

Why Take Direct Action?

If years of UN dithering over an international treaty, the gulf between the government's rhetoric and its actions (more roads, expanding airports and proposing new coal-fired power stations) and the tidal wave of corporate climate greenwash have shown us anything, it's that governments and big business still have their heads firmly buried in the sand and will repeatedly place economic growth before social and climate justice. Let's



face it, that's hardly news – but if it's not challenged and stopped in the next few years, we're going to pass some pretty terrifying tipping points. Runaway climate change is nearly upon us ... now's the time to step up, get out into the streets and get involved with the growing international climate justice movement. The fossil fuel empire will crumble; it's up to us to speed up that process and make it an equitable transition towards a better world.

And why direct action? Lobbying our so-called 'leaders' can have no major impact on the biased and undemocratic institutions they run, in which profit is the only real policy-maker. To instigate real change we have to throw a few spanners in the works, show that new fossil fuel infrastructure will not be built without a fight, hurt the profit margins, unmask and expose climate criminals' greenwash. On the forecourts, in the head offices and in the public eye where reputations are built and destroyed, we have to put ourselves in the way of their daily operations, and pit our wits against their PR machines. Taking direct action is not only effective – think back to the suffragettes, the civil rights movement or the struggle for workers' rights – it's empowering. It reminds us of the enormous power we have to change things for the better – a power governments would rather we lost sight of completely.

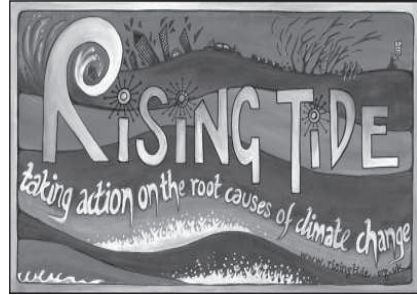


So, be it for this year's Fossil Fools Day, the next day of action against oil, coal, gas, aviation, or any number of false solutions currently being proposed, or for any other day on which you and/or your group decide to take action against the fossil fuel empire, take direct action. Shut down the cheap flight outlet, subvert the billboard, blockade the refinery, disrupt the AGM, visit the head office or wage a media war. This booklet will give you action ideas and a head start on planning, and it will hopefully inspire you to think up new and creative tactics. And when you do, please drop us a line so we can add them to the next version!

www.risingtide.org.uk



15 Actions to Topple the Fossil Fuel Empire



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1. Stop the Pumps. As the main public face of the oil industry, not to mention the fact that they are everywhere, petrol stations are a great place to highlight the connection between car culture, climate change, and social injustice. Aside from being responsible for one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, there is not an oil company on the planet that has not been party to human rights atrocities. Whether



it is Shell's role in the killing of activists in Nigeria or BP's sponsorship of paramilitaries in Colombia, there are plenty of examples to make the connection between the destruction of the climate and oil companies' assaults on human rights.

So, why not take action by blockading the entrance to a petrol station, locking on to petrol pumps (or locking the pumps to each other), or having a die-in on the forecourt. It is often quite easy to gain access to the roof (with the use of an extension ladder) for a banner drop. It should also be noted

that many petrol stations have safety shut off buttons that will shut off the pumps in case of an emergency (generally located on the outside of the station). If a global climate meltdown isn't an emergency, we don't know what is!

2. Direct Action at the Point of Destruction ... where nature, countryside and communities are destroyed to make way for climate-wrecking industries. Take action at open-cast coal mines, new roads, or the construction sites of new airport terminals or runways, gas terminals or pipelines. The tactics which are most useful in such situations are blockading and locking on to machinery with chains or bike D-Locks (make sure you know how it works before attaching yourself, and look out for worker safety).

In Wales, activists helped local residents of Merthyr Tydfil stop excavation work at Britain's largest open-cast coal mine at Ffos-y-fran near Cardiff. Dressed as clowns and polar bears, activists invaded the thousand-acre site, chained themselves to machinery and unfurled banners demanding justice for local residents and highlighting the government's hypocrisy over tackling climate change. The result: plenty of media coverage and the mine closed for the entire day – with no arrests!

