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## Britain has the right energy policies in place, it just needs to keep the costs down

Energy and environment policy has rarely been as high-profile as it is now. Decisions taken today will have implications for years to come

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'Energy and environment policy has rarely been as high-profile as it is now.' Photo: ALAMY

By Vincent de Rivaz

8:00PM GMT 16 Mar 2014

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The recent floods and severe weather across Britain have brought the debate around climate change back into sharp focus. While it is not right to attribute individual weather events to changes in the global climate, the storms were consistent with the increasingly volatile and extreme weather patterns predicted by climate scientists.

Later this month the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is due to confirm again that global warming is real and that the costs of containing it will be greater if governments delay taking action.

Meanwhile, unrest in Ukraine also reminds us we should not ignore issues of security of supply.

Successive British Governments have adopted a correct and timely approach to these issues by balancing the need to cut emissions with the desire to ensure we all have affordable and secure energy.

In the next few years, Britain needs more than £100bn of investment in new electricity generation as a quarter of our power stations are phased out or reach the end of their operating lives. The question is whether we replace them with carbon-intensive

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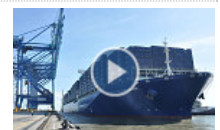
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fossil fuel generation that relies increasingly on imports or with a diverse and secure low carbon energy mix.

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Years of informed debate and policy-making in Britain means we have a response that is well thought through and internationally respected. Crucially, the political consensus and stability of these policies have given investors the confidence to put their money into Britain.

The issue of providing secure, affordable, clean energy is common to most European countries. Britain's policy is in sharp contrast to the German experience: German consumers face some of the highest residential electricity costs in Europe and rising emissions from an increased use of coal and lignite. Investors there are also among the losers.

One of the major planks of Government policy here is called the Carbon Floor Price. This is designed to wean the country off an over-reliance on coal and give a strong incentive to us all to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The mechanism is simple – by setting a rising price for each tonne of carbon dioxide emitted, it penalises polluters and encourages investment in cleaner forms of power.

When it was launched just three years ago, the Government rightly said this was the most cost-effective way to meet our environmental goals as part of a package of policy measures to drive low-carbon investment.

Two things tell us that the policy is working.

First, it is tipping the balance away from coal to lower carbon gas at a time when many relatively modern gas powered stations have been closed or mothballed.

Second, it is encouraging spending on new low-carbon power generation such as wind, biomass and nuclear to give us a more resilient and balanced energy system.

Industry requires competitive energy costs. Some businesses, especially those in energy-intensive industries, have highlighted the cost of carbon pricing on their international competitiveness. It is right that this issue is addressed by targeted and specific measures.

Householders are under pressure, too.

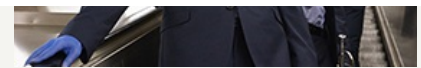
Politicians and energy companies have to work together to bear down on costs of energy efficiency schemes without abandoning important environmental goals or damaging investor confidence.

Action taken last December to review the costs of energy company obligation charges were a step in the right direction and more can be done but, of all the environmental measures, the Carbon Floor Price, among a wider set of policies, is the most cost-effective way to cut emissions.

EDF Energy supports the Government's decarbonisation targets and, together with many business leaders and the CBI, we back the European Union's target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40pc by 2030.

We are playing our part in meeting the challenge by investing more than £1bn a year in the UK. That means bringing new gas and wind power on stream. It also means we will ensure our coal stations are available to keep the lights on during this period of transition to a lower carbon energy future.

Last year, EDF Energy and the Government concluded a deal for power from the first new nuclear power station in a generation at Hinkley Point in Somerset. It will be ready just as the first of our existing low-carbon nuclear stations is coming to the end of its life. It will provide a massive boost to the economy and rebuild



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the British nuclear industry.

As the agreement is part of this far-reaching reform of the UK energy market, it is right that the European Commission should examine the deal.

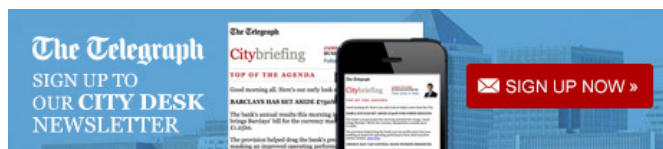
We are encouraged by the pace of the Commission inquiry. The consultation period will show that the contract for Hinkley Point C is fair and balanced for investors and consumers.

