

## FOI Office

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**From:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@virgin.net>  
**Sent:** 09 December 2014 09:26  
**To:** Paul Younger  
**Subject:** RE: New Scientist 15th November

Many thanks.

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**From:** Paul Younger [mailto:Paul.Younger@glasgow.ac.uk]  
**Sent:** 08 December 2014 20:21  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: New Scientist 15th November

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks very much - I would be more than happy with that.

Paul Y

Sent from my iPhone

On 8 Dec 2014, at 16:43, "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]@virgin.net> wrote:

Dear Paul,

Thank you so much for your very helpful response to my email. It was so encouraging to hear someone say that we need to pay the right price for energy (and water and food!!) because, of course, there are ways to help those who cannot pay but it would focus the minds on what these resources actually cost. What a shame that Ed M, having driven the Climate Change Act, is so reluctant to come clean on energy costs! I have ordered the book...it will be our Christmas reading, last year we had Energy of Nations!

I am an architect but am also a member of the Construction Industry Council's Green Construction Panel. George Adams, for President of CIBSE, is the chair and also sits on the Government's Green Construction Board. Energy is one of the items that the Green Construction Panel is addressing with the over-arching theme of the transition to a low carbon future. One of the flags that I am flying and which George Adams is supporting is evidence based research and to this end I have been identifying academics who are bringing realism into the discussion. Would it be OK with you if I shared your thoughts with George and would you be happy to be on the 'academics' list. It doesn't mean that you will be called on to do anything but it is part of the overall information resource on who is doing what, where etc.

With best wishes

[REDACTED]

**From:** Paul Younger <Paul.Younger@glasgow.ac.uk>  
**Date:** 7 December 2014 at 20:36  
**Subject:** RE: New Scientist 15th November  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@virgin.net>

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks for taking the time to write. [REDACTED] and I wrote in splendid isolation from one another, so the two pieces are really 'stand-alone' rather than any kind of dialogue. I found his piece disappointing, for it simply confirmed one of my main arguments, viz., that the majority of the high-profile campaigners are addicted to wishful thinking, which will ultimately land us all in the soup. When we begin to get frequent blackouts because of the longstanding neglect of baseload and dispatchable power, the backlash against renewables will be horrible to see. I do not want to see that (after all, most of my research and spin-out activities are in renewables, so why would I?), but as long as we construct our futures on hoping for the best, but failing to prepare for the worst, then I fear we are creating an inevitability for just such a backlash.

Your comments about responsible ongoing use of fossil fuels as a bridge to a "low-carbon" future are spot-on. In fact it is the term "low-carbon" rather than "fossil-free" that ought to be our priority in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Yet curiously, many of the most committed activists have constructed an epistemology which holds all fossil fuels (whether abated by CCS or not), and of course nuclear (despite its better low-carbon credentials than solar PV and offshore wind), as being intrinsically evil. The rage is therefore against fossil fuels, instead of against unabated carbon emissions.

As for [REDACTED] unsubstantiated claim about CCS being uneconomic, he really ought to keep up with the field. The Boundary Dam power station in Saskatchewan is now operating CCS at 1M tonnes per year without subsidy. Admittedly this is because much of the CO<sub>2</sub> they are capturing is being sold on to the hydrocarbons sector for a secondary recovery project, but the net result is a 90% reduction in the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the burning of lignite – the very worst of the fossil fuels. Why anyone who cares about climate change wouldn't welcome that I cannot imagine – except that it does not suit the narrative of the "intrinsic evil" of fossil fuels. Of course CCS will not always be able to cross-subsidise from a nearby industrial sector that wants CO<sub>2</sub> – but all analyses I've read (and I have read very many) suggest that the net effect of CCS is to bring fossil-fuel use into price parity with the mainstream renewables (hydropower, biomass, onshore wind) – so if CCS is economically unviable, so are all those highly desirable technologies. Insisting on CCS is a way of levelling the playing field with renewables on cost – which is a great prospect in my view. But Ed Milliband won't like it because it means that having energy that is low-carbon as well as secure will cost us roughly twice what we pay today. To my mind we should pay it, and find ways to ensure those who can't afford it are spared the full cost. I've written about these issues at some length in my new book "Energy; all that matters" (<https://www.hodder.co.uk/Books/detail.page?isbn=9781473601888>) should your curiosity extend further.

Thanks again for writing.

Best wishes

Paul Younger

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**From:** [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@virgin.net]

**Sent:** 07 December 2014 12:06

**To:** Paul Younger

**Subject:** New Scientist 15th November

Dear Paul (if I may),

I read your article on divestment with interest (New Scientist 15 November 2014) and it chimed very much with something that the late Richard Douthwaite wrote some years ago about needing to be responsible in our use of fossil fuels as we need them to create the transition to the low carbon alternatives.

You made the point that CCS is necessary. [REDACTED] then made the point that CCS is not economically viable...what does that actually mean? Can we afford not to invest in it?

I would be really interested to know how you see things going forward on this front.

Many thanks