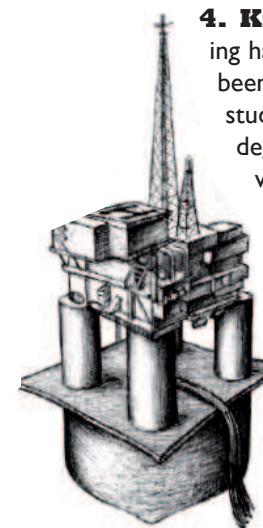


3. Spank a Bank. The fossil fuel industry couldn't continue to build new energy infrastructure without the financing of the world's largest banks. Billions upon billions of pounds are handed out to the world's largest polluters by these financial institutions. Fortunately, there is a growing international effort to get banks to stop funding the fossil fuel industry.

In October 2007, 35 separate actions across the UK targeted the Royal Bank of Scotland (the self-described 'Oil and Gas Bank'), with activists invading branches to hold invisible theatre, blockading bigger offices, dropping banners from the roof, and D-locking branches closed. In the US, Bank of America and Citi have been targeted for their financial support of the coal industry, with over 100 actions to date.



Even if you can't pull a crowd together for a protest, a few people with 'Out of Order' stickers or signs can shut down dozens of cash machines owned by these banks in a matter of hours. Make sure there is a message in fine print on these signs about the bank's role in climate change. Check out Platform for more info on fossil fuel finance: www.platformlondon.org



4. Kick it Off Campus. Many of Britain's universities are walking hand-in-hand with the oil and gas industry. Course curricula have been increasingly tailored to meet the needs of industry. Areas of study are set in consultation with industry representatives; some degree courses now specialise entirely in oil and gas; and many universities provide training services to existing industry personnel. Chances are there's a university near you that's involved in some aspect of perpetuating our addiction to fossil fuels.

And they're at it in schools too. BP, Shell and ExxonMobil all sponsor 'Education Services', pumping out propaganda to primary and secondary children throughout the UK. Oppose fossil fuel sponsorship of educational buildings, academic posts and research, and don't miss company careers talks, whether to hand out leaflets, ask difficult questions, or shut them down. Do some research of your own, get creative, and kick the fossil fuel industry off your campus. For more info check out: www.risingtide.org.uk/pdfs/degrees_briefing.pdf



5. Take it to the HQ. If you live in, or near to, a reasonable sized city, there's a good chance you've got the headquarters of a climate criminal of some sort in your area. These companies hate the negative publicity a big demo brings, but even more annoying and disruptive to their climate destroying efforts is a nice blockade of their office. Get creative – arm tubes, tripods, concrete barrels with arm holes, superglue, D-locks.

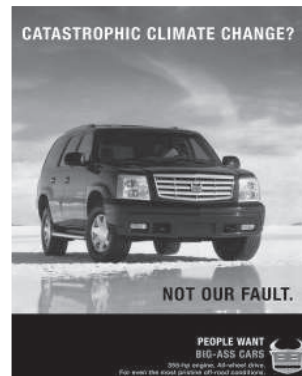
Rising Tide and friends found that dumping a lorry-load of fake peat outside Shell's HQ worked pretty well, as did a banner-drop / tree-sit combo outside BP's HQ as they released their quarterly results.

If you want to get a bit closer to the dirty business of the climate criminal, an office occupation may be in order. With some proper scouting (try posing as a potential client or asking to use the toilet), you'll probably be shocked to learn just how easy it is to get into CEOs' offices. Remember, if you want to stay for a while you might want to take along some lock-on devices – try a bike chain around your waist or a D-lock in the handbag of your office worker disguise.