In the meantime, our investments to extend the lives of our 15 existing nuclear reactors by around two years will delay the crunch point when electricity demand and supply converge. This has bought the country some much-needed breathing space but it has not changed the fundamentals.

That's why the Government must send a strong signal that it remains committed to its long-term energy policies, even if it makes short-term and temporary adjustments to them. Although there may be a short postponement of the energy gap, there is no such respite available on climate change.

Energy and environment policy has rarely been as high-profile as it is now. Decisions taken today will have implications for years to come. We have the right policies in place. Now we must deliver them in the most cost-effective way possible.

*Vincent de Rivaz is the chief executive of EDF Energy*



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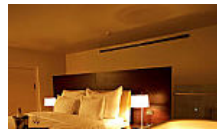
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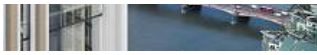
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Start-up Remade In Britain sells 'upcycled' furniture and accessories from 300 makers all over the country. Be inspired by some of their quirkier creations.

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## Revealed: The menu items you didn't know you could order at McDonald's



McDonald's has a new menu item, and unlike some of its iconic foods (the Big Mac, fries, McFlurries) this one is a little less... traditional. Introducing: the Crab Croquette Burger and some of the other surprising dishes you can get at McDonald's

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There are over 87,000 different drink combinations at Starbucks, according to the coffee retailer's website. How



many of them do you know? From flu remedies to Harry Potter-inspired beverages, we highlight the weird and the wonderful brews and infusions.

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**itzman** • a year ago

IN another note 'Renault has the perfect formula one engine, they just have to deliver more power, without burning so much fuel or blowing up'

'Every person in the country could look a year younger at age 60 if they buy asses milk and honey from wild bees every night, this is the right policy, if only we could get the cost down..'

The right energy policy is of course the one that DOES keep the costs down that ain't happening it's probably the wrong energy policy..

we could save a billion a year on grid transmissions losses simply by putting gold or silver over all the pylon cables.

That is exactly the right policy, if only we could get the costs down from that so it would cost.

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**ryck** • a year ago

"One of the major planks of Government policy here is called the Carbon Floor. This is designed to wean the country off an over-reliance on coal and give an incentive to us all to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The mechanism is simple – by setting a rising price for each tonne of carbon emitted, it penalises polluters and encourages investment in cleaner forms

Such a process is purely political benefiting only the left and they need the revenues for their power base so they will never give it up. They will find no way to fix with phony punitive taxes.

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**keswickian** • a year ago

Vincent de Rivaz states that "The consultation period will show that the cost of Hinkley Point C is fair and balanced for investors and consumers" and also provide a massive boost to the economy and rebuild the British nuclear industry

What he fails to make any reference to is the country's urgent need for a practical solution for dealing with the current stocks of high level radioactive waste that will inevitably be produced by a new generation of nuclear plants. These costs will be immense and have not been taken into account working out the true eventual cost to consumers and taxpayers.

The Government's preferred option is to bury the waste in a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). Whilst the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has not yet conducted a consultation on the Siting Process for a GDF, it has already proposed that in two tier authorities County Councils will be excluded from the decision making process. This is despite the majority of responders to the consultation rejecting the proposal.

This can only be described as a cynical manoeuvre by DECC to exclude County Councils from being in a position to vet and reject, with totally just

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**itzman** > keswickian • a year ago

100 000 years is nothing compared to how long lead remains toxic for mercury. Or arsenic.

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**lanthalus** • a year ago

I'll tell you how to keep costs down, Vincent:

1. Stop subsidising pointless windmills and PV arrays (given that all empirical evidence points to gradual climate warming, following a trend that goes back centuries, levels of climate sensitivity - look it up - and strong indications that mankind's influence is really quite small, current political and zealot driven "mitigation" doing more harm than good)
2. Stop profiteering by greedy energy companies who develop new lines of over and above their traditional job of energy supply, in order to increase price back of public subsidies.
3. Start building some more gas powered generators (and stop closing coal plants in order to guarantee supply).
4. On the back of (3) with no danger of the lights going out, renegotiate the horrendously expensive deals for new nuclear without having a gun to our heads to achieve a more sensible price.
5. On the back of (1), stop pouring money into the new distributed-supply (only necessary because we are putting windmills in a multitude of inaccessible locations).

