

The oil companies are saying they'll quit UK oil expl...

Published: January 13, 2026, 9:56 am

I was [pleased to read this in the FT](#):

UK oil and gas producers on Thursday warned Rishi Sunak, the chancellor, that his new windfall tax on their profits could force the cancellation of projects as well as prompt investors to deploy their capital elsewhere.

They might think this a threat.

I think it the evidence we need that tax can play a part in bringing the fossil fuel era to an end when that has to happen if our climate crisis is to be contained.

I suspect Sunak thinks it vital that we find more oil and gas in the North Sea. I don't. He needs to take the oil companies' long undertaxed profits and divert them to investment in renewable energy now in the way these oil companies will never do.

In other words, a little adherence to the message of COP26 might help right now.

There is a silver lining to the windfall tax after all.