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When environmentalists collide: understanding conflicting views and values of environmentalists to wind energy

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When environmentalists collide: understanding conflicting views and values of environmentalists to wind energy

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I certify that this dissertation is 9964 words long.

I declare that this dissertation is being submitted for no purpose other than the Master of Philosophy examination.

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Preface

In writing this dissertation I have read broadly and deeply into the issue of wind energy in Australia, the UK, and elsewhere. I have read and reviewed academic publications, news reports, campaign materials, internet resources, and brochures of environmental groups, and submissions to and outcomes of policy reviews and project assessments. Where I have relied on these materials or views, I have attributed them in the body of the dissertation and listed any publications in the bibliography.

For the purpose of this study, I also communicated with four individuals who were previously or are currently active in the wind energy debate (see Table 4 on page 13). Where I have relied on their views, I have attributed them in the body of the dissertation.

Greenpeace UK/Sims consented to the reproduction of the image in Figure 2. Despite my inquiries with the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (CPRW), I could not identify the CPRW member who authored the publication in Figure 5. It is therefore reproduced without consent. I captured the image in Figure 3.

All other views and work in the dissertation are my own, have not been the subject of collaboration, and have not been previously published. I claim originality over them.

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This dissertation is not only the culmination of nine months of study, but also of many more months and years of personal reflection and thought. I have burdened friends, peers, and colleagues with my thoughts and I have asked them for their own. I thank them for the exchange, and I hope that they are gratified by what I have achieved.

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I also owe special thanks to Maarten Wolsink, University of Amsterdam; Rynd Smith, Royal Town Planning Institute of the UK; Monica Richter, Australian Conservation Foundation; and Peter Ogden, Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales, for their willingness to communicate with me.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACF	Australian Conservation Foundation
AusWEA	Australian Wind Energy Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BWEA	British Wind Energy Association
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England
CPRW	Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry (UK)
FoE	Friends of the Earth
NFFO	Non Fossil-fuel Obligation (UK)
NIMBY	not in my backyard
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK)
TAN	Technical Advice Note (Wales)
UK	United Kingdom

Chapter 1: Introduction, background and methods

Conflicts between environmentalists

Traditionally, environmental groups have attempted to reach consensus, to campaign collectively, and to merge concerns about social justice within their environmental agendas (Mercer, 2000). However, since the dawn of environmentalism in the late 1800s, there have been instances where environmentalists have found themselves opposed. Norton (1991) traces the clashes of the late 1890s between Muir and Pinchot about proposals to build a dam in Yosemite National Park and to allow grazing in forest reserves: arguably the first series of inter-environmentalist disputes. The clashes highlighted the distinct values that Muir and Pinchot and their followers held. Muir argued that the preservation of nature was a moral obligation. Pinchot, on the other hand, supported the exploitation of the environment because he saw any environmental and recreation effects as marginal but the human and economic benefits substantial. Adopting current philosophical understandings, Muir's values could be characterised as ecocentric and duty-based within the realms of morality, science, and ecosystem, while Pinchot's were utilitarian, within the realms of society, economy, and recreation.

In recent decades, disputes have been observed where environmental groups have divided on pragmatic and idealist lines. They include at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit (Chatterjee and Finger, 1994); in West Germany in the 1980s giving rise to the formation of the Green Party; and in Australia, upon the introduction of new federal environmental laws in 1999 (Mercer, 2000; Hamilton and Macintosh, 2004). Weak ecological modernist (Christoff, 1996) or technocentrist (O'Riordan, 1981) approaches to solving so-called 'environmental problems' (Bennett, 1992), such as carbon offsets, have also disenfranchised many of Naess' (1973) 'deep ecologists' from the prevailing agenda (BBC News, 2007; Adam, 2006). Environmentalists have also splintered on social policies like migration that are incompatible with environmental objectives (Motavalli, 1996).

Wind farms, the subject matter of this dissertation, are an example of a land use that has been alternatively perceived as environmentally beneficial and locally destructive (Smith, G, 2003; Warren et al, 2005; Kempton et al, 2005).¹ There is almost unanimous concern among environmentalists about climate change² and a general recognition that climate change can and should be mitigated by embracing

¹ Hajer (2003) also gives the example of ecological restoration.

² For the purpose of this dissertation, I use the term 'climate change' to mean human influenced climate change.

renewable energy technologies. The conflict between them arises, however, when wind energy and its component wind farms are proposed and pursued as one of those technologies.

There is extensive commentary supporting the thesis that conflicts about land use can be attributed to divergent values and beliefs (Economou, 1993; Campbell and Floyd, 1996; Owens and Cowell, 2002). However, the literature on wind energy and wind farms has been predominately discursive and empirical. Arguments for and against wind farms have been presented. The question of how local opponents respond to wind farm proposals, particularly whether their opposition reflects NIMBYism, has been well studied and will provide a strong foundation for this dissertation (for example: Pasqualetti, 2000; Wolsink, 2000; Devine-Wright, 2005a, 2005b; Haggett and Toke, 2006). A year-long quantitative discourse study has mapped the attitudes of opponents and supporters and the aspects of the environment that they value (Ellis et al 2006a, 2006b; Barry et al, 2006). It adds to the growing acceptance that opposition to wind farms reflects strongly held conceptions of, and value for, landscape (Wolsink, personal communication, 2007). Ellis et al (2006a, 2006b) encourage further discourse analysis to complement the large body of quantitative and attitudinal research.

In this dissertation I will draw on the burgeoning wind energy literature, written submissions to policy and project debates, campaign materials, internet resources, and interviews, and will continue the discourse analysis approach.³ The dissertation will focus on wind energy policy and recent and current proposals for wind farms in Britain⁴ and Victoria, Australia. A dual focus aims to broaden the investigation, and lead to more persuasive conclusions. It will allow for an assessment of the degree to which the phenomenon of inter-environmentalist conflicts in wind energy is contextual. Because the landscapes of the rural locations where wind farms are being proposed in Britain are superficially similar to those in Victoria and the project assessment processes are alike, any distinctions identified through a combined discourse analysis of the two regions will be interesting points of comparison. I do not have the capacity within this dissertation to explore the background to each of the actors whose discourse I will analyse. Rather, I will introduce the concept of environmentalism and briefly indicate how the dominant participants in the wind energy debate can be considered environmentalists. I will frame the debate as one between environmental groups, dividing these groups into competing discourse coalitions with incompatible storylines (Hajer, 1995). I will explore whether there is a

³ I will return to discuss the methods of discourse analysis I adopted but, by way of introduction, a discourse is a 'particular way of talking and thinking' (Hajer, 1995, 13). It is a way of understanding arguments and discussion and the way the discussion is conducted (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005).

⁴ Within the limits of this dissertation it was not possible to broaden the study to include Northern Ireland. Only an overview picture is given of the Scottish wind energy experience.

schism, if so whether it can be explained by divergent environmental values, and how any difference in environmental values is treated in or influences the decision-making process.

My research questions are:

- What discourse coalitions do the environmental groups participating in the wind energy debate form? What are their discourses and dominant storylines?
- What environmental values do the environmental groups participating in the wind energy debate hold? How are they consistent or different within and across coalitions?
- Are policy or project decisions made having regard to different environmental values? What are the policy implications of understanding environmental conflicts as being grounded in values, particularly if those values are multiple and inconsistent within and across competing coalitions?

Overview

To answer my research questions I will first provide the policy context to the debate over wind energy in Victoria and Britain and explain my methods for analysis. In Chapter 2 I will describe a number of value systems that may exist within the competing coalitions in this study. I will introduce the idea of a spectrum of environmental values and categorise values by realm.

In Chapter 3 I will briefly define environmentalism and provide a basis to my assumption that actors within competing coalitions are 'environmentalists'. I will then detail the findings of my study, analysing the discourse by storylines. In Chapter 4 I will conclude by briefly discussing the consequences of my findings for public policy.

Wind energy in Victoria and Britain

The wind energy debate began in earnest in Victoria in the late 1990s to early 2000s (Mercer, 2003), around a decade after the first policy steps were taken by the United Kingdom (UK) Government that led to the current wind energy conflict in Britain.

One of those initiatives was the institution of the Non-fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) (Mitchell and Connor, 2004; Woods, 2003). Although the NFFO was principally intended to support a non-viable nuclear industry after electricity privatisation, the NFFO and its successor, the Renewables Obligation, have been the prime drivers of renewable energy developments in the UK (Mitchell and Connor, 2004), just as similar subsidies have been elsewhere (Wolsink, 2000), including Australia. These government subsidies, together with renewable energy targets (Table 1), have supported the growth in wind energy interest and projects to its current booming state (Table 2).

Table 1: Renewable energy targets

Jurisdiction	Target	Policy or legal instrument
Australia	2% increase on 1996/7 levels in electricity supplied from renewable energy sources by 2010 resulting in the maintenance of approximately 10-11% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2010.	Mandatory Renewable Energy Target; Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000 (Cth)
Victoria	10% of electricity supplied from renewable energy by 2016.	Victorian Renewable Energy Target; Renewable Energy Target Act 2006 (Vic)
UK	10% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2010. 15% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2015. 20% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2020.	Renewables Obligation Our Energy Future, Creating a Low Carbon Economy 2003 The Energy Challenge 2006
Scotland	18% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2010. 40% of electricity supplied from renewable sources by 2020.	Renewables Obligation (Scotland) Securing a Renewable Future: Scotland's Renewable Energy, 2003
Wales	4 terawatt hours of renewable generation by 2010, including 800 megawatts of onshore wind and 200 megawatts of offshore wind. 7 terawatt hours of renewable generation by 2020.	Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005)

Sources: Devine-Wright (2005b); DTI (2003, 2006); Kent and Mercer (2006); Strachan and Lal (2004); Mitchell and Connor (2004); Bergmann et al (2006); British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) (2007); National Assembly for Wales (2005); ACF et al (2007); Scottish Executive (2003).

