

Slovenia: High-volume fracking ban planned

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After several unsuccessful attempts by opposition parties to ban fracking altogether, Slovenian Government has drafted amendments to the Mining Law, under which high-volume fracking would be banned in Slovenia and the amendments also create conditions for low-volume fracking.

The amendments draw the limit between low-volume and high-volume fracking at 1,000 cubic meters of water per fracking phase or 10,000 cubic meters per entire fracking procedure. While high-volume fracking would be banned, low-volume fracking would be allowed under several conditions, including that all ingredients in the fracking fluid and proppants must be known and approved for use in Slovenia.

Moreover, there can be no surface outflow of pollutants and they must not pollute the soil, water or air. Pollutants on the surface must be handled according to relevant rules, and must not contaminate underground water. Fracking must not come into contact with an aquifer and must not cause damage to other activities near the drilling wells.

Minister of Infrastructure Jernej Vrtovec said that the amendments are substantially more restrictive than the provisions proposed by the European Commission, because the latter does not find low-volume fracking dangerous and does not regulate it, adding that used technological methods for low-volume fracking will be safe for the people, the environment and nature.

The amendments will be on public debate until 22 January.

British Ascent Resources has been trying for years to get approval for its fracking gas project in Petisovci in northeastern Slovenia, threatening that it will file a lawsuit against the country if the approval is not granted.