Data & Facts - Gaps: War on Water

The War on Water

Where there is contaminated land, there are unmapped aquifers and vectors for pollution transmission through soils, ineffective landfill solutions, wildlife and wind. Given the long legacy of military usage of toxins for a variety of purposes, there is evidence to suggest that as with other branches of government, human failure, legislative shortcomings and mistakes will also be endemic to military practice.

When it comes to land owned or previously owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), bear in mind that these are areas where technical and chemical 'innovations' will be initially tested. To be clear, it is the MoD that will tend to be on the 'cutting edge', trying out new tools and toxic chemical compounds to undermine the 'enemy'. The public are not permitted to enter MoD designated zones, so external oversight of practices is minimal. Only if concerns reach a government committee, whose discussions are behind closed doors, might there be any accountability for mistakes made.

Given the lack of technical and scientific expertise among ministers scrutinising this government department, achieving any level of balance in 'public interest' versus 'strategic imperative' seems unlikely. Do we trust our leaders to always act in the best interests of people and planet, despite whatever best efforts? What little evidence we share here is no doubt the tip of the iceberg. Look at the track record (That is on those pages that did not get deleted off the internet during the production of this page..!)

- **Ministry of Defence** sites formerly used for **weapons testing** are subject to secrecy laws and confidentiality practices (e.g. 'D Notices', which forbid public access on the basis of ‘national security’). Find out more about the legacy of our military on our environment here:
  - Radioactivity
  - Site History
  - MoD Land Contamination History Stalls Forthside Land Transfer
  - WWII MoD Legacy
  - Note that limits to the Freedom of Information legislation apply when asking about toxic pollution on ex military sites, specifically: Sections 24 and 26 are exemptions in the FoI process; the Ministry of Defence may argue that the Public Interest Case is not met weighed against national security and the safeguarding of defence

capabilities.

- There is an interesting '**Declassified**' report that offers some insight into the scale of **military pollution** in the UK. While the Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR) and Declassified UK (DUK) have mostly reported on Greenhouse Gas Emissions being hugely underreported, they do raise concerns also the MoD's performance on environmental damage from pollution, particularly radioactive waste management. They also say the following: "The MOD also seems to ignore the latest scientific research showing the catastrophic global environmental impacts which would result if it launched its nuclear weapons."
