

Western Morning News

PUBLIC CONNED OVER NEED FOR TURBINES

Date : 19.11.04

I listened to Mike O'Brien, the Energy Minister, on Radio Devon and heard reports of his statement at the Regen SW conference on the need for large numbers of wind turbines in Devon to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 2010 (and beyond) for the sake of the planet. Why does he, his government and the renewables industry continue to confuse green energy with renewable energy?

Wind power is indeed both green and renewable if used directly by the supplier, but if the energy goes into the National Grid - which is the case for the proposed massive wind power turbines in Devon - there is virtually no saving of carbon dioxide emissions. This has been confirmed by the Danes, world leaders in wind energy.

The reason is simple. Wind is intermittent and to maintain continuity of supply conventional power stations must remain on standby, emitting CO2 but making no electricity. When there is either too much or too little wind and the turbine stands idle, the power station comes on stream. A conventional power station takes days to warm up, so cannot be turned off unless we are prepared to let the lights go out.

Supporters of wind power fail to make this known and lead people to think that wind energy is green energy because the wind is "free". Wrong. They intimate that it is our duty to have wind turbines, whatever the environmental cost, if we are to save the planet for future generations.

The Government is trying to appear "green" and the wind industry is promoting its turbines on the false premise of saving our planet while taking massive subsidies from taxpayers. It is a winning situation for a few and an irretrievable loss for the majority.

We are being conned, and the consequences are a potential environmental disaster.

Susan Kingdon

Braunton, North Devon