

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to make a submission to the Senate inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

I work in the renewable energy industry which I find very rewarding and fulfilling. I have worked in a number of industries previously and it is great to now be working in a clean, green industry which is sustainable and is contributing to an improvement to the global environment, especially with regard to climate change.

Wind farms have many benefits for society, particularly rural societies, in a number of ways; they create local jobs both during construction and long term operation; they provide an ongoing revenue stream to local landholders through royalty payments; in some cases they provide financial support to local communities through dedicated community funds; and they create 'green collar knowledge jobs' for those tasked with their planning, design, construction supervision and ongoing management. I know first hand of a number of highly specialised wind engineering jobs created in cities, as well as regional areas, to support the development, design, financing, construction and long term operation of wind farms.

By adopting the right policies to support rather than hinder wind farms, Australia can create many, many jobs as well as abating our green house gas emissions. Professor Garnaut has recently stated that Australia is now clearly a laggard, not a leader, in GHG emissions reductions as the world hurtles towards ever increasing concentrations of CO2 in the atmosphere - primarily caused by human activities. It is time for Australia to stand up and play its part as a developed economy in reducing its emissions.

Finally I would note that there are already strict controls in place on noise emissions from wind farms and that further controls are not necessary. It would appear more important to examine other social and economic factors associated with rural communities than trying to blame a new and clean industry.

Yours sincerely  
Matthew Forwood