

## **ASIG's Handout Dubbed "The Facts" – More Deceptions, More Falsehoods**

### ***Here's the Documented Truth***

At the January 27, 2009 public meeting in Eatontown, New Jersey, for the Atlantic Sea Island Group's (ASIG) application to build an island out of scratch to import liquefied natural gas (LNG), ASIG selectively handed out a document entitled "Atlantic Sea Island Group: **The Facts**."<sup>1</sup> The document cites nine "Fictions" and then provides "Facts." ASIG attributes all nine "Fictions" to Clean Ocean Action (COA), even though three are quotes not made by COA. ASIG has a documented history of both lying and attacking COA with falsehoods. The company's handout is more of the same. COA believes the facts speak for themselves in explaining why New York and New Jersey do not need to and should not get addicted to another foreign fossil fuel. Below are the "Fictions" and "Facts" as claimed by ASIG, and the documented truth provided by COA. We provide documentation so you can decide who to trust.

How to read this document: Keep in mind, the "Fiction" and "Fact" portions are reproduced verbatim from ASIG's document. In its original paper, ASIG wrote "Clean Ocean Action" above each "Fiction." The "Documented Truth" is the information that Clean Ocean Action presents based on documents and available sources.

## What ASIG claims is “fiction”

1. “140 acre man made island”

## What ASIG claims is “fact”

“Island is 60.5 usable acres for construction, with a seabed footprint of 116 acres.”

## The Documented Truth



The U.S. government’s Federal Register Notice announcing the public hearings says: “The proposed port would consist of a 60.5 acre island at the surface, 116 to **140 acres** at its base.”<sup>2</sup> This island will devastate up to 140 acres of seafloor. This island is being built at Cholera Bank, part of the only naturally occurring reef system off NJ/NY. Therefore, citing the size of the island based on its footprint is fundamental for the public to understand the full extent of damage that will occur by building this island. It is crucial for the public to understand the amount of public and natural resource that will be destroyed. If your neighbor wanted to build a two acre dump site on top of endangered species habitat, you would care more about those two acres than the size at the top of the rubbish pile.

Further, ASIG continues to deceive the public about the size of the island at the surface. ASIG says the island is “60.5 usable acres for construction,” implying the island will only be 60.5 acres at the surface. Indeed, up until now, ASIG has consistently referred to the island as a 60.5 acre island without saying “usable acres.” However, COA has already exposed ASIG in the past by pointing to ASIG’s own application (Volume Three, Part One, Topic Report One, page 1-42), showing that the island would be 86 acres at the surface. People do not care how much “usable surface area” ASIG will have. The fact is that the island, at 86 acres at the surface, will exclude the public from this public resource for private use, and up to 140 acres of seafloor – rich with marine life – will be destroyed.



## What ASIG claims is “fiction”

2. “The private company has no experience in LNG operations or offshore construction.”

## What ASIG claims is “fact”

“Qualifications and Experience”  
“Offshore Operations Experience”  
“ASIG has assembled a team of experts with significant experience in the marine construction and LNG industry. Over the past 30 years, the ASIG management team members have had significant experience in various facets of the energy business, including development of energy projects. Further ASIG has hired consultants and contractors with significant experience in offshore operations. This combined expertise will ensure that Safe Harbor Energy will be designed and operated in accordance with all applicable laws, permits, and regulations.”  
[ASIG’s document then goes on with 11 pages describing the contractors they have hired and their qualifications and experience.]

## The Documented Truth

The following is from Volume Two, page D-1 of ASIG’s application: “[T]he Atlantic Sea Island Group LLC (ASIG) management team members have no prior direct experience with offshore LNG operations.”

The following is from Volume Two, page E-1 of ASIG’s application: “[T]he Atlantic Sea Island Group LLC (ASIG) management team members have no prior direct offshore construction experience.”

ASIG may be hiring contractors with experience but the management team admits to a lack of experience in managing that which they are proposing. Would you hire a gas station attendant to run General Motors?

