



UK Organisations That Recognise Peak Oil

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The Soil Association is a 60 year old UK organisation responsible for setting standards in organic farming. They describe themselves as "*UK's leading environmental charity promoting sustainable, organic farming and championing human health.*" Their logo is the UK's most recognisable trademark for organic produce. It is found on more than 70% of all UK organic produce.



They have also recently announced a major peak oil initiative, it goes by the name of [Food and Farming - Post Peak Oil](#) and they are hoping to raise £100,000.

The Soil Association is looking ahead and preparing for a post peak oil world as an organisational priority. Our aim is to create a new, localised food culture that will deliver long-term quality of life in place of the old dynamic of unrestrained globalisation and short-termist exploitation.

Initiatives we want to take forward include:

- Focussing our 2007 National Conference on the theme of 'Food and Farming - Post Peak Oil'
- Producing practical research to enable cities, towns and communities to re-localise their food supplies
- Launching a national campaign, alerting public and politicians alike, to the urgency of this challenge
- Promoting re-localised food systems in schools, hospitals and businesses
- Investing in our local groups as key catalysts to build a new resilient food culture at the grassroots

The challenge is immediate, but fear should not be the driver. The Soil Association is optimistic that we have the vision and means to create a new, localised food culture that will deliver long-term quality of life in place of the old dynamic of unrestrained globalisation and short-termist exploitation.

This is certainly a welcome development, illustrating a growth in peak oil awareness and adding credibility to the message through association with such a credible organisation. I wonder how many other UK organisations are addressing peak oil as the Soil Association are now?

I'm going try and collate a list of UK organisations that publicly recognise peak oil. These organisations deserve recognition for their position but it is also interesting to see if there is any commonality between these organisations. Why are they speaking up and not others?

I'm not going to include organisations like the Independent or Guardian newspapers, even though they have run peak oil stories nor the Energy Institute even though Chris Skrebowski edits their Petroleum Review magazine. Peak oil doesn't appear to be key influence on these organisations.

The List

[ASPO UK](#), see [The Oil Depletion Analysis Centre \(ODAC\)](#)

[British National Party \(BNP\)](#)

"Peak oil" is going to become a household term in the same way that "global warming", "climate change", "third world poverty" and "consumer society" filtered down from academia to the popular press and media to become everyday terms.

Peak oil spells the end of cheap oil and gas. It is the moment when 50% of the world's reserves of these two finite fuel sources are used.

It is not about completely running out of oil or gas. There will always be some reserves remaining but the monetary cost and more importantly the energy cost of exploiting those reserves makes such activity prohibitive.

[Centre for Alternative Technology \(CAT\)](#)

Climate Change and 'peak oil' have created a situation that is both deadly serious and increasingly urgent. The solution common to both challenges is to re-think and re-localise our lives.

This landmark research project will map out a nuclear-free energy strategy for the UK, while addresses three challenges: Climate Change, Peak Oil and Global Equity as well as mapping out alternatives to dangerous and costly nuclear power generation.

[Community Carbon Reduction Project \(CRed\)](#)

[East Anglia Foodlink \(EAFL\)](#)

Most analysts agree that once we pass the half-way point in the world's oil reserves, production will begin to drop off as the remaining reserves are more difficult to extract. Some believe that point will come in the next 12 months, others think we have 10 years or more left. But either way, we need to prepare now by reducing our dependency on this finite resource.

In order to highlight this, CRed and East Anglia Foodlink are running a one day conference at the Insurance Hall, London EC2. On the 11th of October, from 10am to 4pm.

This conference will aim to discuss the challenges arising from a peak in oil production, and to begin to plan responses to tackling those challenges. It is aimed at policy-makers, business people, NGOs and individuals who use energy or eat food.

[The Ecologist](#)

Our lives are now so dependent on oil that it is impossible to conceive of a world without it. Before long, however, we will have no choice. The sooner we start planning for that reality, and changing the way we live, the better our chance of survival.

[Green Party](#)

And it's only the Greens that recognize that there is another compelling reason to act - the prospect of an end to cheap oil and the very real danger that governments will try to turn to the costly alternative of extracting oil from coal, exacerbating climate change at the time when we desperately need to be mitigating it.

Scientists and geologists are beginning to warn that "Peak Oil" - the point at which growing supplies of generally cheap oil turn into fast-depleting supplies of ever more expensive oil - is just a few short years away. Some argue that it is already with us - and the increasingly desperate revisions of oil companies' estimated reserves bears testimony to their concerns. ...according to increasingly vocal whistleblowers, oil is depleting fast, and the age of cheap oil will soon be over.

