

Department of the Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra, 2600

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept my submission to the Senate Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

When considering whether wind farms are appropriate for a particular area it is necessary to look at the whole picture. Wind farms may spoil some people's views and cause annoyance to others but what effect will severely restricting or banning wind farms have. The alternative is likely to be a heavily polluting coal fired power station whose pollution affects people well out of sight of the power station, as well as around the world.

> From the website of the Union of Concerned Scientists I have downloaded a list of the pollution produced by an average power station. Brown coal produces a lot more.

Burning coal is a leading cause of smog, acid rain, global warming, and air toxics. In an average year, a typical coal plant generates:

- o 3,700,000 tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the primary human cause of global warming--as much carbon dioxide as cutting down 161 million trees.
- o 10,000 tons of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), which causes acid rain that damages forests, lakes, and buildings, and forms small airborne particles that can penetrate deep into lungs.
- o 500 tons of small airborne particles, which can cause chronic bronchitis, aggravated asthma, and premature death, as well as haze obstructing visibility.
- o 10,200 tons of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), as much as would be emitted by half a million late-model cars. NO<sub>x</sub> leads to formation of ozone (smog) which inflames the lungs, burning through lung tissue making people more susceptible to respiratory illness
- o 720 tons of carbon monoxide (CO), which causes headaches and place additional stress on people with heart disease.
- o 220 tons of hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds (VOC), which form ozone.
- o 170 pounds of mercury, where just 1/70th of a teaspoon deposited on a 25-acre lake can make the fish unsafe to eat.
- o 225 pounds of arsenic, which will cause cancer in one out of 100 people who drink water containing 50 parts per billion.
- o 114 pounds of lead, 4 pounds of cadmium, other toxic heavy metals, and trace amounts of uranium.

While wind farms should be regulated to minimise loss of amenity for rural communities, in the long term these communities are going to be much more severely impacted if we are unable to stop climate change. Therefore I would urge you not be misled by unsubstantiated rumor and outright fear campaigns about wind energy.

Wind is an energy source that is growing quickly around the world. We do not want to be left behind.

Valerie Wheatstone