Table 2: Status of onshore⁵ wind farms, Victoria and Britain

Jurisdiction	Operational	Approved ⁶	Contested ⁷	In planning
Victoria	5	11 ⁸	5	13
England	62	11	33	67
Scotland	44	15	36	99
Wales	24	3	6	20

Sources: BWEA website (www.bwea.com/statistics) [Accessed 14 June 2007]; Australian Wind Energy Association (AusWEA) website (www.auswea.com.au/auswea/projects/vic.asp) [Accessed 14 June 2007]

The targets are the primary policy response of British and Victorian Governments to their concerns about climate change and their regional and international obligations to reduce carbon emissions. These concerns have also led to a shift in focus in the energy policies of the UK and Victoria, now both in post-privatised landscapes (Victorian Government 2002a, 2002b; Department of Trade and Industry (UK) (DTI), 2006, 2007). It is a paradigm shift from issues of ownership to sustainability,⁹ which until recently has been a second order issue (Jessup and Mercer, 2001).

Government and wind energy supporters cite this greening of energy policy and the availability of renewable energy subsidies to promote and support the development of local renewable energy industries (Strachan and Lal, 2004). Predictably, and like all historical wind energy policy, the government and corporate responses to climate change focus on economic and industrial development and pay little regard to social capital (Breukers and Wolsink, 2007).

Planning policy documents were prepared to guide decision-makers on the appropriateness of wind energy development but only after the first wind farm projects were approved in Britain and Victoria (Kent and Mercer, 2006) in response to community concerns and to manage an increase in wind farm proposals. The most recent wind energy policy documents are specified in Table 3. The policies have not eased conflict over wind energy projects. Rather, they have been criticised by wind farm opponents as endorsing wind energy while neglecting concerns about landscape and place (Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (CPRW), 2004; Prom Coast Guardians, 2003). In Britain and Victoria it is rare to find a wind energy project that is not the subject of conflict. In Wales almost all wind farms have been

⁵ The focus of this dissertation is on onshore wind farms because offshore wind energy is not presently proposed in Victoria and because British environmentalists are still familiarising themselves with the issues, benefits, and disadvantages of offshore wind farms. I comment on some views to offshore wind farms in Chapter 3 in the section headed 'The "valuing landscape and place" storyline'.

⁶ Includes wind farms under construction.

⁷ Those wind farm proposals currently subject to an application for land use approval. It does not include proposals, such as the Dollar wind farm, which have lapsed.

⁸ This figure treats the Portland Wind Energy Project as four individual wind farms. One, Yambuk, is already operational.

⁹ In the UK the shift has also led to an inquiry about the nation's nuclear future. In Victoria and Australia the issue of nuclear energy is entering the public arena, however it is still in its formative stages and has not yet been embraced in the policy dialogue.

opposed by the CPRW(Ogden, personal communication, 2007), and I know of few, if any, wind farm proposals in Victoria that have not been contested. Hence, while the policy framework is slowly evolving, the evolution has not corresponded with or given rise to any consensus in decision-making.

Table 3: Most recent wind energy planning policy documents

Jurisdiction	Policy document
Victoria	Policy and planning guidelines for development of wind energy facilities in Victoria (2003)
England	Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (2004)
Scotland	Scottish Planning Policy 6: Renewable Energy (2007)
Wales	Technical Advice Note 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005)

Discourse analysis

Dryzek (1997, 8) defines a discourse as:

‘a shared way of apprehending the world. Embedded in language, it enables those who subscribe to it to interpret bits of information and put them together into coherent stories or accounts’.

Environmental discourses can be conceived as social constructions that reflect how people interpret, give meaning to, and represent the environment. Discourses can also be considered in Foucauldian terms as being a reflection, expression, and exchange of knowledge and power (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005; Rydin, 2003; Litfin, 1994; Linnros and Hallin, 2001). Discourses comprise ‘vocabularies of motive’ (Kemp, 1990, 1244), language, metaphors, analogies, clichés, catch phrases, and concepts and structures of bias. They are condensed into often simple, succinct, and agreeable storylines within which actors are able to attach their disparate views, values, and interests (Hajer, 1993). These storylines become ritualised, entrenched in the debate, and infiltrate common language (Hajer, 1995). Environmental discourses tend to be dominated by specific emblems or ‘issues that dominate the perception of the ecological dilemma in a specified period’ (Hajer, 1995, 19). They frame, shape, and highlight particular knowledge (Hajer, 1995, 2005), and often mould interests and views into a scientific and rationalist message (Litfin, 1994; Rydin, 2003). This is a perspective to which I will return.

Discourse coalitions are the diverse groups that rally around a particular storyline or set of storylines in a struggle for discursive hegemony (Bulkeley, 2000). The coalitions comprise actors, such as politicians, scientists and activists, with different backgrounds, views, values and motives (Hajer, 1995). The mix of actors in a discourse coalition will change over time. Participants will enter, form alliances, and exit the discourse as their interests are met or threatened (Elias et al, 2004). According to Hajer (1993, 45), ‘a discourse coalition is basically a group of actors who share a social construct’, but who do not necessarily share interests or values.

It is this basis for grouping actors into discourse coalitions that differentiates discourse coalitions from policy networks (Smith, A, 2000; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003) and advocacy coalitions (Sabatier, 1987; Dudley et al, 2000). It is a difference that may be more subtle than the advocates of each model claim (Bulkeley, 2000; Smith, A, 2000; Litfin, 1994).

Discourse analysis is used to investigate the struggle over environmental conflicts. It combines an argumentative analysis with a social analysis of the actors engaged in argument (Hajer, 1993). It 'allows one to see how a diversity of actors actively try to influence the definition of the problem' (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005, 177). Discourse analysis assumes multiple and variable opinions and outlooks. For this dissertation it will be used to map those variable worldviews and values as a way of understanding a seemingly entrenched conflict over wind energy. It will attempt to uncloak the values of the actors engaged in the debate (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005). Discourse analysis is critical of constructed knowledge and truth. As Dryzek (1997, 8) notes 'each discourse rests on assumptions, judgements, and contentions that provide the basic terms for analysis'. It tries to make sense of the motives, success, and strategies of actors wedded to particular storylines. It aims to understand the dominance, legitimisation, and effectiveness of particular storylines (Rydin, 2003) as well as the foundations for policy changes and project decisions (Hajer, 1995). For this dissertation I adopted a simplified version of the argumentative discourse analysis process outlined by Hajer (2005). I began by researching academic and non-academic writing about wind energy and conducting two extensive face-to-face interviews with disassociated experts in the wind energy field (see Table 4). Through these steps I identified the key actors in the wind energy debate and began to frame coalitions and identify members of those coalitions. I then located documents describing or detailing the arguments made by these actors and the means in which they engaged with the debate. These documents comprised policies, submissions on proposed projects and policies, and campaign materials, including internet resources. I reviewed and analysed the argumentative exchange, and I analysed the form and level of participation by coalition members, particularly the extent that coalition members have remained in the debate and the circumstances leading to their introduction, departure, and participation. Unlike Hajer (2005), who recommends second rounds of interviews to confirm findings, I augmented my interpretation by corresponding with two actors engaged in the discourse.

Table 4: Communications with experts and actors

Date/Period of communication	Form of communication	Expert or actor
21 December 2006 to 11 January 2007	Email	Monica Richter, ACF, Australian environmental group
15 February 2007	Face-to-face	Maarten Wolsink, University of Amsterdam, academic with expertise on NIMBYism and wind energy
19 February 2007	Face-to-face	Rynd Smith, Royal Town Planning Institute, past chair of assessment panels for wind energy projects, Victoria
11 to 21 May 2007	Email	Peter Ogden, CPRW, Welsh environmental group

As Rydin (2003) notes, forum and avenues of participation limit or mould discourse. For this study, campaign material and the informal arena of the internet proved essential for analysis of environmental values. Policy statements and submissions made to formal institutions, by contrast, were bland. Within these documents there was a discourse battle over ‘objective’ and ‘scientific’ argument. A concerted effort was made, particularly on the part of wind energy opponents, to distance themselves from accusations of self-interest. There was a reluctance to argue the adverse social consequences of wind energy. Instead there was a focus on undermining its economic and scientific footing. There was a need to balance what coalition members were saying with what they were advocating or doing in order to infer beliefs from the discourse analysis (Smith, A, 2000).

There is a degree of academic construction of discourse coalitions. Coalitions are conceived by academics to fit their thesis or frame. They are invariably fixed by location. As Hajer (2005, 300) states: ‘one recurring problem with discourse analysis is deciding at what level one defines a discourse’. In this dissertation, my focus is wind energy and my level is the environmental group. This framing deliberately excludes the general discourses on climate change (see Bulkeley, 2000) and renewable energy (see Kent and Mercer, 2006) with their widely variable coalitions. It also does not explore in detail the disparate views and values of the members of any particular environmental group. Instead I will only identify and analyse internal conflicts that become apparent during the study.

Chapter 2: Clashing values

Value orientations and realms

Table 5 presents a human-nature 'spectrum'¹⁰ of environmental value orientations and philosophies (Eckersley, 1992; Radcliffe, J, 2002) that have been defined and used to explain views or actions with respect to the environment. Different values along this spectrum are expected to be found within and across discourse coalitions (Hajer, 1993, 1995).

At one end of the spectrum are the individualistic and consequentialist philosophies. They are premised on humans being separate from, and holding dominion over, nature. Academics ordinarily identify preference utilitarianism as the most common human-centred (anthropocentric) philosophy (Carter, 2001; Goodin, 1992; Belshaw, 2001). Adopting this philosophy an environmentally destructive development could be supported if it responds to society's wants (for instance it provides jobs or 'green' electricity), even where the development might irreversibly destroy an aspect of natural or social capital, particularly in the case of wind farms landscape or place, and even where the destruction feels wanton (Owens and Cowell, 2002; O'Neill, O, 1997). In order to compare preferences economic value is principally used as the unit of account (Jacobs, 1991; Pearce et al, 1989; Sagoff, 1998). Bergmann et al (2006) employed such a preference methodology to conclude that community members would trade-off the benefits of wind energy (jobs, industry, and environmental improvements) to preserve areas of subjectively defined 'high landscape quality'.

