://www.ran.org/the-understory/lng-destroys-villages/
10 https://www.banktrack.org/project/mozambique_lng/pdf
12 Calculation of Andy Gheorghiu, Policy Advisor for Food & Water Europe, based on numbers by https://alsi.gie.eu/#/
WORST CLIMATE CRIMINALS AT FLAME

SHELL

$21.4 billion profit in 2018

- The Anglo-Dutch oil and gas corporation is an ‘Associate Sponsor’ of Flame.
- Spent the last 50 years destroying the livelihoods and health of local people in the Niger Delta.
- Its gas extraction has caused earthquakes and damaged housing in Groningen.

BP

$12.7 billion profit in 2018

- The British oil and gas ‘supermajor’ will present daily at Flame.
- Temporarily re-branded itself ‘Beyond Petroleum’ and invested in solar energy before ditching the name to keep the focus on fossil fuels, including toxic tar sands in Canada.
- Building the controversial Southern Gas Corridor to transport gas from the Caspian Sea to Europe together with Azerbaijan’s state-owned SOCAR.
- Knew about climate change since the 1960s, but opted to keep pushing fossil fuels to protect its profits.

ANADARKO

$5.74 billion profit in 2018

- VP Andrew Seck of this Texan oil and gas company will speak at two sessions.
- Involved in land grabbing and the forced relocation of thousands in northern Mozambique in connection with its new $20 billion LNG terminal.

FLUXYS

€54.5 Million profit in 2018

- The publicly-owned Belgium gas transporter will take the floor twice at Flame.
- Major shareholder in the controversial Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP), the last leg of the Southern Gas Corridor, for which it has lobbied the EU alongside the authoritarian Azerbaijani government.

- Its LNG terminals receive fracked gas from the US and gas from the Russian Arctic.
- Chairman Daniël Termont is a Flemish Socialist Party politician who claimed to be a climate champion while Mayor of Ghent.

What now?

Join the fight against gas and corporate impunity!

Get in touch with Corporate Europe Observatory and the Gastivists for more information.

Let’s make sure there’s no Flame Conference #26!

14 https://lobbyfacts.eu/representative/5c3fbbd9f4ec4a5684955ce51301502f/shell-companies
16 https://www.desmog.co.uk/2018/07/10/what-shellknew-and-how-it-was-used-stall-international-climate-change-negotiations
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