

Deepwater Horizon: What happened, why and where do we go from here?

Dr. Frank Alcock Associate Professor of Political Science, New College of Florida

Wednesday 1st June, 12.30-2pm

Spectrum Theatre: BP House, 20 Customhouse Quay Wellington

Abstract

This seminar will review the findings of the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. Topics discussed will include technical dimensions of the disaster, the regulatory context that allowed it to happen, ecological and economic impacts, report recommendations, and broader implications for offshore drilling activity and U.S. energy policy. Salient themes include a regulatory regime and industry culture poorly suited to manage risks, the absence of meaningful contingency planning, and considerable uncertainty regarding medium to long term impacts and implications. The seminar will also include some reflections upon New Zealand's plans for offshore oil and gas exploration and development.

Biography



Frank Alcock is an Associate Professor of Political Science at New College of Florida where he serves as the Director of Environmental Studies and teaches courses on world politics, international law, climate change, marine policy and sustainable development. From February through May 2011 Frank will be a Senior Fulbright Scholar based at Victoria University of Wellington. Frank's Fulbright project involves research and lecturing on New Zealand's climate policies with an emphasis on the Emissions Trading System. In addition to his work on climate policy, Frank is also lecturing on the Deepwater Horizon spill and its implication for U.S. energy policy. Frank is a former Director of a Marine Policy Institute at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, FL and a Fellow with the Collins Center for Public Policy in Florida. His work with Mote and the Collins Center has focused on the potential risks and benefits of drilling near the Florida coastline and he testified before the Florida legislature on this topic prior to the spill. Frank holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke University, a M.A. in International Affairs from George Washington University and a B.A. in Economics from Binghamton University. From 2000 to 2003 Frank was a Belfer Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Prior to obtaining his Ph.D. Frank spent five years as an international policy analyst/energy economist at the U.S. Department of Energy.