The nature-centred (non-anthropocentric/ecocentric) orientations and philosophies are at the opposite end of the spectrum. Ecocentrists and biocentrists, despite having different views about the value of endangered species, conceive nature holistically, encompassing humans (Jacobs, 1991), and as a 'subject of power' (Smith, K, 2006, 349). Critically, they believe that nature has intrinsic value (Carter, 2001) and non-humans have ethical standing (and possibly rights, including those of not being injured (McGregor, 2004)). Using the example of wind farms, biocentrists might oppose the erection and operation of turbines if they believe that they pose a threat to individual species. Ecocentrists may support or oppose wind energy as a

¹⁰ This is not the only way that environmental values can be charted and analysed. For example, utilitarianism can be divided and classified into distinct and nuanced philosophies based on historical and neo-classical understandings or on the definition of preference or pleasure (O'Neill, J, 1993). Rights/duty-based philosophies can also be categorised based on alternative views about the nature and extent of rights and duties (O'Neill, O, 1997). Within the confines of this dissertation, I elected to focus on the supposed nature-human dichotomy in environmental values because it is predominant in the literature on environmental controversies and it encompasses the greatest breadth of individual environmental philosophies.

means of protecting nature from the consequences of climate change or as an intrusion into nature, including the landform, the air, or ecosystems.

Table 5: A human-nature spectrum of environmental value orientations

Human-nature spectrum	Value orientation	Characteristics
Anthropocentric	Egocentrism	Self-centred, individualistic. Nature should be used for personal well-being.
	Utilitarianism	Aggregative, consequentialist. Humans decide how to use the environment.
	Marxism	Welfarist. Humans give value to the environment through their effort.
	Technocentrism	Solution-focussed. Humans can overcome environmental problems through the application of ingenuity. Environmental problems present opportunities.
	Deontology	Rights and duty-based. Humans (and in some views non-humans) have rights or duties, those rights should be respected and protected. May include obligations and rights of non-injury.
	Animal liberationism	Individual sentient animals have moral rights, like humans, that should be protected.
	Environmental determinism	Humans are subject to the controls of the environment. The environment is seen as a restriction on human activity.
	Biocentrism	Humans are a part of nature, which has intrinsic value and cannot be valued in monetary terms. Intrinsic value extends to individual species.
Non-anthropocentric (Ecocentric)	Ecocentrism	Humans are a part of nature, which has intrinsic value. Value attaches to all aspects of nature, including landforms, air and soil, and species (not just sentient animals).

Sources: Pepper (1984); O'Neill, O (1997); Owens and Cowell (2002); Goodin (1992); Winter and Lockwood (2005); Carter (2001); Belshaw (2001); Low and Gleeson (1998); Pearce (1994); Jacobs (1991); Pearce et al (1989); Eckersley (1992); O'Neill, J (1993); Sagoff (1988); Bennett (1992); Wood (2000); Smith, K (2006); McGregor (2004); O'Riordan (1977).

The division between the anthropocentric and the non-anthropocentric value orientations, described by O'Riordan (1977, 3) as a 'duality of environmentalist thought', has been criticised, and it has been argued that individual value orientations are more complex and hybrid, constructed from individual experience, societal and global influences (O'Neill, J, 1993; Norton, 1991; Pepper, 1984; Campbell and Floyd, 1996; Brandenburg and Carroll, 1995; Foster, 1997). As Owens and Cowell (2002) note, there will often be common ground on environmental policies among environmentalists despite their divergent environmental philosophies. This is because human health, spirituality, and the well-being of future generations are concerns that span the spectrum of environmental philosophies.

Table 6: Realms of environmental values

Realms of values	Examples of entities that are valued	Indicative environmental value orientation
Aesthetic	Landscape features.	Anthropocentric
Cultural	Religion, language, cultural heritage, ritual, custom.	Anthropocentric
Economic	Economic development, commodities.	Anthropocentric
Ecosystem	Nature's services, undisturbed ecosystems, native species.	Ecocentric – Anthropocentric
Historical/ Heritage	Historic places or buildings.	Anthropocentric
Moral	Biodiversity.	Ecocentric
Recreation	Solitude, access, opportunity to spend time.	Anthropocentric
Religious/ Spiritual	Ritual, faith, spiritual awareness or growth.	Anthropocentric – ecocentric
Scientific	Endemic and new species, palaeontological discoveries, archaeological sites.	Anthropocentric – ecocentric
Social	Social capital, community, sense of place, employment opportunity for locals.	Anthropocentric

Source: Fleisher Trainor (2006, 12) (modified).

Fleisher Trainor (2006) presents a potentially more useful conception of values. She argues that values are plural and incommensurable and occur at multiple realms. These realms, listed in Table 6, may be found within a range of environmental value orientations. They may be expressed in, and reflect, ecocentric or anthropocentric philosophies. For example, the ecosystem may be valued for its intrinsic worth or its capacity to provide ecosystem services, such as water and air, necessary for human survival.

Important for this dissertation, Wood (2000) makes the point that the distinction between the anthropocentric and the non-anthropocentric is often an intellectual one. In practice value orientations are constructed strategically. As human-orientated reasons for exploitation or conservation carry more weight politically, most arguments for environmental protection are framed within an anthropocentric philosophy. Norton (1991) and Wood (2000) argue that decision-makers do not understand ecocentric or biocentric perspectives because the perspectives lack a scientific or rational foundation. However, as is intended by this dissertation, a close analysis of discourse identifies underlying and strongly held philosophies that dictate actions and the likelihood of environmentalists to bargain and compromise.

A green theory of value and environmental frames

Goodin (1992, 15) identifies a green theory of value: a single 'unified moral vision'. Goodin describes his theory as being a human preference for naturalness. Goodin argues that this preference is found in all environmentalists. There is significant academic support, however, for the contrary view: that there is no one green theory

of value; rather, that within the environmental movement there is no consensus on environmental values or world views (Campbell and Floyd, 1996; Smith, G, 2003, Carter, 2001).

If we were to adopt Goodin's thesis of a unified green moral code, the difference in environmentalists' views to environmental controversies like wind energy could perhaps be explained as a clash of frames (Saarikoski, 2006; Rydin, 2003). This may particularly be the case in the conflict about wind energy because the complexity of the problem supports multiple ways of viewing it (Carter, 2001).

Frames can, however, also reflect underlying and fundamental values (Davis and Lewicki, 2003).

Chapter 3: The coalitions of ‘environmentalists’ and their storylines

Environmentalism

The environmental movement is extraordinarily diverse (Carter, 2001; Doyle, 2005). Hajer (1995) suggests that being an environmentalist is now common place. Businesses and governments are the new environmentalists (Campbell and Floyd, 1996) and have championed sustainable development to hegemonic status (McGregor, 2004) and led a mainstreaming of the environmental movement. The broadening and mainstreaming of participation in the environmental agenda is reflected in the wind energy debate and can be observed through an analysis of discourse coalitions: those erratic and disparate groups of actors drawn to a common storyline (Hajer, 2003). In addition, it supports my assumption that the actors in the wind energy debate fall within the umbrella of the environmental movement. It is a belief that Kempton et al (2005, 121) formed when they describe the Cape Cod proposal in Nantucket Sound as having ‘pitted environmentalist against environmentalist’.

To the extent that a division within environmentalism exists, it is no longer solely grounded in values and philosophy but also in modes and levels of participation and engagement with the policy process (Carter, 2001). Among the large environmental groups founded before and during the rise of global environmentalism in the 1970s and 1980s there is an increasing distance from members and higher levels of professionalism than ever before (Doyle and Kellow, 1995). The mainstreaming and institutionalisation of these groups has been exemplified by them aligning within the prevailing geopolitical agenda rather than revolting against it (Campbell and Floyd, 1996; Faber and O’Connor, 1989), and by them participating less often in project assessments (Kemp, 1990). This trend has corresponded with the resurgence in grassroots environmentalism, which includes post-modern radical groups, campaigners against locally unwanted land users (Blowers and Leroy, 1994), and pragmatic and broad coalitions (Carter, 2001; Hajer, 2003; Kempton et al, 2001). These groups depend on greater and more informal involvement of members (Doyle and Kellow, 1995). They are attributed with the greening of the social capital of communities (Savage et al, 2005; Kempton et al, 2001) and changing the cultural context of place (Bryan, 2003). As I will explain below, while the growth of grassroots environmentalism is celebrated for rejuvenating and building local communities, the concerns these environmentalists rally around are often dismissed as being overly narrow in outlook.

It is pertinent to note and emphasise that although environmentalism is a broad concept, regional and historical peculiarities and nuances do exist. These differences are a reflection of social, symbolic, political and historical experiences (Doyle, 2005), and collective identities and responses to policy interventions (Wondolleck et al, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Hajer, 2003). The histories of the evolution of environmentalism in Australia and the UK, the locations within which the discourse analysis for this dissertation has occurred, have been told elsewhere (Doyle, 2005; Doyle and Kellow, 1995; O’Riordan, 1981; Pepper, 1984; Lowe and Goyder, 1983). Key differences, of potential relevance to understanding the wind energy debate, are that the Australian movement borrows from the US conservation movement and reflects new world environmental concerns about ‘wilderness’. Organisations like the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and the Wilderness Society grew out of battles over forests. By contrast, the principal concern in the UK has been for urban or human-modified nature or landscape, which gave rise initially to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and National Trust, then afterwards the ramblers associations and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE). One decision-maker with familiarity of both jurisdictions distinguished Australian appreciation for the ‘bush’ with British concern for countryside (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007). Similarities between the jurisdictions are, however, strong. Large groups within both countries are engaged in global environmental debates and there is a greater transnationalisation of environmental concerns and knowledge than ever before (Doyle, 2005; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003); including on the issues of climate change and wind energy.