6. Mess with the Masters of Spin. The fossil fuel industry can't exist without public opinion and consumer power on its side. Enter the PR industry, here to turn the nastiest of companies into cuddly giants, quell our fears about climate change with denial and spin, and disguise those turning the climate crisis into a new source of profit as friendly eco-heroes.

www.corporatewatch.org.uk, www.spinwatch.org and www.prwatch.org will all get you fired up about the need to tackle the masters of spin, and provide great resources on who to target. (Here's a few to get you started: Ogilvy and Mather's clients include BP, Shell and Ford; Burson-Marsteller does Boeing and Edelman just took on Eon). See www.heatisonline.org/disinformation.cfm for the latest industry front groups and academics spreading disinformation. And don't forget the advertising companies manufacturing our desire to fly, drive, and buy more climate-destroying crap!

Once you've picked your PR target, see it as a golden opportunity to get creative, and use the spin tactics we're bombarded with on an hourly basis against their creators. Check out www.climatedenial.org for adverts crying out for subvertising. Send out a hoax press release from the PR firm you want to mess with, perhaps severing their ties with a particularly nasty company (like Rising Tide did with Drax's PR firm in the run up to the 2006 Climate Camp). Or, use your own gift of the gab in a PR office occupation.



7. Resist Road Expansion. More roads mean more cars, plain and simple. Instead of reducing our dependency on automobiles or investing in reliable, user-friendly public transport, the government focuses on building a never ending web of roads, and expanding existing ones. The M1 widening alone will result in 115 miles of new concrete, at a cost of over £5 billion and an increase of 186,092 tonnes of CO2 every year! Roads devastate natural ecosystems, open up rural areas to new development, and encourage more and more cars to hit the road, and more and more CO2 to be emitted. Communities are resisting new road projects across the country, from Hastings to Lancaster, Norwich to Glasgow. The action possibilities are endless, from street demos and disrupting public meetings, to waging a reputational war against the companies involved, to occupying threatened trees and preventing construction.

Check out: www.eco-action.org/rr and www.bettertransport.org.uk

8. Banner Drops, Billboard Liberations, and other Guerrilla Messaging. Unfurling a banner (for example, from a bridge, next to a busy road or from a rooftop) is a relatively easy action that anyone can take. When well timed and well placed, banner drops get the message out to thousands of people, even though they rarely stay up for long before being removed by security of some sort. And if you're feeling a little more adventurous you can get the message out for hours by choosing a hard to reach location ... or by a bit of extra scheming:

Billboard Liberation: the act of taking over a billboard and replacing the annoying advertisements with a more important message – can be an extremely effective way of putting a little heat on your favourite climate criminal. Measure the size you'll need before hand, buy or make your own glue, and ideally take a spotter to look out while you're doing the deed. Or, for the simple option, go solo with a spray can.

Balloon Banners: a helium balloon banner can stay up for quite some time and is easy to construct, ideal for indoor banner hangs in offices, malls or anywhere with a high ceiling.

X marks the spot: Take your banner drop to the source: hang it on a power station, smokestack, at an import terminal, or the roof of a head office and it's likely to get loads of attention. The harder it is to get up, the harder it will be for them to get down!



9. Fry the Friendly Skies. Air travel is one of the fastest growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as one of the most extravagant uses of fossil fuels. Many of the UK's airports are considering major expansion, which means even more airplanes polluting the air. Yes, we need to reduce the amount we fly as individuals, but let's not forget the industries that manufacture our desire to fly, and are aggressively lobbying for expansion.

