



141 NGOs Call for a Moratorium on Large-Scale Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction in Greenland

PRESS RELEASE

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In an appeal published today, 141 NGOs from all over the world call on the Greenlandic and Danish governments and the European Union to help protect the Greenlandic and Arctic environment. Greenland possesses some of the world's largest oil and gas and mineral reserves. Thus far, there are about 70 active large-scale exploration and exploitation licenses in Greenland, covering thousands of square kilometres. Almost all are surface mining projects, often at high altitude.

"We need a time-out for oil and gas extraction in Greenland and especially for the mining sector", says Erik Jensen from The URANI NAAMIK / NO TO URANIUM Society in Nuuk. "Large parts of Southern Greenland have been turned into license areas, because our government is handing them out by the dozens. Especially worrying is the big Kvanefjeld uranium and rare earth mining project, which contains some of the biggest uranium and thorium deposits in the world. The project is expected to be approved in a few months. This could be a point of no return for the whole country. It would also make sense, if Greenland was recompensed for the possible loss of revenue while the time-out lasts."

"New Arctic strategies are underway in the European Union and the Danish Realm", says Hans Pedersen from SustainableEnergy. "The existing strategies have had a negative impact on Greenland's environment because they encourage large-scale mining and oil and gas extraction. Unfortunately, there is no indication that the new strategies will be any different. What we need are strategies that helps protect Greenland and as much as the Arctic as possible."

The 141 NGOs call on the Greenlandic and Danish governments, the European Union, and everybody else who take an interest, to help establish an Arctic sanctuary. The inspiration could be the Antarctic Treaty, as supplemented by the Madrid Protocol signed in 1991, but respecting the fundamental difference represented by the populated nature of Greenland and the Arctic and the rights and needs of the peoples and nations of the Arctic region.

“Protecting Greenland and the Arctic is not only a local, national and regional, but also a global issue”, says Diego Francesco Marin from European Environmental Bureau. “The European Parliament has already expressed support for the idea of an Arctic sanctuary and people all over the world realise that the Arctic environment is particularly vulnerable to pollution, because it recovers very slowly. Furthermore, exploitation of Greenland’s vast oil and gas reserves will contribute significantly to global warming and go against the objectives of the Paris Agreement.”

The appeal can be downloaded [HERE](#)

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