NIMBYs and ‘local’ opposition

NIMBYism has not been adequately defined, and when used it is invariably not explained (Wolsink, 1994, 2007b). Where a common definition has been crafted, it has made the identification of NIMBYs difficult. The academic literature and the Oxford English Dictionary have defined a NIMBY as a person who opposes a land use or development in their community, and who would support the land use or development elsewhere: in someone else’s backyard (Wolsink, 2007a, 2007b). According to Wolsink (2006, 87), only a ‘very small part of opposition’ to wind energy is NIMBYist (see also Wolsink, 2000; Devine-Wright, 2005a). This is because the second element of the test is rarely explored with opponents (Wolsink, 2006).

Nevertheless, there is a ‘fixation with NIMBYism’ within the wind energy debate (Ellis et al, 2006a, 7). Opposition to wind farms is characterised as local (Clifford and Warren, 2005; Haggett, 2004, Devine-Wright, 2005a), and often NIMBYist, embedded with implications of selfishness and ignorance while the supporters claim

the moral high-ground with their global outlook (Wolsink, 2006, 2007a; Laws and Rein, 2003; Hampton, 1996; Kemp, 1990). Policy-makers and proponents often treat the existence of NIMBYism among residents and stakeholders as a given (Wolsink, 2003, 2007b). They use the concept to universalise the arguments of wind energy opponents (Haggett and Toke, 2006) to more easily dismiss them. However, as Wolsink (personal communication, 2007) notes, a typical or universal NIMBY does not exist. Consolidating and conceiving concerns as NIMBYist ignores the plurality of views and beliefs about wind energy, nature, and place (Kempton et al, 2005). The focus on NIMBYism can lead to inherent, technological, or design problems or operational concerns, questions about the need of the development, and deficits in the participation process being overlooked (Laws and Rein, 2003; Freudenberg and Steinsapir, 1991; Owens, 2002, 2004; Owens and Cowell, 2002; Haggett and Toke, 2006; Bell et al, 2005). Further, opposition may be misconstrued as self-interest when it instead reflects a concern for natural or social environments (Hampton, 1996; Kemp, 1990).

Despite the trend for wind energy proponents and policy-makers to employ the NIMBY concept, there is disagreement within academia over the existence of NIMBYs in the wind energy debate. For example Righter (2002, 22) asserts that 'we do know that the NIMBY ... response is alive and well', while Devine-Wright (2005a) argues that there is a lack of empirical evidence demonstrating that wind energy opposition reflects NIMBYism. Concurrently, there is a broader argument over the validity of the concept (recently played out between Hubbard (2006) and Wolsink (2006)).

Whether or not opposition fits within the definition of NIMBYism, there is undoubtedly a degree of self-interest at play in the wind energy debate. According to some academics, this is a positive and 'prudent' reaction to development proposals (Freudenburg and Pastor, 1992) that helps opponents build a 'sense of place' (Norton and Hannon, 1997, 243). Such opposition ought to be treated comparably with the self-interest of business in its commercial endeavours. It should also be recognised as relying on plural views, values on differing geographical scales, and interests (Kemp, 1990; O'Neill, J, 1993; Fleisher Trainor, 2006).

There can also be little doubt that most objections to wind farms are from people who live in or cherish the place or landscape where the facilities are proposed. But the fact that a first-hand experience with a wind energy proposal sparks opposition should also not be misunderstood as a NIMBY response. It is such first-hand experiences that prompt critical inquiry and initiates a process of knowledge collection (Wolsink, personal communication, 2007); knowledge that can augment expert knowledge if accepted into the policy-making process (Kemp, 1990; Irwin,

1995); and knowledge and learning that can develop or help articulate environmental values or encourage participation within a discourse coalition (Hajer, 1995). Some project opponents continue to battle wind farms elsewhere. In Victoria such people, including Tim LeRoy of the Tarwin Valley Coastal Guardians and Coastal Guardians Victoria, have used their experience fighting wind energy projects to form regional guardian groups. The existence of these groups emphasises the translocational character of perceived effects of wind energy (Katz, 1998; Owens, 2002). The search for further failings of wind energy emphasises their determination and the extent to which their strongly held values have entrenched them in the battle. Often engagement or participation in discourse coalitions is brief, lasting only the duration of the planning process for a wind farm.

Defining the discourse coalitions

Within the wind energy debate there are, according to Warren et al (2005, 854)

‘strong “green” arguments on both sides of the debate ... some environmentalists advocate windfarms because of the “clean energy” credentials, while others oppose them because of their landscape impacts. Still others are caught awkwardly in the middle, supporting renewable energy in principle but opposing specific windfarm proposals’.

While this characterisation is simple, at a high level it is an accurate division of the discourse coalitions engaged in the wind energy debate and their dominant storylines. A more nuanced and critical analysis of the characterisation follows. As Toke et al (in press) note, however, the anti-wind groups comprise a mix of organisations generally sceptical of wind energy and others that are established with the sole purpose of opposing wind farm proposals.

The RSPB is named by Warren et al (2005) as one of those groups ‘in the middle’: an active supporter of a mix of renewable energy, while opposing some specific wind farms because of a perceived risk to avian habitat or migratory paths (RSPB, 2005).

While membership of the discourse coalitions is fluid (Hajer, 1995), for the purpose of analysing the views and values of coalitions, it is necessary to define the make up of the competing coalitions. Drawing on media reports, observation, and commentaries on the wind energy debate (Haggett and Toke, 2006; Toke and Strachan, 2006; Elliott, 1997; Smith, R, personal communication, 2007; Kent and Mercer, 2006; Strachan and Lal, 2004), as well as constant reflection throughout my study, I identified broad memberships of the discourse coalitions and selected representative groups within the coalitions for investigation (Table 7).

The central values and views embedded in each storyline, and the supporters of each storyline are in Table 8¹¹. The table summarises the discourse analysis that follows.

Table 7: Coalitions and membership

Coalition	Membership	Groups studied
Pro-wind	Large environmental groups	ACF, Australia
		Environment Victoria, Australia
		Greenpeace Australia-Pacific, Australia
		Greenpeace, UK
		FoE, UK
Pro-wind	Government	Sustainability Victoria, Australia
	Renewable energy industry	AusWEA, Australia BWEA, UK
'Middle-ground'	Bird protection groups	RSPB, UK
		Birds Australia (Vic), Australia
Anti-wind	National countryside conservation groups	CPRE, UK
		CPRW, UK
	Landscape guardian groups	Country Guardians, UK
		Prom Coast Guardians, Australia
		Tarwin Valley Guardians/Coastal Guardians, Victoria, Australia
	Heritage conservation groups	National Trust (Vic)/ Australian Council of National Trusts, Australia
Recreation groups		

¹¹ The characterisation and distinction between the national countryside conservation groups and the landscape guardian groups and the development of accurate and appropriate labels for their discourse is particularly problematic. As discussed earlier CPRE and CPRW have long histories of conservation. Their conservation effort has gradually broadened and now has a broad focus. The main distinction between these groups and the large environmental groups remains a relic of history. It is interesting to see this history dividing the groups on the issue of wind energy. However, within the confines of this dissertation I cannot delve here. Nor can I explore the growth of the landscape guardian groups, their transnationalisation, and evolution from single-issue, wind farm opposition groups to groups concerned more broadly with the protection of landscape. In Victoria, the landscape guardian model may have given rise to Victoria's first countryside conservation group: the Victorian Landscape Guardians, created by former representatives of the Victorian chapter of the National Trust.

Table 8: Principal storylines and actors

Storyline	Central values and views	Principal actors	Other actors in storyline
Responding to climate change	<p>Ecocentrist and deontological – emphasis on environmental protection and the well-being of future generations, who are characterised as having a right to an unharmed environment.</p> <p>Moral values, ecosystem values.</p>	Large environmental groups	<p>Government</p> <p>Renewable energy industry</p> <p>National countryside conservation groups</p>
Building green industry	<p>Utilitarian and technocentrist – emphasis of establishing and growing a renewables industry that will provide economic development and jobs – green tinge – reflecting weak ecological modernist view of environment.</p> <p>Economic values, social values.</p>	Renewable energy industry	<p>Government</p> <p>Large environmental groups</p>
Protecting birds	<p>Ecocentric and biocentric and partly anthropocentric – emphasis is on environmental protection for the benefit of bird species. However, elements of human recreation interest are present “for birds for people for ever”</p> <p>Recreation values, ecosystem values, scientific values, moral values.</p>	Bird protection groups	Landscape guardian groups
Valuing the landscape	<p>Anthropocentric – emphasis on preserving landscapes – both ‘natural’ and rural – because of pleasure and tranquillity these environments bring people.</p> <p>Elements of non-anthropocentric, ecocentric values –a belief that turbines do not belong in the landscape whether seen or not.</p> <p>Aesthetic values, cultural values, social values, recreation values.</p>	<p>Landscape guardian groups</p> <p>National countryside conservation groups</p>	<p>Heritage conservation groups</p> <p>Recreation groups</p> <p>Large environmental groups</p>

The ‘responding to climate change’ storyline

Climate change is the current emblematic environmental issue (Hajer, 1995) in Australia and the UK. As noted earlier, there is a discourse focussed broadly on the issue of climate change and the need for, and form of, response (Bulkeley, 2000). Within the narrower wind energy debate, however, concern over climate change has been digested into a storyline. ‘Responding to climate change’ is a catch phrase that, as Table 8 summarises, both supporters and opponents adopt with varying nuance. The large environmental groups most vigorously pursue this storyline. Because climate change is a transnational issue within the legislative and diplomatic responsibility of the national governments, the storyline most frequently occurs in the capitals (Kempton et al, 2001) where wind energy is said to be ‘trendy’ (Prom Coast Guardians 2003) - and away from the locations of proposed wind farms, where conflict is most intense. This disjuncture can inflame rural-urban relations (Pasqualetti et al, 2002).