The management team leads and ASIG has already demonstrated its poor leadership through numerous actions. The fact that they believe constructing an island is the best available option for delivering their foreign fossil fuel is telling. As another example of being in over their heads: the Chairman, Howard Bovers, does not even understand that the ocean waters at the proposed site location are held by the government in public trust for the people of the United States. At a hearing in Long Beach, NY on November 19, 2007, Howard Bovers shouted at a citizen (who was expressing concern about “our ocean”): “It’s not your ocean, it’s the federal government’s.”



### What ASIG claims is “fiction”

**3.** “14 times the size of Giants Stadium”

### What ASIG claims is “fact”

“Giants Stadium is part of the larger Meadowlands Sports Complex, which is constructed on 750 acres. When most people think of Giants Stadium, they regard Meadowlands Sports Complex as Giants Stadium. This would lead one to believe Safe Harbor Energy would be a whopping 10,500 acres. The actual Giants Stadium makes up only a small portion at only 20.25 acres of the 750 acre complex. The statement that Safe Harbor Energy being 14 times larger than [sic] Giants Stadium is still grossly overstated: fourteen times 20.25 acres equals 283.5 acres - well in excess of the Island’s 60.5 usable acres for construction, with a seabed footprint of 116 acres.”

### The Documented Truth

First off, does ASIG really think the public is this dumb: “When most people think of Giants Stadium, they regard Meadowlands Sports Complex as Giants Stadium”? The Meadowlands Sports Complex consists of Giants Stadium, Meadowlands Racetrack, and Izod Center (home to the NBA’s New Jersey Nets and home until 2007 to the NHL’s New Jersey Devils). When you hear “Giants Stadium” do you think Giants Stadium plus Racetrack plus Nets arena plus all the property, including parking, on which these sporting arenas are located?

Second, as to the “actual Giants Stadium,” interestingly, COA and ASIG both appear to rely on the same website for their Giants Stadium information: <http://football.ballparks.com/NFL/NewYorkGiants/index.htm>. That website includes the following:

- \* SPECIFICATIONS: 756 feet (length) x 592 feet (width) x 144 feet (height) 13,500 tons of structural steel and 29,200 cubic yards of poured concrete
- \* ROOF TYPE: Open
- \* COST: \$75 million
- \* SITE OCCUPIED: 20.25 acres
- \* PARKING: 25,000 spaces

When COA refers to the “Giants Stadium,” it refers to the actual physical structure, not both that and the surrounding parking lot (or the entire site). When someone asks you how big your house is, do you tell them how much land you own? No, you provide the square footage of your home. COA used the “specifications” for the structure (or the “actual” stadium): 756 feet (length) times 592 feet (width) equals 447,552 square feet. 43,560 square feet equals 1 acre. So,  $447,552 \times (1 \text{ acre} / 43,560) = 10.27$  acres (to calculate this, we in effect place a box over an oval, therefore Giants stadium is smaller meaning we, in the next sentence, actually underestimate how much of these stadiums would overlap with the island). COA then used the 140 acres of seafloor and divided that by 10.27 to get 13.63, which rounds to 14.<sup>3</sup> Ta-da, up to 14 Giants Stadiums.



## What ASIG claims is “fiction”

**4.** “Marine life and habitat will be killed and destroyed.”

## What ASIG claims is “fact”

“Both New Jersey and New York have endorsed NJ Artificial Reefs.”  
[ASIG’s document then goes on to list examples of this support.]

## The Documented Truth

To state that it is fiction that marine life will be killed or habitat destroyed by this project is ludicrous.

ASIG has in the past claimed that their island will be a fish sanctuary. A place that fish will be attracted to and flourish. Without discussing the merits of the island as an artificial reef, let’s concede that point for the sake of argument and think about whether that’s a good idea. Does New Jersey and New York destroy naturally occurring reefs (i.e., Cholera Banks, where the island would be located) just to build artificial reefs? Does New Jersey and New York build artificial reefs and then begin massive industrial, foreign fossil fuel operations on top of those reefs?

