SHALE GAS

The Social Justice Team of the Archidiocese of Moncton wishes to express their concerns and add their voice to the many community organizations that have expressed their opposition to the hydraulic fracking method that is to be used in extracting shale gas exploration in the province of New-Brunswick.

According to Gladys LeBlanc , Social Justice Coordinator for the Archdiocese of Moncton: « We need not be experts in the field to realize that the hydraulic fracturing method used in the extraction of shale gas is very different from the one used in the past for natural gas exploration and is quite controversial. »

The Social Justice Team realizes that New-Brunswick's provincial debt has risen dramatically and that we need investments from local entrepreneurs as well as outside investments but this needs to be done in ways that do not negatively affect the environment. The team hopes that the potential for important profits in a short period of time, isn't taking precedence over the long term negative effects that are possible if this exploration does take place.

Mrs LeBlanc adds: « The Team realizes that due to the depletion of conventional natural gas resources, shale gas exploration is a very interesting alternative…but at what cost? Since shale extraction is relatively new, do we really know what impact it can have on the environment, on the air we breathe, the water we drink, on our forests, as well as on our own health? »

Even if our provincial government has put in place the most rigid laws in North America in order to prevent ecological accidents, some things cannot be controlled by legal measures. Certain risks cannot be legislated and remain very present since no one can be sure how the soil will react to the hydraulic fracking method and what the long term effects will be.

For the Social Justice Team, ecology carries a social cause since the poor are the first ones to suffer when there is abuse to our planet. Ecological justice, social justice and solidarity go hand in hand since **the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are but one**.

In the best interest of everyone involved and out of respect and responsibility for all, the Social Justice Team asks for a moratorium on shale gas exploration before going ahead on this important matter.

The citizens of New-Brunswick have too many important questions that remain unanswered. Important decisions that will affect future generations need to be made.

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