That'll do for starters.

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**ryck** > lanthalus • a year ago

A fine assault on the EcoNazi left. The left do not care what the price is as long as it is very high since low costs help capitalism, their dire

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**Harold\_Blue\_Nose** > lanthalus • a year ago

Good points, sadly though with people running our energy needs with short term motives and no clue about to actually plan, manage the country's resources, our "lights" will remain a political football.

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**parakeet** • a year ago

Britain does not have "The right energy policies in place" as Vincent de Roon proclaims.

Solar generated electricity from locations outside of Britain is the solution to the energy needs of Britain.

The energy policy of Britain policy does not take advantage of generating electricity from overseas solar energy locations. There are big advantages in this approach. Britain could become a major supplier of cheap solar generated electricity by investing in building solar power stations in the deserts of North Africa to meet the needs of Britain and neighbouring nations.

The present energy policy mix of Britain is based on Britain generating its electricity from within Britain. Policy makers wrongly believe that this will ensure a reliable supply of electricity. If gas, uranium or coal does not reach Britain the supply will not be reliable.

Solar super heated steam driving steam turbine generates is the way of the future. The cost of the renewable raw materials using solar systems is zero. Whilst electricity generating systems require massive expenses in purchasing the renewable raw materials such as coal, gas, uranium to fuel the generating plant, electricity generated from solar energy is an environmental winner.

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**itzman** > parakeet • a year ago

"Solar generated electricity from locations outside of Britain is the solution to the long terms needs of Britain."

Hahahaha = top joke post of the day.

You really have no idea do you?

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**tonydartford** • a year ago

It depends if you believe CO2 is causing global warming. The last few years have seen several bad winters and the last one quite mild and that is with more CO2 pumped into the air. We are shooting ourselves in the foot over energy and then phase out wind farms as they are useless and ignore anything to do with CO2 gases.

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**PCAH** • a year ago

If EDF want to cut carbon emissions they need to shut down all their AGR reactors which routinely discharge their carbon dioxide cooling gas into the atmosphere. The UK taxpayer funded subsidies for Hinkley C must be ruled out by the EU Commission. Even if it went ahead it would not produce any electricity by the end of 2025. Much too late to stop the lights going out in 2015-2016. Wind and solar farms will fill the electricity gap within 18 months. Solar roof tiles on industrial sites and supermarkets will enable small local grids to supply electricity to domestic consumers. At a cost of £16 billion Hinkley C would cost more to build than it would provide in electricity. Anyway, it is not intended to provide electricity but act as a distribution centre for the Sellafield plutonium stockpile in the form of MOX fuel which does not work and would leave spent fuel on site for thousands of years. Hinkley C is not ruled out due to illegal subsidies, it will be ruled out on the grounds of its infringement of our right to life under the EU Human Rights Act. The UK looks like a complete patsy, falling for the nuclear propaganda; all we have to do is follow the example of Germany, Italy, Switzerland and other European countries in replacing nuclear with renewables and joining the European smart grid.

1 △ | ▾ • Share >



**spartacusisfree** > PCAH • a year ago

CO2 venting from AGRs and Magnox reactors was and is minuscule.

7 △ | ▾ • Share >



**pcah** > spartacusisfree • a year ago

Unless current policy is changed atmospheric discharges from Magnox waste vaults will be over 500,000 cubic metres. This is minuscule; it would be a disaster, so the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's new national contract must prioritise public safety by recognising that there is no safe level of exposure to man-made radiation as explained in many published scientific papers including the ICRP Recommendations.

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**spartacusisfree** > pcah • a year ago

500,000 m<sup>3</sup> at STP is 1071 tonnes.

World emissions/year are 36,700,000,000 tonnes.

So the CO2 from UK nuclear is 0.000003%

4 △ | ▾ • Share >



**nabs** • a year ago



mr de rivaz

My grandad said to me years ago "if you dont know what your talking about mouth shut"

its advice you should heed

britain doesnt have an energy policy

its driven by polititians who i guess like you are arts graduates who have b  
by the snake oil salesmen selling , "green energy" which is in reality their w  
screwing the taxpayers

just ask or look at the amount of electricity produced by windpower

over the last second,minute hour day etc etc

if fcuk all & look at the cost of it ,we are going along the wrong path & its  
fortune

7 • Share >



LR • a year ago

Well I can only assume the author is living in a parallel universe.