The sad irony is that if the island acts as a reef that attracts marine life, it will be attracting much of that marine life to their demise. Marine life will be killed through different operations of the island. To prove the point and keep it simple, COA refers to just the deaths projected to be caused by LNG ship operations alone at one LNG terminal off Massachusetts: 10.4 trillion phytoplankton, 342 billion zooplankton, 27,000 lobster larvae, two million fish eggs, and 743,000 fish larvae each year.<sup>4</sup> By saying that the statement “marine life...will be killed” is “fiction,” ASIG displays an utter lack of understanding of the scope of their own project. More likely, it is just consistent with their pattern of trying to use false information to mislead the public and to get their project approved.

COA also contends that dumping 14 million tons of material to build the island will smother up to 140 acres at Cholera Bank and result in “habitat” being “destroyed.”



## **What ASIG claims is “fiction”**

**5.** “LNG is a foreign fossil fuel from volatile sources like Russia, the Middle East, and Africa.”

## **What ASIG claims is “fact”**

“LNG is sourced from other locations including Trinidad and Tobago, and Norway. The United Stated [sic] imports close to 60 percent of its LNG from Trinidad.”

## **The Documented Truth**

ASIG labels the above statement as “fiction” yet it implicitly concedes that this is true. Yes, some LNG does come from sources other than Russia, the Middle East, and Africa. But one must look at the full picture when considering ASIG’s proposed foreign fossil fuel dependency plan. While Trinidad currently supplies a high proportion of LNG to the United States, it only has 0.27% of the world’s natural gas reserves.<sup>5</sup> ASIG wants to construct an island that will import LNG for years to come. Therefore, one must consider those countries that would benefit from a long term dependency on this foreign fossil fuel. The Middle East and Russia together have over two thirds of the world’s proven natural gas reserves.<sup>6</sup> While the United States is in the top ten of proven natural gas reserves, the other nine are Russia, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Nigeria, Algeria, Venezuela, and Iraq.<sup>7</sup> Exxon, who also wants to build an LNG port off NJ and NY, has specifically solicited the Russian oil giant Gazprom. ASIG has not declared from where they would import their LNG.



## **What ASIG claims is “fiction”**

**6.** “LNG is dirty – up to 40% dirtier than American natural gas and it will increase carbon dioxide emissions and climate change.”

## **What ASIG claims is “fact”**

“When compared to natural gas that is delivered by pipeline from the gulf state region, LNG significantly reduces harmful emissions. The analysis below verifies the emissions reduction using the Safe Harbor Energy LNG terminal.”

“Air Emissions Associated with Pipeline Transport of Natural Gas Compared to Air Emissions from the Proposed Safe Harbor Energy (1-26-09).”

“Woodard & Curran completed a comparative analysis of air emissions from transmission of natural gas by pipeline with emissions produced during LNG receiving and operation of the proposed Safe Harbor Energy Facility. The Transcontinental Gas Pipeline (Transco) was selected for comparison as it is one of the major pipelines from the Gulf Coast that services the geography that would be serviced by the proposed Safe Harbor Energy Facility. Emissions from the Transco pipeline system are limited to those emissions that occur during transport of natural gas from the Gulf Coast while emissions from the Safe Harbor Energy Facility include LNG carrier unloading and transport of natural gas to its interconnect with the Transco pipeline.”

[ASIG then goes on to elaborate upon these two components of the natural gas and LNG lifecycles for comparison.]

## **The Documented Truth**

This is a blatant and despicable form of deception by ASIG. ASIG cherry picks what information to compare, thus choosing information that looks advantageous to them.

COA’s citing of up to 40% more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions<sup>8</sup> is based on looking at the entire lifecycle emissions from LNG versus domestic natural gas. In other words, COA is looking at how much CO<sub>2</sub> will result if NJ/NY uses LNG instead of domestic natural gas, because when it comes to climate change, the entire global footprint of CO<sub>2</sub> matters—from extraction to end use.

