

Submission to the Senate Inquiry and Report into the social and economic impact of Rural Wind Farms.

From Mr James David and Mrs Pamela Anne McGregor

We appreciate the opportunity to make a submission on this matter and should the Committee visit Western Australia in the course of its inquiry, we would be happy to meet with the Committee.

Because of time constraints, this submission is relatively brief and may add to it in the coming couple of weeks.

We make the following points:

1. Regarding planning laws: if a Local Government entity decides to not grant permission for a planning application for a wind farm in their area, and we believe that that decision would be made with sound reasons, we do not believe that State or Commonwealth Planning Ministers should have the power to overturn that decision.
2. We are very concerned that the Commonwealth Government commitment to have 20% of Australia's power generation from renewable resources by 2020 is taking precedence over properly considering all the effects of some of the methods of renewable power generation. There are many methods of renewable resources power generation – for example solar, wind, wave, thermal, biomass to name just a few. The current focus on wind power generation concerns us as we feel that all aspects of such projects (as noted in the Inquiry headings – health, noise, land values) are not being considered properly.
3. We feel strongly that wave generation has the potential to provide much power in the next ten years without some of the adverse effects of other proposals e.g. the sun doesn't always shine, the wind doesn't always blow, but the waves keep doing what they do.
4. The method of transmission of power from remoter areas needs to be looked at so that the maximum efficiency – and maximum power – is gained (AC versus DC transmission).
5. While land holders have the freedom to do whatever they wish on their land, they do not own the air above their land.
6. Land values – there is conflicting evidence about the effect of wind farms on the properties on which they are sited (positive) and the neighbouring properties (negative). This conflict needs to be resolved.
7. Wind turbines have a visual presence in the landscape as well as sound and noise impacts – this potentially can bring conflict into a district where owners of land on

which the turbines are situated have income; the neighbours without turbines on their land, who may well have the same visual, sound and noise impacts, don't.

8. There is a great deal of conflicting evidence about the health impacts of wind farms. The "official" stance seems to be that wind farms have no negative effects on human health, but there is abundant evidence to the contrary. This issue needs to be clarified by independent peer reviewed research.
9. Through the internet and the world wide web, there's a huge amount of (sometimes conflicting) information. No doubt the Senate Inquiry will be accessing that to assist in their deliberations as they prepare their report.

Signed James D McGregor 10 February 2011

Signed Pamela A McGregor 10 February 2011