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Faith Communities Together for Frack Awareness [FaCT] is profoundly concerned about the recent “agreement” between frackers and so-called “environmentalists” to establish a "Center for Sustainable Shale Development/CSSD,” which is to develop voluntary standards for the fracking industry to follow. We believe that this “agreement” will mislead the public into thinking that everything is all right with fracking. The public may incorrectly believe that since fracking corporations have entered into this agreement, that environmentalists now accept and approve of fracking. Nothing could be further from the truth. Virtually all environmental groups in Ohio and elsewhere are NOT represented by this “agreement,” nor were they even consulted during its development.

Principal players behind formation of CSSD are the Heinz Foundation and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a group that is known among real environmentalists as a “greenwasher,” an environmental group that is willing to endorse weak regulations and industry self-regulation and reporting, and which provides a mantle of respectability for the industry, which it certainly does not deserve.

Just on the face of it, this agreement on voluntary standards is a sham. The key word here is voluntary. We’ve heard of such things before – terms like self-policing, self-regulating, and self-reporting. Pure and simple, it’s like putting the fox in charge of “regulating” the henhouse. We all know how that story will end.

As the Executive Director of Food & Water Watch, Wenonah Hauter predicted, greenwashers like EDF and some others have swooped into states like Ohio where there are strong grassroots groups against fracking and “claim to represent environmentalists while they promote regulation that is so weak even the gas industry can live with it.”
Since April 2011, EDF has been positioning itself to undermine the science of Cornell University's Robert Howarth, Renee Santoro, and Anthony Ingraffea in their peer-reviewed study that predicts that methane is the dirtiest fossil fuel, worse than coal. Dr. Ingraffea met with Fred Krupp and Mark Brownstein of EDF about a year ago, but Krupp and EDF are on a mission to completely discredit their findings.

As people of faith, we agree with Father Neil Pezzulo who has said that fracking “is a lie; and no matter how many times a lie is told, it is still a lie.” Fracking is morally wrong because it harms God’s creation, hurts and sickens people, and exploits the poor, especially in deprived rural areas. And we agree also with hydraulic fracturing engineer Dr. Anthony Ingraffea that the reason the industry does not make fracking safe is that cannot make it safe.

FaCT believes that the phony agreement and the resulting sham voluntary standards mislead the public and further distracts us from what should be our real goal as a society, which is to get completely off our hydrocarbon dependency and move to a new paradigm of green, safe, renewable energy. A warming world must not stall any longer, and it must not be distracted by greenwashers and corporate propagandists.

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