With both natural gas and LNG, there are emissions from getting the natural gas out of the ground, transporting it by pipeline, and then burning it for consumption. LNG adds three additional lifecycle stages that add to the pollution. After extraction from the ground and traveling through a pipeline, for the LNG lifecycle the natural gas must (1) use energy to be cooled to -259°F to make it liquefied, (2) use energy to be shipped across the ocean in an LNG tanker, and (3) use energy to be re-gasified through burning natural gas or other heating measures. After this, the LNG, now re-gasified, goes into a pipeline system before being burned for consumption. These extra lifecycle stages result in additional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that contribute to climate change.

In their document, ASIG compares emissions from operations at the island and emissions from their new pipeline, to emissions from natural gas traveling through a pipeline running from the Gulf Coast to the Northeast. ASIG neglects to include the emissions from the pipelines in the foreign countries that transport the natural gas from the fields in the foreign country to the LNG liquefaction plant. ASIG also neglects to include the emissions from the liquefaction plant in the foreign country that’s producing the LNG. Further, ASIG neglects to include the emissions from the tankers transporting the LNG across the ocean. In other words, ASIG does not compare apples to apples.



## What ASIG claims is “fiction”

7. “We in Sea Bright urge Gov. Corzine to veto this project like his colleague Gov. Paterson chose to do in New York. -- Sea Bright Councilwoman Dina Long”

## What ASIG claims is “fact”

“New York Governor Paterson **never** vetoed the Safe Harbor Energy project. Lorraine Cortes-Vazquez, New York’s secretary of state suggested two alternative sites for an LNG facility that would be consistent with the coastal plan, both outside New York boundaries. One would be 13 miles offshore south of Long Beach, N.Y.”<sup>9</sup>

## The Documented Truth

ASIG claims that this is a “Clean Ocean Action” statement, however it is not. Nonetheless, COA has made similar statements – calling on Governor Paterson to veto ASIG’s proposal just like he helped stop the Broadwater LNG proposal in the Long Island Sound.

It is correct that Governor Paterson has not vetoed ASIG’s proposal, as ASIG’s application has not made it to that stage yet. ASIG clearly takes Councilwoman Long’s statement out of context to imply she was referring to their project. Based on ASIG’s response, it is likely ASIG knew she was referring to the Broadwater project, which they then go on to discuss.

ASIG also implies Governor Paterson had nothing to do with working to stop the Broadwater LNG terminal in the Long Island Sound. While NY Secretary of State Lorraine Cortes-Vazquez denied a permit for the project, Governor Paterson held a press conference to announce that “Broadwater did not pass my test” while promoting the clean alternatives to LNG:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHbtNE8sar8>.

Finally, ASIG notes locations suggested by Secretary Cortes-Vazquez, arguably implying their facility would fall into this category. ASIG fails to point out that their proposal in no way reflects what Secretary Cortes-Vazquez was considering, among other matters.



## **What ASIG claims is “fiction”**

**8.** “You are talking about the first-ever man-made island in the open ocean just 19 miles out. -- Sea Bright Councilwoman Dina Long.”

## **What ASIG claims is “fact”**

“Throughout the world, there are hundreds of man-made islands. In fact, we don’t have to look very far, since there are several in the New York Harbor. Below are just a few examples:” [ASIG goes on to cite several examples of man-made islands off Dubai, Madagascar, and in New York Harbor.]

## **The Documented Truth**

Again, while ASIG wrongly labels the heading of the statement from “Clean Ocean Action,” COA agrees with it, and circulates fact sheets with the statement “first ever open ocean man-made island.” ASIG is again twisting the facts.

First, the New York Harbor is not “the open ocean.” Second, islands off Dubai in the United Arab Emirates are in the Persian Gulf, not “the open ocean.” Finally, ASIG cites “Eden Island,” which is located “in the Seychelles archipelago nation” and just off the east coast of Mahé. As demonstrated by pictures (<http://www.luxuo.com/luxury-locations/man-made-seychelles-paradise-eden-island.html>), Eden Island is built in shallow waters right next to a large existing island, Mahé, and is connected to it by a bridge. Eden Island is also protected from the ocean by additional smaller surrounding islands. It is not a stand-alone structure in “the open ocean.”