Protests can be organised at airline offices, travel agents and advertising agencies, as well as at airports. While tight security at airports leads to a number of logistical problems, it also creates advantages such as a tendency to overreact to any situation out of the norm with a resulting disruption of airport business. Private airports, catering to the extremely wealthy, are also outstanding targets for action and send a clear message that short-haul flights for the rich have to stop. Travel agencies are also a great, easy place to take action; activists have D-locked their doors shut, set up stalls outside and undertaken invisible theatre inside. Due to the danger to both airplane passengers and yourself we discourage doing anything to interfere with airport runways. For more information check out: www.planestupid.com



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10. Offset This! As the reality of climate change hits home, people and businesses are looking for ways to reduce their carbon footprint. This is undoubtedly a good thing. Unfortunately, there are those who choose to make a fortune from the climate crisis rather than actually reducing emissions. Enter carbon offset companies. These companies take people's money, promising to 'offset' their greenhouse gas emissions by planting trees or installing efficient light bulbs in some developing country. The problem is, this does very little to actually reduce carbon emissions, and what little it does is in the future rather than the present where it's needed. All the while, offsets soothe people's consciences and fool them into thinking that they can fly off on five mini-breaks a year. The bottom line is that carbon offset companies perpetuate the myth that we can continue to burn fossil fuels and fight climate change at the same time. A number of actions have been taken against the carbon offset industry such as office occupations and creative street theatre. Climate Care has offices in Oxford. The Carbon Neutral Company, Carbon Clear and Cleaner Climate are all based in London. For more information visit: www.carbontradewatch.org/pubs/carbon_neutral_myth.pdf

For an amazing collection of action resources (blockading guides, leaflet templates, legal advice, media strategies, images & graphics, etc.) visit: www.networkforclimateaction.org.uk

A brush with the law isn't as scary as you think

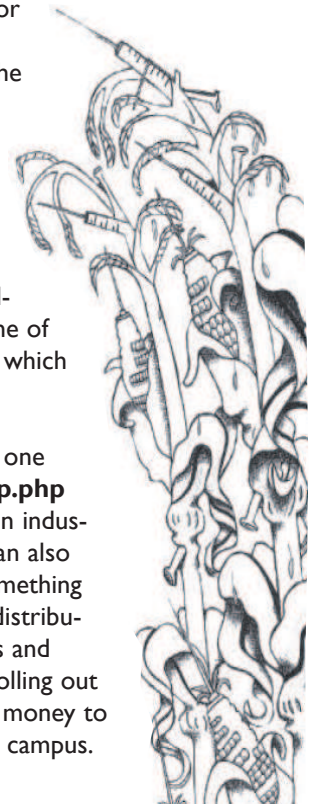
Planning a direct action for the first time might seem a little scary when you think about having to deal with police and the courts. First of all, there are plenty of support roles that don't need to risk arrest, such as taking photos or video, talking to the media, or handing out flyers. A common misconception about direct action is that lots of people – or at least someone – will always get arrested. In reality, when police arrive at an action they usually take a couple of minutes to assess the situation before doing anything. Even then they will usually issue a warning before actually making an arrest, and individuals (or the whole group) can choose whether they want to continue and risk arrest, or move on. Very often, groups disrupt companies and operations for a good while with no arrests made.

That said, anything can happen, the police are an unpredictable bunch, and your group should always talk before hand about who's up for what, plan support in case someone does get arrested, and set a time for a post-action debrief. For more advice on the law and what to do if you are arrested, visit www.activistslegalproject.org.uk. You can also reduce your risk by planning and communicating in a secure way - don't get too paranoid, but do take sensible precautions!

See: www.networkforclimateaction.org.uk/toolkit/security.html

11. Stick it to the Biofools. In the frantic search for 'alternatives' that allow for business as usual, energy-hungry western nations have latched on to biofuels. Unfortunately, the biofuels bandwagon is riddled with holes. Industrial agrofuel production uses massive amounts of fossil fuels and pesticides, putting agrofuels on par with oil production in terms of emissions. All over the world, land that was used to grow food is being converted to agrofuel production, causing food prices to soar with dire consequences for the poorest communities. Agrofuels are also one of the leading causes of deforestation and biodiversity loss – in the name of climate change, we're destroying the life support systems on which the climate depends.

