Sent: Friday, 15 June 2007 2:37 PM
To: Committee, ISR (REPS)

Submission No: 47

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14th June 2007

The House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Industry and Resources
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By Email: ir.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Members,

Inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia.

I understand your Standing Committee is investigating the merits of renewable energy in Australian and finalizing the National Code for Wind Farms – A Discussion Paper (May 2006). A national code is urgently required to impose more stringent standards on wind farm operators seek to place large industrial development in small rural communities.

My partner Heather Barker, owns land near the proposed Oaklands Hill Wind Farm at Glenthompson, Victoria. Heather is devastated after receiving the proposal in March and researching wind farms.

I believe the integrity of wind farm proposals is their efficiency and this is a well kept secret in Australia which can only be read as not meeting the required production figures that all the proposed benefits flow from.

Capacity

Wind farm capacity is the actual generated electricity that is accepted by the power grid for use by the consumer. For Oaklands Hill Wind Farm Glenthompson (a joint venture between Investec Bank and Windless Systems). The output calculation is as follows:

Generation Capacity 80 Megawatt hours (advertised size of the wind farm)
multiplied by 8750 hours per year
= 753,260 Megawatt hours per year
Multiplied by Capacity factor

Now apply the Capacity Factor:

1. Oaklands brochure advertised benefits use a **36.8%** capacity factor.
   = 280,000 Megawatt hours per year for consumer use

2. At Heather's property I asked the Investec representative what would be the percentage output to the grid, *around 30%?* In answer to my question the Investec representative replied "try **20%".**

   = 150,672 Megawatt hours per year for consumer use

3. A web search for international capacity factors revealed an average of **18.6%**

   = 139,767 Megawatt hours per year for consumer use

4. Australian figures were not available, but finally two became available, they averaged **16.9%**

   = 126,941 Megawatt hours per year for consumer use

As can be seen Capacity has a huge effect on the amount of wind farm produced electricity actually used by consumers from 280,000 megawatt hours down to 126,941 megawatt hours, that is less than half.

This seems to be a misrepresentation of what is a sustainable average yearly capacity by not including performance statistics from operating wind farms in Victoria, Australia and overseas. Majority of turbines are purchased from Denmark and their operating capacity figures are for year 2002 -16.8% and for year 2003 - 19%.

The Premier of Victoria Mr Bracks had McLennan Magasanik Associates Pty Ltd model a scenario at 35% capacity and 33% capacity in their report to Sustainability Victoria in July 2006.

The figures presented by Sustainability Victoria are misleading the community and the project developers are using this information to help their cause.

Sustainable average yearly capacity is certainly not understood by the community who are promised unattainable sustainable environmental outcomes by every wind farm operator who use Sustainability Victoria capacity percentages to calculate their brochure promises.

If I apply either the Investec, the international or Australian capacities to the McLennan Magasanik report then the benefits such as Tonnes per year of carbon dioxide saved, and number of homes powered would be approximately halved.

Are we going to double the current planned number of wind farms to meet the state committed carbon dioxide savings.

How can we, the consumers, be confident that a realistic capacity is being used when project managers are presenting wind farm benefits?

There are at least 37 producing wind farms operating in Australia across all states – why won't The Premier of Victoria Mr Bracks have his Government publish the audited capacity figures of each operating wind farm.

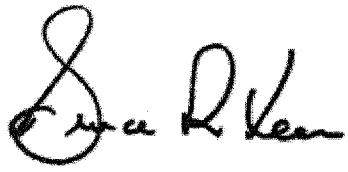
The more I research wind farms the more distressing it becomes. It seems the state Government just wants wind farms with no consideration for country communities.

The figures presented by Sustainability Victoria are misleading the community and the project developers are using this information to help their cause. It makes democratic debate impossible because the Victorian Government has set the parameters to stop any wind farm objection. This was evidenced by Heather and myself when the Investec representative said with absolute smugness "there is nothing you can do, this project will be approved".

In my sixty years of country life I have never witnessed such division in country communities, the process is so one sided that it is depressing.

I strongly urge your Standing Committee to give appropriate consideration to the social impacts of wind farm proposals. The social cost of wind farm developments have been disregarded in State and local regulations. One's quality of life should be given utmost priority in considering the development of renewable energy.

Yours faithfully,



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15/06/2007