

SUBMISSION TO Senate Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms on behalf of Wollongong Climate Action Network

This submission is on behalf of Wollongong Climate Action Network. We have 350 members.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Of the 10 hottest years since global temperature records started in the mid 1900s, 7 have been in the last decade⁴.

It is unarguable that human CO₂ emissions have produced an unprecedented jump to an atmospheric CO₂ level unprecedented in the last 600 million years.

The global warming effect of this extra CO₂ combined with other human emitted greenhouse gases is far higher than the effect of variations of solar irradiance or any other factor.⁶

Australian Bureau of Meteorology records show Australia's temperature has steadily risen over the last 100 years⁵

With world population expected to rise to over 8 billion people by 2050⁷, food and water security presents a major issue. To continue to condone uncontrolled experiments on the world climate in the face of need to secure food and water and the scientific consensus about climate change constitutes gross negligence.

Australia, with large semi arid areas and large areas susceptible to bushfire, flood and cyclone is particularly susceptible.

Carbon sequestration is totally impractical and uneconomic .

So it is imperative for Australia and the world to become more energy efficient and to move away from fossil fuel to other energy sources on a large scale.

Wind Power is the cheapest of these other energy sources.

So we need to rapidly increase our wind power generation.

WORLD TRENDS

World windpower generation has doubled to 340TWh p.a. in the last 3 years⁸. Germany alone generated 37.8TWh of wind energy in 2009. This compares with NSW total stationary energy generation of 77TWh. Germany's land area is half that of NSW.

Australia's installed capacity (2GW) is less than 8% of Germany's and less than 5% of USA installed capacity.

In spite of community belief that we need to act to cut greenhouse emissions¹¹, Australia's already high greenhouse emissions are projected to rise by 24% from 2000 and 2020.⁹

We are lagging the world in windpower development, obstructing world action to cut CO₂ emissions¹⁰ and missing employment opportunity.

NOISE

A wind farm at 350m distance typically generates 35-45dBA^{2,3}

This compares with a draft standard of 50 – 55dBA (depending on road type) recommended by the NSW DECC for nighttime noise in residential areas ¹, and 35-45dBA for a busy road at 5km² .

Noise needs to be considered when designing wind farms, as it needs to be considered when designing roads.

RURAL ECONOMIES

Wind power projects should be arranged so that substantial profits return to the community.

Income from wind turbines can provide a substantial revenue stream for rural communities. An alternative income stream in times of drought could save a rural town from closing down.

1 <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/2010218draftroadnoisepol.pdf>
section 2.3.1

2 <http://www.synergy-wind.com/documents/6Noise.pdf>

3 <http://www.bwea.com/ref/noise.html>

4. <http://www.bmwi.de/English/Navigation/Energy-policy/energy-and-climate,did=311722.html>

5. http://reg.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/silo/reg/cli_chg/trendmaps.cgi

6. SOURCE: IPCC 4TH ASSESSMENT REPORT - ar4_syr_topic2.pdf

7 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population

8. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind_power

9. <http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/govt-uses-new-report-to-back-carbon-price-20110209-1alua.html>

10. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/climate/australia-one-of-the-largest-drags-on-global-climate-action-says-pms-adviser-ross-garnaut/story-e6frg6xf-1226001425200>

11. http://www.newspoll.com.au/image_uploads/101201%20Climate%20Change.pdf

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