

Parliament of Australia :

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Submission from:

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I am not a scientist but I was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the Green movement and a member of FoE.

I was really convinced by the 'ice age scare' of the Green movement in the mid-Seventies. When proven to be a false alarm it was quietly dropped in the late Seventies.

I withdrew from FoE and resolved to do my own research in the future.

The threat of industrialization of our countryside by wind turbines in the early Nineties led me to research the reasons why such drastic action was deemed essential to 'save the planet'. The Green movement had, by then, changed its policy to support the 'global warming scare'. This meant they supported industrial wind power as being free of CO2 emissions and a 'clean' solution to our energy needs.

I joined Country Guardian (www.countryguardian.net) in late 1992 and have researched industrial wind power almost every day since.

The more I discovered the more I understood the urgent need to campaign against this unreliable, parasitical technology which is neither sustainable nor a true alternative to a secure supply of electricity.

UK Government policy on wind power encourages the pursuit of financial gain. Result? Environmental devastation and social distress.

Wind farms divide communities –pitting neighbour against neighbour and even dividing families. These divisions are already passing down the generations.

In all these years I have never heard of a proponent of this destructive industry who has chosen to live or buy a house in the vicinity of a wind farm.

All I receive are requests from people who want to know where they can buy a house which is not threatened by a wind farm.

The saddest victims are those who are trapped in their house as it is either unsalable or they cannot afford to sell it and move elsewhere.

The wind industry is composed of hardnosed businessmen hell-bent on fulfilling their ambitious money-making schemes at the expense of the environment and their fellow men who are forced to endure the consequences.

They are not environmentalists.

The artificial market created by subsidies (hidden in consumers' electricity bills) is propping up the wind industry at huge cost to the environment and the consumer.

The promotion of wind energy discourages serious investment into research for a realistic solution to our need for a secure, controllable supply of clean electricity.

Policy on renewable electricity generation must not be decided by developers anxious to make money from Government or European Commission subsidies and grants.

The development of clean energy should not entail being stampeded into the irreversible ruination of our rural heritage.

It is far too precious to be a football of political ideologies.

Good planning is about balance. The irreparable ecological damage, loss of amenity and distressing divisions within communities caused by industrial wind turbines far outweigh any benefit of their insignificant and unreliable contribution to our energy needs. The relatively tiny, intermittent output of electricity and the negligible CO2 savings cannot possibly justify the huge sacrifice of that most finite resource - our unspoilt and unrenovable rural and marine environment.

Country Guardian is not a 'NIMBY' (Not In My Backyard) organisation in the sense as used by the advocates of industrial wind 'farms'. The stigma carried by such a label (implying self-interest above all else) is a very effective and frequently used technique for suppressing questions and complaints from people who legitimately seek to know why gigantic industrial structures are suddenly appearing all over the land and in their 'back yards'.

The mindless accusation of 'NIMBYism' is contemptible - it seeks to denigrate our basic instincts to preserve our environment in exchange for abstractions like 'the global environment' or 'a green future'.

It is our duty to protect our heritage for present and future generations from such gross and unnecessary industrialization. The alternative will be a disaster.

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Angela Kelly