Why is the distinction about “the open ocean” important? Areas that are sheltered by environments such as bays, harbors, shallow waters, barrier islands, or reefs receive additional protection from the harsh elements of the wind and sea. Surface waves typically are powered by wind and their formation depends on wind speed, fetch (the distance wind blows over), duration of the wind, and the water depth. In coastal areas, land and onshore structures limit the fetch and speed of wind and, thereby, wave power. The seafloor in shallow waters also creates friction which dissipates wave energy.

ASIG proposes to build an island where the sea is untamed, putting the construction and operations of the island at risk. ASIG’s application notes that wave heights may reach and exceed 25 feet in the island project area.<sup>10</sup> Yet, ASIG only proposes building their island 25 feet above sea level. Maximum wave heights reached 30.5 feet at one buoy in the region,<sup>11</sup> and 55.4 feet at another.<sup>12</sup> Further, ASIG proposes to build this island over three years, dumping 14 million tons of material into the ocean.



## **What ASIG claims is “fiction”**

9. “Councilman C. Read Murphy said that ‘due to winds coming toward the shore, the gas clouds will be coming ashore. For those who are familiar with natural gas that is liquefied, it doesn’t come out as a liquid but rather a massive cloud of gas. Having it offshore there, there is nothing to break the gas cloud up as it travels across the water,’ Murphy said.”

## **What ASIG claims is “fact”**

“Several reports have verified the gas will dissipate as it moves away from the source. That is one of the key benefits of Safe Harbor Energy’s location 13 miles from the closest land. The Dispersion model below depicts the results from a study completed by Quest Consultants.”  
[ASIG cites a study showing a range for dispersion model results with the “distance to lower flammability limit” ranging from 0.5 miles to 2.5 miles and additional explanations.]

## **The Documented Truth**

Yet again, ASIG writes “Clean Ocean Action” above this statement. COA did not make this statement.

Since many citizens have expressed concerns about safety, COA included a section on this issue in its LNG report, available at <http://cleanoceanaction.org/index.php?id=673>. It is unknown what would happen in a large scale LNG release over open waters and there are varying studies with varying results. COA’s report cites different documents that can lead the reader to individual conclusions. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that LNG does represent a safety threat and that must be compared with other forms of energy that do not.

## Citations

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<sup>1</sup> Emphasis in original.

<sup>2</sup> 74 Fed. Reg. 982, at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-291.htm> (emphasis added).

<sup>3</sup> Apparently, ASIG is not familiar with the common rules of rounding. When they round the size of their island at the surface (85.6 acres) they round it down to 85 acres. This occurs in Volume Two of their Application, page W-10.

<sup>4</sup> Northeast Gateway Final Environmental Impact Statement, Docket No. USCG-2005-22219, p. 4-33 – 4-35 and p. 4-37 (Oct. 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Trinidad has 16.951 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of natural gas out of the world total 6,315.770 tcf. World Proved Reserves of Oil and Natural Gas, Most Recent Estimates, CEDIGAZ, Jan. 1, 2008, Energy Information Administration, Aug. 27, 2008, at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/reserves.html>.

<sup>6</sup> 40.5% of the world's natural gas reserves are in the Middle East. 26.3% of the world's natural gas reserves are in the Russian Federation. BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2007, BP, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> "Hard Truths," National Petroleum Council, p. 133, Figure 2-45 (July 2007).

<sup>8</sup> John Coequyt, *et al.*, *Liquid Natural Gas: A Roadblock to a Clean Energy Future*, Greenpeace, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Emphasis in original.

<sup>10</sup> Safe Harbor Energy Project Deepwater Port License Application Vol. 2, Exhibit V NJDES Permit Application, Atlantic Sea Island Group, Aug. 2007. p. V-12.

<sup>11</sup> Station 44025 – Long Island 33 NM South Islip, NY, National Data Buoy Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, at [http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station\\_history.php?station=44025](http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_history.php?station=44025) (last visited Aug. 4, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Station ALSN6 – Ambrose Light, NY, National Data Buoy Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, at [http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station\\_history.php?station=alsn6](http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_history.php?station=alsn6) (last visited Aug. 27, 2008).