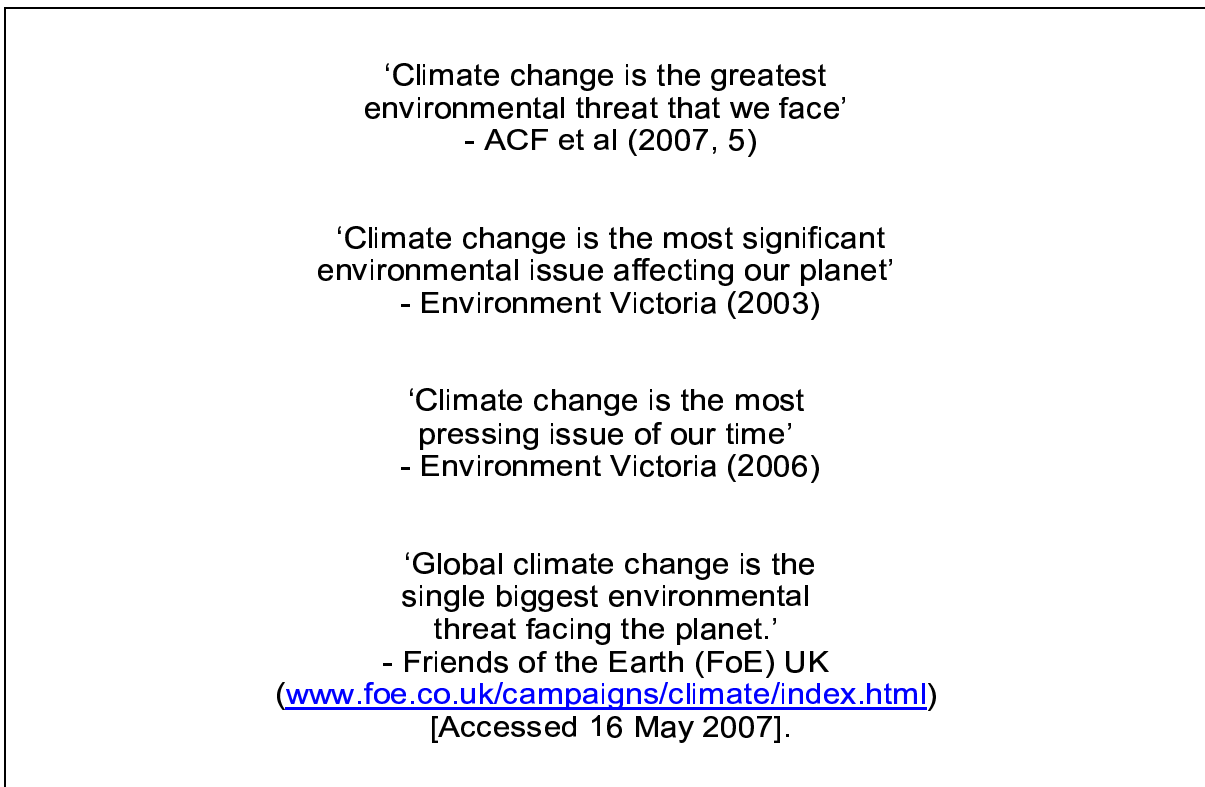


Figure 1: Opening statements of climate change policies and submissions

The opening lines of their climate policies and submissions (Figure 1) illustrate the gravity with which these environmentalists treat climate change and how they frame their arguments.

These actors see wind energy as ‘the clearest path to a low carbon future that minimises the dangers of climate change and allows us to meet ... emission targets’

(Greenpeace UK, 2005). According to the ACF (2006), 'we can start the transition to clean emission-free energy, without any delay, by using wind power'. Wind energy is equated with taking action to address and respond to climate change: an ecologically modernist and technocratic equation (Ellis et al, 2006a, 2006b). Wind energy is a symbol of action and threats to wind energy proliferation are treated as threats to the existence of future generations, island states, ecosystems, and species: those things most valued by these groups (ACF, approx 2006; FoE Australia, 2003). Adopting philosophical orientations, their values straddle the anthropocentric (human well-being now and in the future) and the ecocentric (the survival of ecosystems and species). The realms of their values include the scientific, moral, and ecosystem (Woods, 2003).

Greenpeace UK (2004, 2006) has been among the most vocal of the large groups. For instance, in response to the rejection of the Whinash wind farm proposed in Cumbria, Greenpeace UK (2006) stated:

'Climate change will ravage beautiful areas like the Lake District. I hope those responsible will be willing to explain to future generations how they played their part in allowing the savage grip of global warming to trash the countryside and claim hundreds of thousands of lives.'

In support of the Romney Marsh wind farm proposed in Kent, Greenpeace UK (2004), as well as making its views and values known through demonstration (see Figure 2), argued that:

'Polar bears are just one of many species threatened by global warming, and wind farms like the one proposed for Romney Marsh are the best way to protect our climate. Global warming is already killing 150,000 people a year and things are set to get a lot worse. Without renewable energy schemes like this one we'll see worsening climate change and the construction of new nuclear power stations.'

These quotes not only emphasise concern about climate change and species and human-welfare, but also highlight the fear of nuclear energy (see also Pasqualetti, 2000). As Goodin (1992) argues, this opposition reflects deeply held moral objections to the nuclear cycle: an ethical position that he suggests accords with a monistic environmental philosophy. Such moral values have been held at least since the 1970s and early 1980s when Greenpeace and other actors were active (and radical) in opposing the nuclear cycle (Toke and Strachan, 2006; Doyle and Kellow, 1995).



Figure 2: Greenpeace protesters demonstrate against former UK Tory leader Michael Howard, whose opposition to a proposed wind farm in his electorate despite pledging Tory leadership on climate change was characterised as being ‘motivated by narrow political ambition’. Source: Greenpeace UK (2004). Copyright and permission to reproduce: Greenpeace UK/Sims.

Despite the apparent strength with which these large environmental groups support wind energy as a climate change solution, they are increasingly absent from debates about wind energy, particularly on the individual project level. This trend is observed in both Victoria and Britain. In Britain, Greenpeace UK does not report having made a submission on a wind farm project since 2004. Instead, it has created an internet presence to promote local action. FoE, Greenpeace UK, and WWF UK have developed the internet site Yes2Wind (www.yestowind.org.uk), which is designed to motivate individuals and local community groups to support wind energy projects in their region. The intention is to redress the perceived imbalance in participation in wind energy development planning hearings (Greenpeace UK, 2003) by replicating the translocational success of the countryside guardian phenomenon, something that will be explored later. At the same time, with the same entities as well many other UK environmental groups, including RSPB and CPRE, Greenpeace has actively engaged in the broader climate change debate, including questioning nuclear energy and championing emissions targets (see: www.icount.org.uk)¹².

In Victoria, while ACF and Greenpeace Australia-Pacific supported the first large-scale wind farm proposal at Portland, Victoria (Mercer, 2003), they have not supported subsequent proposals. Indeed, ACF provided an ambiguous statement

¹² On 15 June 2007, the ABC News Online (2007) reported that a similar program would be launched by 10 environmental groups, including Environment Victoria, in Australia in the lead up to the national election under the name ‘Big Switch’.

about its position on the controversial Bald Hills wind farm (Switzer, 2006; Richter, personal communication, 2007). In a statement on the lapsed proposal for the Dollar wind farm, ACF congratulated the proponent on its community consultation but did not support the project. Rather, ACF reiterated its general support for wind energy (ACF, 2005). ACF no longer participates in the deliberative processes for individual wind farms because it does not have the capacity to do so (Richter, personal communication, 2007). Given ACF's omnipresence in the wider climate change discourse, in particular its pursuit of greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, it is likely that it has focussed its campaign effort in that discourse in preference to the one about wind energy.

A consequence of these large groups not engaging with wind farm proposals is that their values may not be presented to decision-makers. Tools such as the Yes2Wind internet site can be seen as a recognition that policy-makers are not hearing their message. The presentation of the climate change storyline within the deliberative process is often left to government, business, and opponents, flavoured by their different values. Where other issues dominate, climate change may be absent from the debate altogether (Kempton et al, 2005).

As identified above, government has relied on, and responded to, its concern about climate change by instituting planning policy and developing targets for renewable energy. Business presents itself as concerned with and responding to climate change, and, as will be explored below, promotes the view that renewable energy, particularly wind, is an appropriate response (Haggett and Toke, 2006). Opponents have also engaged in the 'responding to climate change' storyline. Their engagement adds credibility to their stance (Hubbard, 2006). It gives them a foundation, and a frame within which, to identify and support alternative renewable technologies and emission reduction measures, thus challenging the prevailing supporter's view that wind power is a necessary starting point to addressing climate change. For instance, CPRE (2006a, 2006b) emphasises transport as the sector with the largest contribution of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions and claims that big reductions are possible through energy efficiency and demand reduction strategies. Tim LeRoy from Tarwin Valley Coastal Guardians and Coastal Guardians, Victoria supports solar energy to combat climate change (ABC South East SA Radio, 2006). It is on the issue of wind that the divergence with other actors in the responding to climate change storyline appears.

The 'building green business' storyline

As well as using emotive and moral and technical and scientific language to support wind energy, the large environmental groups also employ language of commerce to bolster their arguments about the worth of wind energy (Woods, 2003) in an eco-

modernist storyline of ‘building green business’. This is not surprising given that the wind energy discourse is taking place in a political environment where climate change is viewed, analysed, and assessed as an economic issue, and it arguably reflects a strategic adoption of an environmental philosophy that Wood (2000) alluded to. ACF et al (2007, 10), for instance, argue that ‘Australia is missing out on jobs and economic development by turning its back on the clean energy revolution’. These environmental groups join government agencies and business groups to perpetuate a building green business storyline. Greenpeace International, for instance has aligned with the Global Wind Energy Council and the European Renewable Energy Council to produce publications supporting renewables and wind energy.

