

Why the need for reliable information about wind energy production is so important.

Good morning everyone. The title of this workshop has been chosen as we hope to demonstrate why we need reliable information about wind power – and how so much is not being reported to, or understood by, the general public. We & others have been attempting to engage politicians and authorities around the world with the issues surrounding an excessive implementation of wind power. Recent events like the tail end of hurricane Gonzalo have exposed what REF research director Dr Lee Moroney has said i.e. that “The ever increasing rise in the cost of constraint payments (those made to developers when turbines must be turned off) underlines the folly of the policy in Scotland. Wind farms are granted planning permission well ahead of the grid’s ability to absorb their output.” She pointed out that these payments are only *half* the story. “When wind power is paid to stop generating on one side of a grid bottleneck, the electricity system is out of balance, and another generator elsewhere in the system must be paid to start generating.....The consumer is being ripped off and both government and the regulator seem content to stand idly by.” More of that later though from my colleague Stuart Young who will take over on matters relating to wind power and aspects of your electricity bill. Should anyone find information causing furrowed brows, do please ask questions at the end and we’ll do our best to answer.

Opening PP 1. on Aarhus.

We have quite a bit to get through and although the subject is interesting it is sometimes complex. We will clearly be unable to cover everything in this short talk and therefore visiting the websites available and listed in your Briefing Notes will be an extra source of valuable information.

So here we go with relevant extracts from a presentation that was delivered to a Holyrood Freedom of Information Conference in Dec. 2013. It was basically a case study on the Right to Environmental Information, background to a case and why it was submitted on behalf of a Community Council to UNECE.(United Nations Economic Commission for Europe).

Bit of background. When the UK and the EU signed the UN’s Åarhus Convention, they undertook to ensure that their citizens have, in the jargon,

‘access to environmental information’ and ‘the right to review procedures and challenge public decisions’ and that there is meaningful ‘public participation in environmental decision-making’. No other route existed by which, with practically zero cost, the issues could be independently examined by an internationally recognised legal tribunal. So our workshop title is important as so much information has not been given & therefore our energy policy remains largely a mystery to most people. The thing is you see, many public servants in Scotland just “don’t get it” – being apparently unaware that the UN & ECJ are **not** some far off places where a large number of people make opaque rules which never apply to them. Our complaint was a ‘first’ for any UK Community Council. The Compliance Committee heard the arguments from both sides in Geneva and ratified their findings of non-compliance on Oct.11.2013. In addition to the non-availability of key information, what has been exposed in what is laughingly called “the system” shows that actions and policies imposed without consultation can have unintended consequences - and that this is not only a legal concern, but can be disastrous for those adversely affected.

PP 3. NREAP

Now let me talk to you briefly about the *National* Renewable Energy Action Plan. **Had** there been consultation, or **had** the Convention been followed, many issues would have been raised during the Plan’s formative stages. Crucially, improved science has exposed flawed and misconceived claims made for wind power. In addition, due to the restrictive policy of the Information Commissioners Office, an inability exists for full examination of problems arising within different arms of government - such as the Forestry Commission. They think in compartments, or silos, and they behave as if one branch had nothing to do with another. ***The strict rules governing it should be relaxed during more complex complaints in order to access the truth of widespread effects.***

Re. emission savings & benefits.

PP5 THE JOHN ETHERINGTON DECC RESPONSE

http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/empirical_measurement_of_fossil

This slide shows the key admission made that no figures exist to prove claims made for emission savings and benefits relating to wind power, it reflects fatally upon the justification for the renewable energy programme now being imposed upon the British population as a whole. On one level, it’s as simple as that. Nobody knows *why* they are doing this.’ The UK has

been found to be non-compliant with Article 7. Given that they form the justification for the current rapid expansion in the UK's heavily-subsidised, wind generated energy programme, that information *must* include the basis for claims made for ***emissions savings and is still missing***. So, neither the UK government nor the EU nor the wind industry has published evidence or proof that wind farms will in practice, achieve any meaningful net savings in CO2 emissions, other than an unconvincing 8-year old [UKERC study](#) by a small group of academics. A study which can hardly be described as independent being partly funded via the government's own Carbon Trust.