[Institute of Science in Society \(ISIS\)](#)

The signs are that Campbell may not be far off the mark. People like Ali Bakhtiari, head of strategic planning at Iran's National Oil Company (NOIC), and Matthew Simmons, an energy investment banker and adviser to the controversial Bush-Cheney energy plan, are united with Campbell in thinking that global oil production is about to peak, which in turn will signal the permanent end of cheap oil. When crude oil price rose above \$50 per barrel in October 2004, people are suddenly jolted into thinking that oil production may be peaking. Worse yet, Campbell's charge that the oil reserves have been overstated also turns out to be correct.

[The Oil Depletion Analysis Centre \(ODAC\)](#)

The Oil Depletion Analysis Centre (ODAC) is an independent, UK-registered educational charity working to raise international public awareness and promote better understanding of the world's oil-depletion problem.

ODAC was founded in June 2001 on the belief that an informed public debate about the likely impacts of depleting oil supplies is critically needed. A growing number of experts now predict that world oil production will reach its ultimate peak within a few years and then start permanently to decline, while the prevailing view of most energy policy-makers and institutions is that near-term oil supply is mainly an economic and geopolitical concern. Under almost any scenario, however, lead time is running short for a smooth transition to new energy systems and a less oil-dependent way of life.

PM also welcomes articles on a wide range of subjects relating to sustainable living. These can be stories about ecovillages, communities and projects. They can also be about subjects like Peak Oil and energy decline and how we will live in a world without cheap oil; what sort of economic systems as well as energy systems will survive and prosper? We are looking for examples of pioneering news, ways of living together and we appreciate critical thinking.

[PowerSwitch](#)

PowerSwitch is an independent UK organisation dedicated to raising awareness and discussion about the causes, consequences, and mitigations of the imminent peak and decline in global oil production. Established in October 2004 we have brought together individuals across the UK with the intention of developing a grass roots approach of bringing the situation to the public consciousness through a 'domino effect'. We also approach public and private bodies that need to bring an understanding of global oil depletion and the challenges it brings to their decision making processes.

[Soil Association](#)

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[Solar Century](#)

CEO Jeremy Leggett is a frequent writer and speaker on peak oil. I'm going to include solar century on the list because of Leggett even though I can't see an official statement from the company on peak oil.

[Sustainable Development Commission](#)

...the recent trend of increasing world crude oil prices suggest that the effects of approaching peak oil production are now beginning to have a fundamental impact on current and future oil markets. Hence, it is probable that previous conventional thinking on world crude oil prices and UK fuel prices may have to be revised radically.

Also Jonathon Porritt, chair of Sustainable Development Commission speaking on [Peak Oil and Climate Change](#).

[Sustrans](#)

We also, however, recognise current opinion that all major oil discoveries have been made and that the world will soon face 'peak oil': the moment when demand for oil outstrips the ability of the worlds oil producers to meet demand. Indeed, many commentators predict peak oil occurring in the next five years. To prepare for the harsh

impact diminishing oil supply will have on Western lifestyles, particularly for a country such as Scotland on the far, western, margins of the Eurozone; we must begin planning for an economy much less dependent on oil

This is far from a complete list (I hope!), **which is where I turn to our readers. Could people post other UK organisations that have made similar statements?** I'll add them to the main article so this can be built up over time.

Unfortunately the Government doesn't even appear close to joining these forward looking organisations with this being the most recent statement on the subject from the energy minister in response to a written question from an opposition MP:

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate the Department has made of when global production of conventional crude oil will peak.

Malcolm Wicks: The Government's assessment of the remaining lifespan of global oil reserves is set out in the Energy White Paper 2003 "Our energy future--creating a low carbon economy". Paragraph 6.15 of the White Paper notes that "Globally, conventional oil reserves are sufficient to meet projected demand for around 30 years, although new discoveries will be needed to renew reserves. Together with nonconventional reserves such as oil shales and improvements in technology, there is the potential for oil reserves to last twice as long".

This is consistent with the latest assessment by the International Energy Agency (IEA) in its 2004 World Energy Outlook. The IEA concludes that ". . . global production of conventional oil will not peak before 2030 if the necessary investments are made."

The Government remain committed to working with producers, consumers and the international community to improve the conditions for investment in the international oil sector, as well as implementing policies to maximise the economic recovery of the UK's own oil (and gas) reserves and to ease the UK economy away from power supplied primarily through fossil fuel supply. We are also supporting efforts to promote greater transparency in reporting of global oil reserves.

Of course this answer is nothing more than devolving responsibility to the IEA, in hope perhaps to dodge some of the future blame for getting it so wrong?



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