



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

Department of Energy & Climate Change
3 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

www.gov.uk

Mrs V C K Metcalfe

Our ref: TO2014/12766

31 October 2014

Dear Mrs Metcalfe

Thank you for your letter dated 19 August to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) about wind power. We sincerely apologise for the long delay in replying to you.

Wind generators, in the same way as all other industries, are covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) which requires them as duty holders to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees and any members of the public who may be affected by their activities.

Duty-holders are responsible for assessing and controlling the risks from their undertaking and it is for the sector to prepare industry standards. For example, RenewableUK, the trade and professional body for the wind industry in the UK, have published wind turbine safety rules and guidance, details of which can be seen at <http://www.renewableuk.com/>.

In the UK, The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) performs appropriate regulatory checks on the operation and maintenance of wind turbines and also commissions research as needed. Where there is evidence that monitoring programmes may be required to increase understanding of potential health impacts of any activity then these should be conducted.

Turning to your last question, in 2012, DECC estimated that approximately 7.4 million tonnes of CO₂ were avoided in the UK where onshore wind power displaces electricity generated from fossil-fuelled power generation. This figure was calculated using the total amount of electricity generated by onshore wind (12,121 GWh of electricity for onshore wind), multiplied by an estimate of the amount of carbon dioxide emissions per gigawatt hour (GWh) of electricity supplied for the known fossil fuel mix for electricity generation in the UK (609t CO₂/Gwh), divided by average equivalent carbon emissions per capita 2009 (7.4 million tonnes). The Department publishes these figures as part of its Digest of UK energy statistics (DUKES) series, which can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digest-of-uk-energy-statistics-dukes#2013>

I hope that this is useful.

Yours sincerely,
DECC Correspondence Unit

From: correspondence@decc.gsi.gov.uk [<mailto:correspondence@decc.gsi.gov.uk>]

Sent: 31 October 2014 12:00

To: Christine Metcalfe

Subject: A response to your enquiry to DECC - Ref: TO2014/12766

Dear Mrs Metcalfe,

Please find attached our response to your recent enquiry.

Regards

DECC Correspondence Unit

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From: Christine Metcalfe

Sent: 17 November 2014 21:47

To: 'correspondence@decc.gsi.gov.uk'

Cc: Fergus Ewing MSP; Elizabeth Truss MP; Owen Patterson MP; Chris Heaton-Harris MP; Michael Russell MSP; Graeme Pearson MSP; Struan Stevenson; John Constable; Jeremy Hunt MP; David Cameron MP

Subject: RE: Response to your enquiry to DECC .Ref: TO2014/12766

Importance: High

Sir,

Please find attached a response to your letter of the 31st. October 2014 plus three of the attachments referred to in the letter.

I should like to draw your particular attention to the attached important recent submission by Pat Swords BE CEng FICHEM CEnv MIEMA, to the Northern Ireland Assembly Environment Committee, in which the following observations are made (my emphasis).

***“Elections are only a ‘roll call’ to select public representatives and not put ‘rulers’ into place with unlimited powers by diktat. The environment of the UK does not belong to administrators of the UK or of the EU to do what they want with it, such as filling it with wind turbines and pylons. Instead, the environment of the UK belongs to its people and they have defined rights in law, which must be respected. History teaches us that populist trends and fashions come and go; as a result that is why a defined legal structure and associated rights have been put in place. This legal structure and associated rights are there for a reason, as part of the necessary checks and balances.*”**

So let's look at those rights and the legal structure, which was put in place to control such matters. Principle 10 of the United Nations Rio Declaration of 1992 spelt it out:

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=78&ArticleID=1163>

- *Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.”*

These statement truly reflect why the detailed nature of the attached response was and remains, necessary.

I should be grateful for confirmation of receipt of this email and the four attachments.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. V.C.K. Metcalfe.