PP10 Map of FCS estates.

FCS has entered into direct partnerships with certain developers the majority of whom will not be holders of generating licenses for the installation of renewable energy schemes, predominantly wind energy, throughout the nation's estates and has awarded exclusive rights of search for just this purpose.

PP 11 FCS process for development of wind energy on their estate

There was no competition, far less any public consultation. There are legal implications for the applications for indeterminate numbers of turbines throughout. I repeat; **there was no bidding process**, and no public consultation, even with local authorities. An FoI request would reveal that these decisions were all taken by the Scottish Government, over the heads of the public, the Councils – and arguably in defiance of FCS statutory purpose, which is to manage the nation's forest estate *for the public good*. That public awareness of this is very low stems from information being largely unavailable or inaccessible.

PP12. The true picture of FCS involvement. Does the general public understand any of this?

Existing “public consultation exercises” are often buried in government consultation websites. A mockery is made of the process as almost everything out of line with government thinking is ignored - be it by engineering experts or others highlighting legitimate issues or adversely affected residents.

Now that water contamination issues associated with Industrial Wind Turbines are also emerging as reported by Dr. Rachel Connor in her report at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQf0hLYXd7o> - the fact that an Act allowing the **industrialisation of water catchments areas** has been passed by this government, is being greeted with disbelief by many at home and abroad. More will definitely be heard on the legal implications of this within the foreseeable future.

PP16.

Complexities exist with aspects relating to noise, infra sound and opposing scientific views, but in the light of evolving knowledge and judgements, it is therefore not only legally and morally valid, but medically imperative that monitoring programmes **are** instigated. Provision of information on symptoms of turbine related ill health experienced by those **now forced to live** in close proximity to wind turbines, will also form the basis upon which further studies can be based, and importantly, avoid such related conditions being attributed to the **wrong sources**. *Entrenched scientific consensus must be constantly reminded to remain open to new evidence and research challenging currently held opinions.*

Lawyers of any families bringing cases to court will take due note of such failures and adoption of the precautionary principle or measures of protection. Together with the failure to comply with the Strategic Environmental Assessment - and completion of monitoring for significant unforeseen adverse effects involving issues on low frequency sound, loss of biodiversity, etc., - in so many aspects the legally required procedures of assessment and monitoring simply haven't happened. E.g. low frequency sound which was never adequately assessed before the programme was implemented, **no** monitoring was done. **Germany, one of the few countries to have had prior low frequency noise environmental standards, are now admitting that their current standards are inadequate. Also, the German Environmental Agency Published Report on Infrasound**, has sections in English found at a website which can be provided for interested delegates. An abstract can also be provided by email.

http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/378/publikation/en/texte_40_2014_machbarkeitsstudie_zu_wirkungen_von_infraschall.pdf

On page 15 of this document, about the state of knowledge regarding the effects of infrasound on people, is a really important conclusion: The Extract says: ‘Wind energy plants are a frequently studied source of noise in connection with infrasound. The publications show that the measurement of emission and propagation of noise from wind energy plants is plagued by uncertainties that complicate a substantiated noise forecast. With an increasing height of the wind energy plants, the rotor blades cut through an even more varied wind profile. It is therefore questionable whether the emission and propagation models of smaller wind energy plants can be applied to more modern and larger wind farms. This is very unlikely given the theoretical observations of aeroacoustic scientists.’ The English summary appears on p.27

On Page 55 is another important statement which should be read relating to evaluation methods etc., The German authorities are now clear in that there is a very real issue with low frequency sound and recognise that they both need to update their regulations and complete more research.

PP17 Related Symptoms / Vibro Acoustic Disease Clinical signs.