In Victoria, the ACF and Environment Victoria have engaged in ‘myth-busting’ (Table 9) in common with Sustainability Victoria. In the UK, BWEA joined with environmental groups to establish the Yes2Wind project (Toke and Strachan, 2006), which has engaged in its own myth-busting exercise in order to dispel ‘the old myths and exaggerations that are trotted out year after year despite all the evidence to the contrary’ (BWEA, 2007). The purpose of this technique is to reduce views and values to facts. While ‘facticity’ is seen as culturally desirable and responding to a ‘society of reason’ (Jasanoff, 2007), intractable conflicts, particularly those grounded in inconsistent values or irreconcilable frames, are rarely resolved by recourse to ‘facts’ (Putnam et al, 2003; Warren et al 2005; Rein and Schön, 1991).

Table 9: Myth-busting

Sample myth-busting facts
<p>Wind turbines ruin the landscape.</p> <p>Some people are concerned about the effect wind turbines have on the beauty of the landscape, while others see them as symbols of a better, less polluted future. In contrast to other energy developments, particularly open-cut coal mining in the Latrobe Valley, wind farms have little visual impact.</p> <p>– Environment Victoria</p>
<p>Myth 4: Wind farms are noisy.</p> <p>Modern turbines are quiet! Thanks to advances in technology, today’s turbines should be quiet enough to cause no disturbance to people living just a few hundred metres away. At this distance, noise from the turbines usually goes unheard, masked by the noise of the wind in the trees and vegetation.</p> <p>– ACF, Yes2Wind</p>
<p>Myth: Wind farms pose a threat to birds.</p> <p>Fact: Monitoring has found that no rare, threatened or endangered birds or bats have been killed by wind turbines in Victoria.</p> <p>– Sustainability Victoria.</p>

Source: Sustainability Victoria (2006), ACF (2006), Yes2Wind web page (www.yestowind.org.uk/noisy_debunk.html) [Accessed 14 June 2007];, Environment Victoria web page ‘Wind: why’ (<http://www.envict.org.au/inform.php?item=416>) [Accessed 14 June 2007]. See also Macintosh and Downie (2006).

AusWEA and BWEA share a mission to promote the use and uptake of wind energy (<http://www.auswind.org/auswea/htmlfiles/about.htm> [Accessed 8 June 2007]; <http://www.bwea.com/about/index.html> [Accessed 8 June 2007]). They characterise and frame wind energy as a practical, readily available, deliverable, and feasible solution to climate change, and one that is supported by the majority of the community (BWEA, 2007). With developers, industry groups promise jobs and economic development as a benefit of wind energy (Strachan and Lal, 2004), and they expect a return. BWEA (2006), for instance, emphasised that wind energy and other renewables could 'contribute up to £2.5 billion to the Scottish economy by 2020' in its submission in support of a reduction in planning decision times and the building of further grid infrastructure. Both British and Australian developers have promised to bring turbine-manufacturing jobs to towns that host wind farms (Bergmann et al, 2006; Mercer, 2003), which, at least in Portland, Victoria, was instrumental in the final approval of the four-site wind energy project (Mercer, 2003; Department of Sustainability and Environment (Victoria), 2003). As Mark Diesendorf notes, it should be expected that wind energy businesses exploit and pursue their commercial interests (ABC South East SA Radio, 2006). Their principal values are anthropocentric and technocentric in the realms of society and the economy. Their discourse is focussed on solutions and outcomes (Strachan and Lal, 2004) and not with the consequences of failing to act: indeed they concede that they will not act unless it is in their economic interest (Stephens, 2007). By emphasising the support of the majority, they draw implicitly on preference utilitarian philosophies. The industry organisations and wind energy developers do, however, promote themselves as caring for the environment (Haggett and Toke, 2006). Wind energy is offered as the 'saviour' of the environment (Strachan and Lal, 2004, 553). AusWEA's slogan: 'Clean Power. Clean Air' sums up succinctly and powerfully the green message that industry wants to sell. It is a message that has had traction, say the Prom Coast Guardians (2003). According to Mercer (2003) the wind energy industry has successfully promoted a storyline that wind energy and renewable energy are synonymous and that wind energy is the best way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. BWEA has seconded a range of celebrities to help it sell its message. On its internet site www.embracewind.com/champions.html [Accessed 14 May 2007], BWEA quotes artists, politicians, television personalities, designers, architects, business people, broadcasters, politicians, and academics, all of whom support BWEA's storyline. They claim that immediate action is required to combat climate change, and that wind is a 'free' and 'endless' form of renewable energy. Designers and architects praise the aesthetics and design of the 'now' technology' that is 'making a difference'. The purpose of the site is stated clearly. It is to raise

the voice of the so-called silent majority to challenge the views of the ‘vociferous and scaremongering anti-wind groups’ (BWEA, 2007). It is a challenge that will be discussed further below.

The ‘protecting birds’ storyline

For most participants in the wind energy discourse, the protection of birds is a secondary issue (Wolsink, 2007a, 2007b). However, there is a discernible storyline worthy attention here. In Victoria and Britain, bird mortality has been ‘hotly contested’ (Warren et al, 2005, 858), though for different reasons. In Britain, the RSPB has successfully raised the plight of birds. They are both threatened by climate change and, potentially, from wind farm developments (RSPB, 2005). In Victoria, the birds storyline is essentially the storyline of the survival of the orange-bellied parrot.

The Victorian storyline was raised in the Portland wind energy project assessment process by Birds Australia, government departments, the Australian Raptor Association, and the Victorian National Parks Association (Mercer, 2003). It has since become a cause championed almost exclusively by landscape guardian groups, pragmatically as part of a smorgasbord of opposition (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007). It has been given oxygen by a highly political and controversial initial decision by the Australian government to reject the Bald Hills wind farm (ABC 7.30 Report, 2006)¹³. Birds Australia, the leading ornithologist society in Victoria has not been among opponents to wind farm proposals since Portland (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007), and the internet site of its Victorian branch (<http://www.babblersnest.com/conservation.html>) [Accessed 9 June 2007], while highlighting opposition to two government-proposed developments, does not refer to wind farms. It was as surprised as other environmental groups when the Minister for the Environment and Heritage interpreted a report on the cumulative impact of wind farms on birds (Biosis, 2006) in such a way as to reject the Bald Hills wind farm. Graeme Hamilton from Birds Australia commented in response to the Minister’s decision: ‘it sets a very high

¹³ Three days before the 9 October 2004 Australian election the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, wrote to all constituents of the electorate of McMillan, where the Bald Hills wind farm is proposed. He reportedly implied to them that a vote for the Government would be a vote against the wind farm (Minchin et al, 2006).

Three days after the election, which was won by the incumbent Government and in which the Government won the seat of McMillan from the opposition, the Minister told the wind farm developer that he would not make a decision on the Bald Hills wind farm until after he was provided with further information on bird impact. As events transpired, the Minister commissioned his own research on bird strike and cumulative impacts of wind farms on four endangered birds (Biosis, 2006). One and a half years later the Minister announced that he would not approve the Bald Hills wind farm because of its impact on the orange-bellied parrot highlighted by his commissioned research. The decision has since been reversed following threats of legal challenge and the revision of the turbine layout.

standard in terms of what we would perceive as an acceptable risk to the orange-bellied parrot' (ABC 7.30 Report, 2006).

The RSPB's values are the most ecocentric, and the most concerned with ecosystems and species, of those groups within the wind energy debate. Their values also fall into the realm of recreation, and to the extent that they value bird watching opportunities, they become more anthropocentric. The RSPB maintains its storyline about the protection of birds in support and opposition of wind farms. It has been less likely to veer into arguments about technology and economy than other actors within the wind energy discourse.

The RSPB uses the same language of climate change import and threat as the large environmental groups, and it is a member with them of the awareness raising initiative www.icount.org.uk. In its submission to the UK Energy Review (RSPB, 2006), for instance, it stated in its second paragraph: 'We consider that human-induced climate change poses the biggest long-term threat to global biodiversity'. However, it adopts a discourse of optimism on climate change, believing that emission reduction targets can be achieved without harming the environment, particularly birds and their habitat. This optimism is contrasted with some of the alarmist threats highlighted by groups like Greenpeace UK (above) and the pessimism of some landscape guardian and national countryside conservation groups.¹⁴

RSPB's (2005) policy on wind farms is supportive, provided wind farms are:

'sited, designed and managed so that there is no significant adverse impacts on birds of acknowledged national and international importance, and on their habitats'.

Because bird survival and habitat can be assessed relatively objectively, RSPB can set transparent benchmarks against which it can judge whether wind farms will pose a problem for birds or not. As I will explain below, the landscape guardian and countryside conservation groups do not have the same capacity to set measurable criteria for objection because their concern and values cannot be assessed or measured objectively.

RSPB has begun engaging with developers at the same time as having its views challenged by the wind industry. BWEA (in Warren et al, 2005, 858), for instance, maintains that

'many more birds will die if we do not tackle climate change by using renewable energy and reducing carbon dioxide emissions. That is more important than the odd bird killed by a turbine'.

Nevertheless, RSPB (2005) says that 'such consultation helps us stop or adjust inappropriate development early on, which benefits all concerned'. However, it has

¹⁴ For instance, the CPRE (2006a) argues that the UK Government is not ready to take the policy actions needed to reduce emissions to targeted levels.

raised the ire of wind farm opponents, just as the engagement by the Australian Council of National Trusts with AusWEA enraged, and led to a splintering of the Victorian chapter of the National Trust (Millar, 2007; Millar and Button, 2003). Macalister (2007) reports that the RSPB has been accused of selective opposition and support of wind farms based on financial motives; to encourage uptake of RSPB branded wind energy.