The biggest targets in the UK are biofuel refineries. Find the one nearest you here: www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/refinerymap.php (click on the dots for more info on UK companies involved in industrial agrofuels, including their partners and investors – you can also look up the location of their offices). If you're looking for something closer to home, try your local Tesco, one of the largest UK distributors, retailers and investors in agrofuels. Virgin Airways, Trains and Holidays are another good bet, with boss Richard Branson rolling out agrofuels across his empire. Universities also take corporate money to find new ways of expanding agrofuels, so keep an eye out on campus. For more information visit: www.biofuelwatch.org.uk



12. Two Wheels Good, Four Wheels Bad. Critical Mass is a time-honoured protest against car culture and an excellent way to get large crowds out for mass civil disobedience with relatively low risk. For a Critical Mass, all you have to do is get together a group of cyclists and take to the streets. The idea is to take over all lanes of traffic to create an empowering atmosphere for bicycles while temporarily impeding automobile traffic. It helps to have a few volunteers at the head of the ride temporarily

leading the mob if you have a route you want to stick to. But a ride without a planned route can be just as fun. Critical Masses can also be an excellent way to get a bunch of people to a target in a short amount of time. Consider having your Critical Mass end at your favourite fossil fuel target. Or even better: take a tour of all the climate criminals in your town!



13. Greenwash Guerrillas. Climate criminals need a social licence to operate and what with people cottoning on to the fact that the fossil fuel industries are destroying the planet, that's getting harder and harder. That's why we're seeing more and more sponsorship of cultural events by the oil industry, aviation companies and the like – all corporate greenwash aimed at fooling us into believing they have our best interests at heart.

Show the sponsored institution or event that accepting money from the fossil fuel industry is not acceptable. All you need is some white paper suits (stencilled 'Greenwash' or with a green radiation sign), some highly sophisticated greenwash detecting equipment (homemade from old Hoover parts, lamps, broken hair dryers, green flashing bike lights, etc.), and, if you can find it, some hazard tape – that way you can cause more visible disruption by cordoning off the greenwash area or entrances to it. Now you're all set, arrive just before the guests and warn them of the greenwash leaking from the building – a tongue-in-cheek leaflet can be useful.



Leaflet Template: www.risingtide.org.uk/resources/leaflets

Short Film of Greenwash Guerrillas at Shell HQ: www.risingtide.org.uk/node/250

14. Blockade Big Carbon. There are few actions more empowering and attention-grabbing than blocking access to a coal or oil-fired power station, coal mine, pipeline construction site, or liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal. Having a lot of people is useful for an action like this, but not essential. Most important is a site with just one or two entrances that can be blockaded using mass civil disobedience and/or more sophisticated blockading methods. At Ratcliffe-on-Soar coal-fired power station, 11 activists locked on to coal machinery and conveyor belts, preventing the plant from re-charging for over 5 hours. At Milford Haven's under-construction LNG Terminal, 5 Rising Tide activists with 5 arm tubes (plus an 8 person support team) shut down construction for over 6 hours, costing its owners (ExxonMobil amongst others) over half a million pounds.

Checklist: A detailed map of the area (with someone having visited the site previously to check that it looks the same on the ground and to measure distances and timings), transport to the site, blockading equipment (arm tubes / concrete barrels with arm holes / tripods or a combination of all three), a 'clean' (new SIM, not someone's own) mobile phone, someone off-site sending a press release, and a sympathetic solicitor's phone number – there's a reasonable chance that those actually blockading will be arrested (but that's not always the case). This does take a bit of planning but it's worth it on the day!