Consenting wind farm applications before compliance with the ratified decision’s recommendations is, in effect, by-passing legally binding requirements for democratic accountability by continuing to provide permits for that infrastructure - despite a ruling from an International legal tribunal that the programme is non-compliant. Only very recently, on the 23rd October, 2014 The Waubra Foundation in Australia issued a public statement that Public Officials were at Risk of Criminal Charges for Torture, by Ignoring **Prolonged Sleep Deprivation** from Environmental Noise. **The Waubra Foundation will be assisting any Australians who wish to lodge complaints with the relevant authorities for being subjected to torture, under their own Criminal Code Act and pursuant to articles of the UN Convention Against Torture and Cruel Inhuman and Degrading Treatment.’**

The UN Committee Against Torture has explicitly identified prolonged sleep deprivation as a method of torture. The Committee cites the impact of prolonged sleep deprivation as:

‘..Sleep deprivation can cause impaired memory and cognitive functioning, decreased short term memory, speech impairment, hallucinations, psychosis,

lowered immunity, headaches, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, stress, anxiety and depression.” The Physicians for Human Rights also consider sleep deprivation as well as sensory bombardment with noise, to be methods of torture, and list the clinical evidence of the harm to physical and mental health, and the legal precedents to support this opinion in their document **“Leave No Marks”.**

There is much Diagnostic Criteria (McMurtry and Krogh) acoustic and clinical data collected from the Shirley Wind Development and other locations confirming the Waubra Foundation’s advice to the public in their **Explicit Cautionary Notice, issued on 29th June, 2011** that the adverse health impacts, particularly relating to sleep disturbance, **extend out to at least 10km** from Industrial Wind Turbine Developments, especially with larger, more powerful wind turbines. Recent acoustic field survey evidence collected by Emeritus Professor Colin Hansen’s team from the Waterloo Wind Development in South Australia has confirmed that **residents living out to 8.7km away from the nearest wind turbine were subjected to excessive levels of low frequency noise, known to predictably disturb sleep.**

There are increasing numbers of media reports of affected residents coming forward in the UK, and so clearly the same actions here are likely to follow in due course.

As Open Letters to the DECC have said –

What is effectively happening is medical experimentation, WITHOUT consent, but only one government is actually bothering to collect the health data (Health Canada). The Australian government has promised - but so far has done nothing. **Rural communities around the world are effectively being treated like guinea pigs.** There is NO research which shows what a safe long term chronic exposure dose is, and there is very little data which accurately measures the long term chronic exposures of people to the full sound spectrum. It is well known and accepted however, what chronic sleep deprivation and chronic stress do to people and there is evidence of harm via VAD from chronic exposure at wind turbine generated doses of sound energy - which the Portuguese High Court has recognised.

What we are now experiencing via the infliction of this technology upon populations without prior testing to ensure safety, (as governments permit it through completely unsafe planning and noise pollution regulations, and the promotion of government imposed subsidies) is that they are effectively

allowing technologies to be used without adequate prior product safety testing. There are increasing reports of damage to health, which some courts are accepting, and which an increasing numbers of medical practitioners, acousticians and scientists working in this area are highlighting publicly.

PP20 Section 36

The grossly over loaded planning system struggles with 5-7 new proposals submitted daily since 2007. Evidence is now needed on how discussions led to the adoption of S36 windfarm (i.e. greater than 50MW) applications being considered under the Electricity Act as it was never originally designed to apply to this technology.

Finally, I will leave you with a question. As numbers of cases being brought to court rise, what investors, as they become aware of such information, will continue to be reassured by trade organisations and statements from Ministers as to the safety of their investments if developments stand any risk at all of being classed as unlawful?

You will find links such as the full power point presentation to the Holyrood Fol conference - and more information at: -

<http://www.windsofjustice.org.uk>

CWIF. <http://www.caithnesswindfarms.co.uk/> Which includes 'Your electricity bill explained' <http://www.windfarms.me.uk/wind8.html>

Balancing mechanism and constraint payments

<http://www.caithnesswindfarms.co.uk/SY%20Briefing%20Note.pdf>

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/June-2014/Inquiry-into-Wind-Energy-Chartered-Institute-of-Environmental-Health/>

An important briefing from Pat Swords to the NI Assembly. @

<http://www.windsofjustice.org.uk/2014/11/submission-to-the-northern-ireland-assembly-environment-committee-by-pat-swords/>

Also at www.waubrafoundation.org.au

That concludes this part of our presentation so thank you very much for listening.