The ‘valuing landscape and place’ storyline

The most complex storyline in the wind energy debate is the storyline of the value of landscape and place. It is a storyline that may initially appear subtle (Righter, 2002; Short, 2002; Strachan and Lal, 2004; Ellis et al, 2006a, 2006b), though upon investigation it is clearly discernable. Opposition to wind energy, and to wind farm projects in particular, is presented as being about: noise, landscape impacts, size and number of turbines, property devaluation, loss of agricultural land, increased traffic, tourism losses, a lack of benefits for locals and, as explored briefly above, impacts on birds. Further, opponents challenge the reliability of wind energy, its ability to displace fossil-fuel generated electricity, and its cost and dependency on government subsidies (Szarka and Bluhdorn, 2006; Wolsink, 2000; Warren et al, 2005; Tarwin Valley Coastal Guardians, 2003; CPRW, 2004). Tim LeRoy from Coastal Guardians Victoria suggests that these perceived faults of wind energy distract opponents from fighting on landscape concerns. He says:

‘If it was very efficient in the way of producing energy, we’d only be fighting this on landscape alone, but now we’re highlighting the inefficiencies of the whole industry’ (ABC Radio National, 2003).

Indeed, the discourse analysis suggests that the groups that were established notionally to protect landscape values primarily engage in fact-busting and scientific and technological argument. This is because they and the national countryside conservation groups have difficulty articulating subjective views about landscape values (Schwahn, 2002), the policy-making process is weighted towards apparently rational and science-based decision-making (Ellis et al 2006a and 2006b), and because there is a dearth of policy support for landscape and place (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007). Hence, groups seek to articulate what they see as scientific, measurable, and rational concerns about the environment and the economy in addition, and sometimes in priority, to subjective concerns about landscape, nature, and place. For example, the CPRW (2004) in its letter on the draft TAN 8, described the Welsh environment as ‘an invaluable resource worth over £8 billion to the Welsh economy each year [and that] ... directly and indirectly provides employment for 1 in 6 people in Wales’. CPRW strived to present a rational, evidence based foundation for its stance because that makes sense to

them and policymakers (Jasanoff, 2007). By and large these groups do not attempt to describe landscapes and they do not articulate an assessment of the impact of wind turbines on landscape values (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007). I will return to explore and support these theses after I characterise the values embodied in the protecting landscape and place storyline.

The introduction page to the internet site of the Prom Coast Guardians (Figure 3) illustrates the principal concern and the mission of the group established to oppose the Bald Hills and Dollar wind farms in south Gippsland, Victoria. The landscape is described as being a 'scenic wonderland', drawing on anthropocentric concerns about amenity and visual impacts, and 'precious', based in more personal and inherent, human-centred concepts of landscape. Wind turbines are portrayed as being oversized and prolific. The accompanying text on the internet site (<http://www.promcoastguardians.org/call.html> [Accessed 13 May 2007]) is equally emphatic about the values of the group. It says that:

'We are now engaged in a crucial battle in our long fight against the blighting of our treasured landscapes by inappropriately sited wind turbines.'

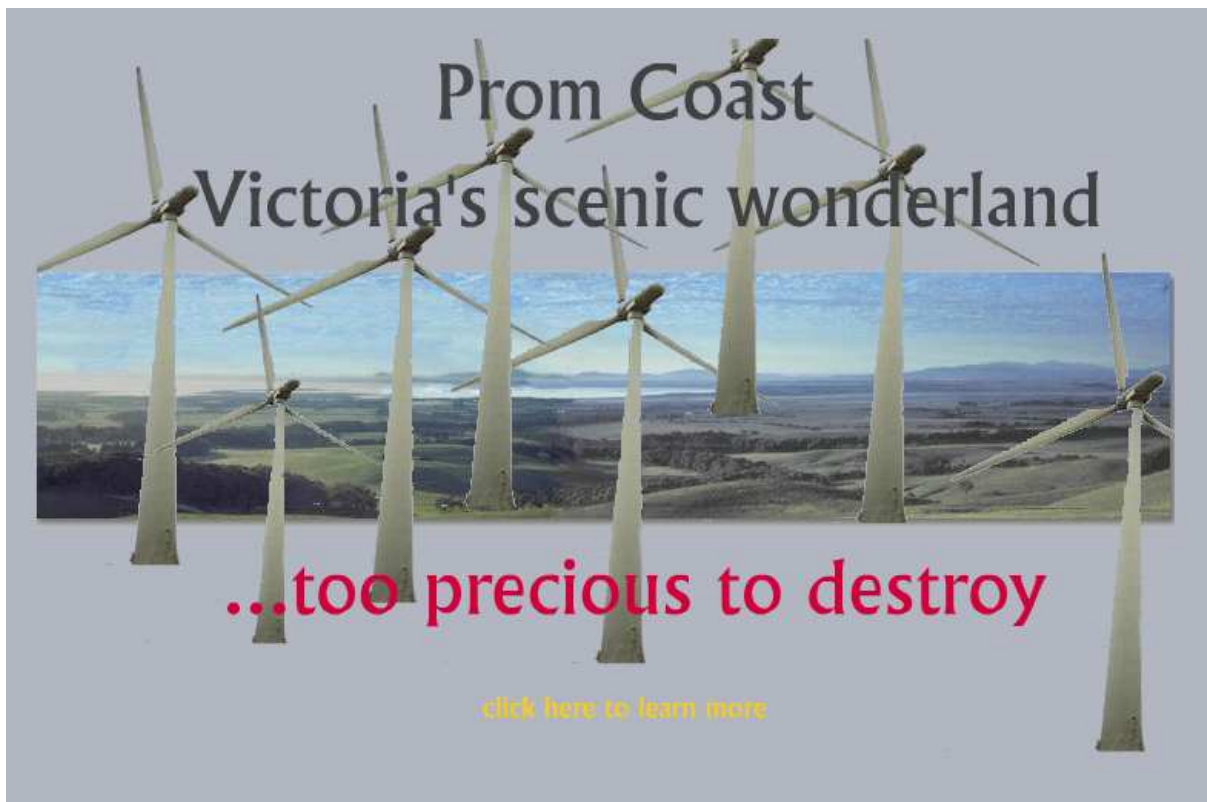


Figure 3: Introduction to Prom Coast Guardians internet site (www.promcoastguardians.org) [Accessed 13 May 2007]. Image captured by author.

Prom Coast Guardians and other guardian groups in Victoria, including the predominant Tarwin Valley Coastal Guardians and the Coastal Guardians, Victoria,

were set up in response to proposed wind farm developments. Aside from the National Trust, with its landscape heritage arm, Australia has no large group comparable to the CPRE or the CPRW. In fact no group dedicated to the preservation of the countryside or the protection of landscape existed before the Portland wind energy project was assessed in 2001 (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007). It was during that assessment process that the landscape most valued by Victorians was defined as being 'natural' and vegetated: the 'bush' (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007; Macintosh and Downie, 2006). However, the establishment of landscape guardian groups suggests that strongly held rural and countryside landscape values exist in Victoria, as well highlighting the transnationalisation of landscape concerns.¹⁵ Because wind farms have been limited by policy to farmlands, it should not be surprising that the development of wind energy in Victoria has drawn out and highlighted landscape and countryside values. The CPRE, in its campaigns on countryside futures, tranquillity in landscapes, and countryside character, emphasises the personal and subjective value in landscapes and rural place. It notes that 'tranquillity is threatened by ... the expansion of energy infrastructure' (<http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/tranquillity> [Accessed 10 June 2007]). This sense of threat to tranquillity is noted by the Prom Coast Guardians (2003), and is reiterated by the CPRE in its policy on onshore wind farms (2006b, 1), when it says:

'the visual impact of large wind turbines can be a form of pollution which damages the landscape ... we will strongly resist [wind farms] which damage the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of the English countryside'.

In addition to the anthropocentric values about beauty and personal landscape experience, opponents sometimes also adopt ecocentric beliefs about the appropriateness of wind turbines within 'nature' or place. Just as opponents argue that wind turbines despoil a landscape, they disturb a social construction of a landform, they may also argue that wind farms do not belong in a particularly constructed 'nature' or place (Creswell, 2004; Brandenburg and Carroll, 1995). Their beliefs are a new exposition on Douglas' (2002) explanation of pollution as matter out of place. While some people have a spiritual or emotional connection to nature or place that they want to protect for their own or shared human satisfaction (Planisphere, 2004; Creswell, 2004), others simply appreciate the existence of the place, whether they live close by or never visit it (Short, 2002; Brandenburg and Carroll, 1995).

The CPRE's (2006a) views that wind turbines should be prohibited from nationally designated areas is a reflection of this belief that wind farms simply do not belong in

¹⁵ See for example the international network of landscape guardian groups on the Country Guardians on its internet site (www.countryguardian.net) [Accessed 1 June 2007].

certain areas: areas valued for anthropocentric or ecocentric reasons. Claims that wind farms industrialise the rural and nature, and characterisations of wind turbines as ‘mechanical weeds’ (Brittan, 2001) reflect this belief that wind farms are often out of place (Planisphere, 2004; Katz, 1998; Kempton et al, 2005; Prom Coast Guardians, 2003; Brittan, 2001; Ellis et al, 2006a, 2006b; Woods, 2003; Country Guardian internet page (www.countryguardian.net) [Accessed 15 May 2007]). It is this aspect of the storyline that also draws in some of the large environmental groups. In Victoria, these groups support the exclusion of wind turbines from designated reserves and ACF now checks its support for wind farms in places highly valued by communities (Richter, personal communication, 2007).