There is no energy policy to speak of but a country at the mercy of global  
prices, and a country at the mercy of foreign engineers to exploit the UK for  
projects.

A country who's energy decisions are at the whim of a politically motivated  
ED Milliband, who is responsible for the cancellations of many Gigawatts of  
generation build for fear that the projects will ultimately be uneconomic.

A misguided belief that the UK's (controlled by the EU) stupid and industry  
carbon policy makes a jot of difference in a world where China builds a new  
power station every month.

7 • Share >



PhilB • a year ago

apparently if the UK cut all emissions it would reduce the global emissions  
did this, how would you like living here?

5 • Share >



itzman > PhilB • a year ago

I wouldn't be living here. I'd be somewhere else, or dead.

2 • Share >



spartacusisfree • a year ago

The sub-title of this article should be 'How dare UK government shut down  
gravy train which we, along with the other central generators, rely on for e  
supply profits?'

The new nuclear plant doubles power costs because otherwise it would not  
The reason for this is that UK government is desperate to keep the myth o  
the windmills produce low CO2 energy. This is simply not true.

On their own the windmills save about a third of nominal output CO2 emis:  
10% of instantaneous demand. Above that, there is no CO2 saving.

To back up the windmills, government has decided to use diesel generators  
twice the CO2 emissions of coal plant. Thus windmills plus STOR emit more  
the old coal plants. The diesel sets are hidden away to con the public into  
the windmills generate the power.

They don't. It's a fascist con trick so the Mafia, politicians and their relative  
rich by the subsidies. EDF is part of the problem.

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chaswarnertoo > spartacusisfree • a year ago

I doubt windmills save any CO2, in whole life terms. They may well a  
through STOR backup.

1 • Share >



Frank • a year ago

I am sorry but this article is the most blatant form of self-advertisement a  
pleading. I trust that the EU Commission will reveal how grotesque are the  
hidden in the pricing mechanism for the new nuclear power station and tha  
investigation allows this pricing mechanism to be corrected.  
As for the Carbon Floor Price, this is driving most industry in Europe into th



is hard to see how allowing some firms to escape it is lawful!

13   • Share >



**steamer** > Frank • a year ago

Frank, entirely agree. The man is company propaganda; I will not invest energy so long policies remain dogmatic without any clear agenda es next 7 yrs when a real shortfall and squeeze appears.

The solar market on a private basis is also a dead idea...feed-in tariff been reduced, so the amortisation doesn't add up; One only has to Germany for the disastrous renewal mess they are in with several co going insolvent.

The fact remains that other countries can burn what they will, flatly carbon footprint, whilst the customers in UK get flinched by extra tax

It's a con and everyone knows it.

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**bobbyboyce** > steamer • a year ago

The only problem with your otherwise excellent contribution is everyone does not know it. The media is not pointing out the and even if they do, they relegate them to annoying and trouble details. The main source of information on this subject is the by the admission of one or two presenters, now of limited she biased and still is.

3   • Share >



**jmklampwick** • a year ago

Dear oh dear.... how can the writer say its not right to attribute causation weather events yet claim the overall pattern of such weather events is co with the predictions (sic) ? Is one not a subset of the other ? Crikey, how c to run EDF yet make pronouncements that are about as bright as a 15 wa

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**gentlecynic** > jmklampwick • a year ago

Because he's part of the French establishment.

4   • Share >



**Hospitaller** • a year ago

So much rubbish here I don't know where to start. Leaving aside the quest warming fraud and junk science, about which entire libraries have now beer is simple stupidity to claim that the policies are right but the costs are too response to this is simple - if your costs are too high then you do not have policies, you have the wrong ones. Anybody with a basic understanding of and economics should know this well before they put pen to paper and air theories in public. Furthermore, when your costs are too high, it is usually b impossible to reduce them, you are stuck with them. All the wishful thinkin world will not turn green energy scams into competitive energy sources. W really saying is that he is worried that consumers are more and more aware are being fleeced to pay for green energy scams. When your business moc around screwing your customers, that is a big worry indeed.

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**Antiehypocrite** > Hospitaller • a year ago

Let's wreck the country by pumping chemicals into the ground and p land!!!

