

Margaret Thornborrow

**MRET Review Secretariat
GPO Box 621
Canberra ACT 2601**

Dear Panel Members

Re: - MRET Review.

We wish to make comment on the MRET review.

I along with my partner live at Leslea Court, Yanakie on the Prom Coast in Victoria. I am a Tourist operator in this area and have three self contained Cabins. I have travelled extensively throughout the world and have chosen to settle in the Prom Coast area of Victoria as it is one of the most beautiful areas in our state and has some unique landscape qualities..

The areas of review we would like to address submission to are:

- **The extent to which the policy objectives of this Act have been achieved and the need for any alternative approach:**
- **The possible introduction of a portfolio approach, a cap on the contribution of any one source.**
- **The appropriateness of policy settings including the:**
 - i. ***relevant economic and social impacts that have resulted from the implementation of the provisions of this Act; and***

**RENEWABLE ENERGY (ELECTRICITY) ACT 2000
- SECT 3
Object/outline**

Policy objective [c] *to ensure that renewable energy sources are ecologically sustainable.*

ecologically sustainable

(a)

decision-making processes should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations;

(b)

if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation;

(c)

the principle of inter-generational equity, which is that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations;

(d)

the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making;

The landscape of Victoria is an important part of Australia's heritage and we should not be allowing it to be taken over by wind power stations.

Since the introduction of MRET the wind power industry has been staking claims right along the Southern Coast of Victoria showing little regard for landscape, rural communities, heritage values or the rights of individual landowners.

We need to consider very carefully what our coastal and rural landscapes will look like if the expansion of the wind power industry is encouraged. The decisions we make now will effect the heritage we pass on to future generations. We owe it to our children to leave our landscape in a better condition than we inherited it.

MRET has caused a gold rush mentality within the wind energy industry, which is staking claims on areas all around the coast, *in anticipation of the retention of MRET*, to build a chain of wind power stations along Victoria's Great Southern Coastline like a giant picket fence.

This industry is taking on the appearance of being an insatiable creature that needs to be constantly fed taxpayers money to survive, they were jubilant at MRET being introduced and went around the coastline like wildfire signing up farmers to agreements, now they want MRET increased and to keep on increasing. They also want their industry to get the lions share of the funds.

Is the government going to have to keep feeding them with more and more tax payers money to keep them viable?

The wind industry can't stand on it's own two feet any where in the world for heavens sake let's wake up now and say 'no'.

We notice that overseas countries such as Denmark are now backing away from wind power and cutting back the subsidies as there has been no reduction in Greenhouse Gas Emissions and their power is much more expensive than neighbouring countries.

We are in the unique position of being behind many other countries in the uptake of wind power and if we can just put a bit more thought into the whole equation we can end up in front of overseas countries by avoiding their mistakes.

Australia is a country blessed with an abundance of sunshine, Solar power should be the preferred renewable energy.

The economic and social impacts of wind power stations is starting to become apparent even with just the few that have been built so far:

- Industrialisation of our coastal and rural landscapes.

- Community division

- Wind Power companies sign property owners to agreements that contain confidentiality clauses. When the neighbours and the rest of the surrounding community find out what is proposed an object these landowners get very angry at the objectors, not the company who signed them.

- Noise – The incessant repetitive noise of the turbines has caused major disruption to the lives of those forced to live within close proximity.

- Property devaluation

- Jobs promised but not delivered

- Rural communities unfortunate enough to be targeted for wind power stations, which can be visible up to 40 kms away, will be locked out of future financial opportunities which capitalise on the landscape qualities of their areas to attract tourists and future residents.

The Victorian State Government has introduced their '**Policy and planning guidelines for development of wind energy facilities in Victoria**'. This policy has effectively taken the community and local government out of the Planning Process for wind power station development. We feel this policy is inappropriate and contravenes the objectives of the Federal Governments MRET policy.

Landscape, social impact, environmental concerns and inter-generation equity should be of utmost importance and override other considerations.

In conclusion I would like to make the following recommendations:

MRET be scrapped.

Put more money into Solar rebates and the Solar industry.

Fund a public campaign to reduce power consumption.

Force coal fired electricity generating industries to reduce emissions.

Should MRET be retained we would ask that only isolated 'off the grid' wind power stations that have strong community support be eligible for the subsidies

I would also like to object to AUSWEA's campaign for public support via a 'click here' web site to send a pre-formatted submission on the MRET review. If you ask anyone 'do you support green energy' of course they are going to say yes, however most people don't know of the other issues associated with MRET and indeed the wind industry in general. The submissions received from this web site should not be considered in the panels decision.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Thornborrow