Landscape and place values are poorly represented in the policy and decision-making process for wind energy and wind farms (Planisphere, 2004). Mostly, visual amenity assessment is conflated with landscape assessment (Kempton et al, 2005) and, at least in Victoria, a specific landscape and place assessment is rarely carried out (Sinclair Knight Merz, 2001). The experience at Portland, where opposing sides engaged in a discourse of photomontage display and arguments about aesthetics (Mercer, 2003) has been replicated. The tendency to map, classify, and objectify landscape (Lothian, 1999), which disguises subjective and varied values of the landscape, has been followed by the Australian Council of National Trusts and AusWEA in their joint effort to develop a policy and assessment process for landscape within the wind energy debate (Planisphere, 2004). It is a laudable and encouraging project, but one that will not eliminate largely subjective landscape and place-based opposition to wind farms while it prescribes a scientific approach to landscape assessment.

The alternative, however, are the subjective tests employed by the UK countryside conservation and guardian groups, which are value-based and highly judgmental (Bell et al, 2005), and would be no better at averting conflict. The CPRE (2006b, 3) claims that it will support ‘appropriately located’ wind farms in ‘the least environmentally sensitive areas’, having regard to a suite of criteria.¹⁶ The Country Guardians lists a number of minimum requirements for wind farms that are highly subjective and could potentially be used to oppose any wind farm. The CPRW has a similar approach: one that has caused it to oppose almost all proposals in Wales (Toke and Strachan, 2006) except for ‘single turbine and small clusters for community use ... where their impact has been acceptable’ (Ogden, personal communication, 2007).

¹⁶ Different, and more forgiving criteria have been developed for offshore wind turbines that reflect a level of acceptance to wind energy at sea (CPRE, 2006a). However, such proposals, with requirements for onshore infrastructure will still likely remain controversial. See for instance the conflict over pylons in Scotland (Milner, 2007).


*like chain saws in the hills,
catching birds in their arms,
killing the peace of Llywernog,
they came as sly as a fox,
rising like mushrooms overnight
and standing in a row on the moor,
practising karate with their arms,
splitting the wind and the quietness.*

Figure 4: Poem on Country Guardian web page attributed to Welsh school children (www.countyguardian.net) [Accessed 18 May 2007]


The hybridity of arguments¹⁷ of landscape guardian and national countryside conservation groups: including concerns about landscape and place, protection of birds, the conduct of proponents, and suspicion of the technology (Ellis et al, 2006a, 2006b) are illustrated in Figures 4 - a poem published by Country Guardians - and 5, a pamphlet created by a member of the CPRW without official sanction (Ogden, personal communication, 2007).

The production of pamphlets like Figure 5 by individuals within the discourse coalition exemplifies the diversity of expression and composition within the landscape guardian groups. The diversity of these actors, and because the landscape guardian association is being used as the model for wind farm opposition, means that they will invariably attract and include within their collective views and values climate change scepticism (Smith, R, personal communication, 2007) and the small quotient of 'pure' NIMBYism (Wolsink, 2007a, 2007b), with support for wind farm proposals elsewhere: in someone else's backyard.

¹⁷ The concept of hybridity of environmental argument and values is not well explored. It has a much firmer academic foundation in development and cultural studies. Radcliffe, S and Laurie (2006), for instance, explore the hybridity of culture and social networks within a globalised environment and Watson (2006) employs the idea of hybridity to environmental knowledges. As noted earlier, we are currently observing greater transnationalisation of environmental concerns and knowledge than ever before (Doyle, 2005; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003), which exists at the supporter level (through international networks) and the opponent level (through more informal networks of landscape guardians).



Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales



WOLVES IN GREEN CLOTHING

DO NOT BE FOOLED BY WINDFARMS

Do not be fooled into thinking that windfarms are green and are politically correct. They are deceitful, inconsequential and destructive.

CPRW has no fundamental objection to harnessing the wind at the right scale and in the right place - this is not the way to do it.

DECEITFUL...

Do not be fooled - these things are not 'farms' at all but industrial installations. They are located in open countryside where no other type of industrial development would be considered.

CPRW is totally opposed to wind power stations as inappropriate, out-of-scale structures in increasingly precious open countryside - as industrialisation by the back door.

Do not be fooled - windpower stations are not choices between nuclear and renewable. Windpower by definition is unreliable - it cannot replace fossil fuel or nuclear stations that produce the dependable bulk of electricity - the base load. The distribution system can only absorb a certain amount of intermittent electricity (no more than 20%).

CPRW maintains that it is irresponsible to delude people into thinking that wind will replace nuclear.

INCONSEQUENTIAL...

Do not be fooled - windpower stations in Wales in 1994 produced 167 GWh out of a total production of 15,689 GWh = approx 1%. Experience shows that windstations attain up to 25% of their capacity. This means that only the vast power stations at Carno and Llandinam could come anywhere near being included in National Grid daily calculations when orders are made for electricity generation which could affect the demand for fossil fuel burning.

CPRW believes that the people of Wales do not want to see more and more Llandinam/Carno type desecration in our uplands.

DESTRUCTIVE...

Do not be fooled - wind power stations destroy the precious qualities of rural Wales for no purpose.

A 30% reduction in demand (which is well within reach) would lead to an immediate 12% reduction in greenhouse gases - much more than can be achieved by the tiny output of wind stations.

CPRW advocates greater investment in energy conservation and the concentration of the supply of power where the demand is - in urban areas.

Support our campaign to save our uplands and to seek acceptable long - term solutions to our energy crisis by reducing demand, using energy efficiently, cleaning up conventional sources of supply as well as looking at the long-term input from renewables.

CPRW, Ty Gwyn, 31 High Street, Welshpool, Powys. SY21 7YD
Tel: (01938) 552525/556;
Fax: (01938) 5521

Figure 5: CPRW member produced pamphlet. Source and copyright unknown.

Chapter 4: Policy implications and conclusions

Policy and values

The actors within the wind energy debate, irrespective of their views about wind energy and whether they are active or passive participants in the present transnational conflict in Victoria and Britain, have deeply held and plural values. They are values that transcend the anthropocentric and the ecocentric in both pro- and anti-wind coalitions, though they differ in realm: from those based in economy and society to those grounded in ecosystem and morality, and others in aesthetics and place. Table 8 summarises the discourse coalitions, their storylines, and the hybrid values associated with, and driving the distinctive actors within the coalitions. In addition to these preliminary and significant conclusions about the nature of discourse coalitions in the wind energy debate, I have reached two conclusions with important policy consequences.

First, despite the identified presence of values within the wind energy debate, there is a deficiency of values in the policy and decision-making processes. As I have explored and analysed, this is for a variety of reasons. Principal among them is because proponents and policy-makers appeal to science and rationality as well as principles of sustainable development to argue for, and assess the merits of, wind energy and wind farms (Ellis et al, 2006a, 2006b). Consequently, arguments are hybridised and funnelled into the value realms of science, economy, and technology at the expense of arguments engaging with landscape, nature and place. This narrowing of the expressed value set is exacerbated by a difficulty or inability by many environmentalists to articulate their subjective views in a setting that lacks policy support for values on socially constructed landscapes, natures, and places. The wind energy experience is not unique. Broadly in environmental politics there is a tendency to characterise environmental conflicts as disagreements about facts. This tendency encourages the use of frames, to formulate views, knowledge and arguments in a way that the advocate understands in a complex and conflicted setting. Technocrats and bureaucrats characterise environmental conflicts in this 'hard' way because they are attracted to the belief that science will lead to a rational outcome drawn out of consensus (Bennett, 1992; Irwin, 1995). Others participate in this discourse believing it the best way to either support or undermine proposals. As O'Neill, J (1993) notes, however, while science may be necessary and reliable, it is not sufficient to explain or resolve this conflict. This is because it is a conflict that involves choice in science, where 'the issues themselves involve moral and aesthetic judgements: they deal not with what is true but rather with what is valuable' (Weinberg, 1972, 213).

Values and consensus

There is an expectation that deliberative processes, including those employed in the policy and project assessments arena, follow a linear and progressive approach, ultimately leading to a consensus outcome (Hajer, 1995; Economou, 1993). My second conclusion with important policy consequences is that this study has shown that consensus outcomes will be rare in matters concerning wind energy within the present political and social environments, and that wind energy may be an entrenched and 'intractable' dispute (Putnam et al, 2003; Warren et al 2005; Rein and Schön, 1991). This is particularly the case because participation is increasingly narrow and between actors with most the divergent philosophical views, and who have entrenched the conflict through their fact and myth-busting dialogue. The narrowing of participation and the translocation of landscape guardianship has led to initiatives like Yes2Wind and BWEA's use of celebrity champions, which seeks to inspire citizens to participate in the debate with an implicit goal of reaching consensus through dilution of opposition.

The worth of the deliberative processes should not be judged on the whether consensus is reached, but whether the process informs, and encourages discussion and collaboration (Innes and Booher, 2003), particularly on the comparability of the plurality of values held by participants (Fleisher Trainor, 2006; O'Neill, J, 1993). We need to identify whether the process and seeks to enrich, influence, legitimate, and achieve understanding and acceptance of decisions that democratically elected governments will ultimately make (Smith, G, 2003; Owens 2002, 2004; Rydin, 2003). It is within this context that the current fascination with streamlining and simplifying planning and environmental assessments, particularly for development perceived as being in the national or regional need, is concerning.¹⁸ Within the wind energy debate the policy process is being hindered by the existence of conceptual, institutional, and policy barriers to discourse, which in turn is discouraging the discussion of plural, diverse, and hybrid views and values.

¹⁸ The recent UK Government planning white paper (UK Government, 2007, 20), for instance, sets a goal of developing a 'streamlined, efficient and predictable system'. In Australia, deliberative processes have recently been constrained in Victoria, where the Government, contrary to standard practice, has prohibited cross-examination of witnesses by objectors in the Channel Deepening assessment. In Tasmania, the proponent of a pulp mill withdrew from a forthcoming deliberative process and the Government responded legislatively by substituting the process with a peer review closed to the public and subject to a legislated time-line demanded by the developer.

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