For more information on blockading visit:

www.schnews.org.uk/diyguide/blockadingforbeginners.pdf

15. Share the Love and Don't Listen to Us! The bad news is, climate change is an incredibly complex problem touching all aspects of our lives and all elements of our political, social and economic systems. The good news is, there's no shortage of climate criminals to target wherever you live, no lack of public awareness to raise, and loads of common ground to share with other social struggles, such as food, poverty and anti-war campaigns. We've undoubtedly missed out loads of great action ideas in this booklet ... The best ideas will be the new ones you and your group come up with, that wow the public and stump the police. Give yourself the time to think creatively with your group and you'll come up with something amazing ... And don't forget to drop us a line and let us know what it is so we can include it in the next version of this booklet.

Keep an eye on climate action, visit:

www.risingtide.org.uk

www.earthfirst.org.uk/actionreports

www.climateimc.org

www.schnews.org.uk

Who Are the Fossil Fools in Your Neighbourhood?

Wherever you live, climate criminals are going to be close by, destroying the natural world, poisoning communities near and far, and engaging in other climate trashing activities. Many of us live (sometimes unawares) in the shadow of toxic extraction or production activities. Even if you don't, unless you're living off the grid, your utility company gets most of its energy from fossil fuels ... despite those fancy photos of wind turbines or solar panels on their website. And if you live in a town or city, you're never far from the economic interests driving climate change.



If you're not sure where the climate criminals are, the first step to taking action is to pin down their location! Here are a few leads to pursue:

1. Proposed New Coal-Fired Power Stations:
www.wdm.org.uk/kingsnorth/ukcoal.htm
2. Existing Coal-Fired Power Stations:
www.ukqaa.org.uk/PowerStation.html
3. UK Coal Mines (Deep and Surface):
www.worldcoal.org/pages/content/index.asp?PageID=404
(Click on 'Main Producing Companies' and follow links to see the location of their mines)
4. Existing Oil Refineries:
www.og.dti.gov.uk/downstream/refining/index.htm
5. Proposed Liquefied Natural Gas Import Terminals:
www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_LNG_terminals#UK_2
6. Biofuel Refineries (Existing, Proposed and Under Construction):
www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/refinerymap.php
7. Major Energy Suppliers:
www.ukpower.co.uk/suppliers.asp
8. UK Airports Planning Expansion:
www.airportwatch.org.uk/ukairports/index.php
9. Your Local Royal Bank of Scotland Branch (The 'Oil and Gas Bank'):
www.rbs.co.uk/microsites/general/branch_locator/step1.asp

What Is Rising Tide?



Rising Tide is an international grassroots network that takes creative direct action to confront the root causes of climate change, and promotes local, community-run solutions to our energy needs. Formed in 2000, and now spanning three continents, Rising Tide employs a combination of direct action, creative resistance and popular education.

Our Approach. Rising Tide argues that climate change is an issue of social injustice, and is linked to the economic domination of Northern interests and transnational corporations. Rising Tide rejects market-based 'solutions' to climate change such as carbon offsetting and sequestration schemes, and calls instead for a just, community-led transition to a low-carbon society. Rising Tide believes that an immediate end to oil exploration and a dismantling of the fossil fuel economy are necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change. Rising Tide advocates a grassroots approach, because we believe that changes will be made by people, not state or corporate institutions whose so-called 'solutions' are always, at root, aimed at increasing economic growth, and not building lives of dignity for all. Our work aims to connect the dots between fossil fuels, social injustice, capitalism, and the destabilisation of the global climate.

Getting Involved. In the UK, Rising Tide is resisting fossil fuel developments such as the Shell pipeline in Rosspport, Ireland, and airport expansion around the country; confronting the proponents of false solutions such as the Carbon Neutral Company (carbon offsets) and the Aviation Emissions Trading summit; and unmasking oil industry greenwash, with a particular focus on BP and Shell's sponsorship of cultural institutions. We have eight active local groups around the country and loads more individual contacts, all of which are great ways to get involved in local climate action.



If you want to get in touch with a local group, start your own, find out more about our campaigns, or would like more information on how to pull off the actions in this booklet, get in touch – we'd love to hear from you!

info@risingtide.org • 07708 794665 • www.risingtide.org.uk