High Priced Oil Destroys Growth

<http://www.iea.org/textbase/np...>

According to the results of a quantitative exercise carried out by the IEA in collaboration with the OECD Economics Departmer the

assistance of the International Monetary Fund Research Departmen sustained

\$10 per barrel increase in oil prices from \$25 to \$35 would result in t as a whole losing 0.4% of GDP in the first and second years of high

WORLD IS SLEEPWALKING TO A GLOBAL ENERGY CRISIS

Mark C. Lewis, former head of energy research at Deutsche

see more

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**gentlecynic** > Antiehypocrite • a year ago

America's recent growth spurt has coincided with their fracking. Should this source of energy prove to be short-lived 'a retirement and bearing in mind that the big oil fields are depleting - then the economy is going to collapse.

Farm land will be more valuable than gold.

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**Antiehypocrite** > gentlecynic • a year ago

Theoretically yes - but depends on what kind of farmland

Anything that has been farmed using industrial farming i.e. oil and gas derived pesticides and fertilizers - would

Because without cheap supplies of these that soil is depleted and not support a crop.

And it would take 3+ years of intensive organic inputs to grow anything.

Have a look at this blog for more on this issue  
<http://ourfiniteworld.com/>

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**ianbio** • a year ago

"Britain has the right energy policies in place, it just needs to keep the costs

And exactly how is keeping the costs down compatible with a 9.25p per kWh wholesale price for the output from EDF's Hinkley C nuclear plant? That represents full 7% of the UK's electricity wholesaling at double the cost of gas or coal. EDF build Sizewell C. 14% of our power at double the cost. Think about it. That will put bills up by at least 15% - and that is before you even think about windfarms and solar.

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**pauldirac** • a year ago

Global warming (GW) is semi theory reliant on historical data which is very limited compared to climate change cycles, this fact makes it a very unreliable predictor of future climate even at macro levels.

GW's future trends rely wholly on computer models, which in turn rely on historical parameters, the models can virtually predict ANY result based on "proper" selection of said parameters, making them virtually worthless as predictors.

GW isn't based on science, as science demands that any theory can be falsified or proven wrong by experiment, - GW being parameter dependent can't be falsified (proven wrong) ergo it is not science.

This is similar to claiming that God exists as a scientific theory, when it is proven that the existence (or not) of God can't be proven or disproven by scientific means (one has been successful so far).

Over 90% of the CO2 producing world (China, USA, Germany, Africa, all of South America, Africa etc) are completely ignoring GW, the UK's contribution to the production of CO2 is in the order of 1%.

Our energy policy is a collective suicide pact for industry and the energy producing countries.

see more

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**chaswarnertoo** > pauldirac • a year ago

Not quite right, UK contribution to CO2 is less than 1 % of the manufacturing world. Or about 0.0003 % of total, AFAIK.

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**bobbyboyce** > pauldirac • a year ago

Good contribution. This guy is an EDF man so his credentials are suspect. He is a subsidiary of Électricité de France, and this man is in the pocket of

government and no doubt is in position as a placeman for the EU.

It is time to entirely nationalize energy production in the UK before v deliberately made dependent on foreign supply.

This is simply ever greater integration into the EU superstate which policy of the so called government of the UK.

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**lacoste** • a year ago

What a load of bollocks.

6   • Share >



**i2choose** • a year ago

Vincent de Rivaz should read this website, where proven Scientists and En researched global warming facts. Climate alarm is not supported by any as facts, it is insane to pauper our country in this way.

<http://www.therightclimatestuf...>

Their summary of their conclusions is:

We have concluded that, at most, 0.7 degrees Centigrade AGW has occur 1850, but that it is possible that some of this observed warming was caus naturally occurring cycles of global temperature variation. Other small amon global warming since 1850 were caused by an increase in solar irradiance. T occurring global temperature cycles are clearly evident in the 8000 years o data before the dawn of the Industrial Age. Earlier, much greater changes i temperature were exhibited during the ice age cycles, and are destined to as thecurrent Holocene ice age cycle unfolds.

We have also concluded that increasing levels of GHG in the atmosphere c more than 1.2 degrees Centigrade of additional warming above current glo temperatures, before all economically recoverable fossil fuels on the planet consumed.

This maximum possible additional AGW should be offset to some extent by

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