

Media Advisory by Biofuelwatch

For immediate Release, 25th September 2015

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Campaigners welcome Drax's decision to pull out of destructive energy project

Environmental campaigners welcome today's news that Drax Plc has withdrawn from the proposed White Rose Project. The power station would have been the UK's first new coal plant since 1972, and the EU's first commercial power station designed for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS).

In June this year, Biofuelwatch, together with the London Mining Network and Coal Action Network, handed a petition signed by over 110,000 people to DECC, urging them not to subsidise the White Rose (1).

The plant would have burned at least 85% coal and up to 15% wood pellets. Drax's existing power station imports some of its coal from Colombia, where whole villages have been evicted for opencast coal mines. The mines pollute and deplete water and soils, and have serious impacts on small farming communities (2). Much of the wood burned at Drax is imported from the southern US where conservation NGOs have documented that wood from clearcut, highly biodiverse wetland forests is being turned into pellets destined for Drax in Yorkshire (3). Although the White Rose would have been designed with carbon capture and storage infrastructure, there would have been no legal obligation for it to actually capture any CO₂.

The UK government has already spent £50 million on a feasibility study for this plant and were expected to announce up to £900 million in further upfront subsidies.

Almuth Ernsting from Biofuelwatch states: "Drax's decision to pull out of the White Rose project should spell the end for this destructive project. It would have resulted in more carbon emissions, more environmental destruction and pollution from coal mining, and more forest destruction for wood pellets. DECC should be supporting sustainable and low carbon renewable energy, such as sustainable wind and solar power, as well as energy efficiency and conservation – not coal, big biomass and false techno-fixes like CCS."

Biofuelwatch continues to campaign for an end to the vast subsidies that Drax's existing power station receives (4).

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Notes:

- (1) <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/2015/giant-white-elephant-delivers-over-110000-signatures-against-white-rose/>

- (2) See <http://londonminingnetwork.org/?s=Cerrejon>
- (3) <http://www.dogwoodalliance.org/2015/06/uncovering-the-truth-investigating-the-destruction-of-precious-wetland-forests/>
- (4) <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/axedrax-campaign/>