

Open Letter to the Portuguese Prime Minister and Minister for the Environment to stop fossil fuel extraction

Dear Prime Minister António Costa and Minister for the Environment João Matos Fernandes,

At COP22 Marrakech, you promised to decarbonize Portugal by 2050. We thank you for this intention and now urge:

Don't sell out to a declining industry & risk disaster

News of catastrophic climate change hits us from all over the world, including Portugal's fire and water crises. The planned oil and gas drilling benefits a handful of oil companies, while local people, the ocean, fishing industries and tourism are most at risk. An oil spill, like the Deepwater Horizon disaster in Mexico in 2010, would devastate the Portuguese, Spanish and Moroccan coastlines and economies for decades.

System change, not climate change

Portugal has the best conditions for pioneering a just energy transition, moving away from fossil fuels towards a regenerative economy and society. Using decentralized solar, wind and wave energy technologies, Portugal could become one of the first countries in the world powered exclusively by renewables and, by restoring ecosystems, could overcome desertification, drought, fire and flood disasters for good. Portugal would be a beacon of hope in a changing climate, and people would have enough water, food and energy, and live in cooperation with nature. There are many people developing and holding this knowledge. Let's collaborate to tackle and overcome this historic challenge!

Fulfill the promise made at the United Nations Climate Change Conference

With this promising vision tantalizingly within reach, supported by a national and global coalition of activists, we urge you to stop the offshore drilling near Aljezur and rescind all of the remaining oil and gas drilling contracts. The world is looking for alternatives – it's time for your government and Portugal to provide us with a positive legacy for our children and all generations to come after us.

Yours sincerely,