

Pure hypocrisy from the UK by refusing to join the Extr...

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As the Telegraph (a paper I'm liking more and more now Sean O'Hare is working for it) [has reported](#):

The US pledged yesterday to participate in the [Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative](#) (EITI), becoming the second G8 country - behind Norway - to join.

President Obama said it would ensure that "taxpayers receive every dollar they are due from the extraction of natural resources."

The US joins more than 35 countries, mainly from developing nations in the initiative, in what is essentially an exercise in transparent book balancing designed to highlight financial discrepancies and corruption in the sector.

It's an important point to note that the EITI was launched by the UK, hosted by us for some years, and is still part funded by the UK. Which is the good news.

But now the US and Norway have set the precedent: developed countries can and should join. Tax transparency matters to us too.

And what does the Telegraph report the response of the UK to this suggestion to be?:

Defending the decision not to commit to the EITI, a [UK] government spokesman said: "The UK is already a strong international supporter of the EITI and transparency in the extractives sector.

"We do not feel it is appropriate for the UK to implement the EITI. The UK is not defined as a "resource rich" country by the [International Monetary Fund](#)."

Thankfully that was well and truly debunked:

Joseph Williams of [Publish What You Pay](#), an organisation that believes wealth generated by oil, gas and mining industries can be a pathway to poverty reduction, stable economic growth and development in resource rich countries, said: “This is a bogus argument which smacks of double standards. Plenty of EITI implementing countries are not considered as resource rich by the IMF such as Madagascar, Niger, and Tanzania. The British government supported these countries joining EITI so why are they holding themselves to a different standard?”

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"It's also worth mentioning that the UK is the EU's largest oil producer and the second largest natural gas producer."

Quite so.

This is dual standards at play.

So much for a commitment to transparency by this government. This is about keeping their friends in shady places happy.

And those friends are in those places, [as the recent report by Publish What You Pay Norway showed](#).