



Following the furore over the alleged diversion of EU 'green energy' funding to gas-fired power generation, as documented by *The Guardian* (see *Environment UK blog* of 29 May), the main environment news was the announcement yesterday of the front-runners in the race for up to €1.5bn worth of funding for carbon capture and storage (CCS) schemes. While not in any way renewable energy, the schemes do improve on previous methods of dealing with the carbon released from fossil fuel energy production (ie, not dealing with it at all). Leader of the pack, so to speak, is a project based near Doncaster, the Don Valley Power Project.

The scheme will recover CO₂ produced in the generation of power from coal mined at Hatfield Colliery and transport it, together with other carbon emissions from power generation elsewhere and local industry, to the offshore oilfield to harvest 'hard-to-reach' oil before being permanently stored. Two other projects in Yorkshire and one on Teesside are also among the eight preferred projects, although only the top two or three schemes are likely to receive funding.

If you have to use fossil fuels to generate power, I suppose it's better to store the carbon released rather than pump it into the atmosphere. However, more exciting is the news that a tidal power scheme on the Isle of Islay is in line for funding as a renewables scheme, with a second tidal scheme in Kyle Rhea on Skye named as 'first reserve'. Tidal power is at last becoming a reality, with Scotland leading the way. Together with wind energy, that's how you get benefit from atrocious weather!

Other news on the environment front continues to be the effect the southerly track of the jetstream is having on the British summer. One theory states that the melting polar ice cap may be influencing the jetstream's position. If that is a factor, we may be in for more extreme weather events such as the current flooding; before the UK begins its long road to tropical-type drought.

It would be churlish not to give at least a passing mention to an upcoming sporting event that is taking place somewhere to the south of here soon. I'm referring, of course, to the World Bog Snorkelling Championships that are held at Llanwrtyd Wells every year. This year they take place on 26 August and form part of the World Alternative Games. They are also part of the Welsh town's Green Events programme (Llanwrtyd Wells also claims to be the smallest town in Britain). Get there if you can.

Only kidding! The London 2012 Games is priding itself on being the 'greenest' Olympics in the modern era. Certainly its construction project and aspirations for legacy appear to bear that out – although how much that is actually saying is hard to quantify.

I am haunted, though, by the thought of the CO₂ and CH₄ emissions that will be produced by the consumption of all the cola and hamburgers. Yeuch!

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