

SAVE CENTRAL

Reversing the Irreversible

Attention: News Editor
17 August 2008

Save Central, an Otago-based environmental group dedicated to protecting Otago's outstanding natural landscapes and heritage from inappropriate development, applauds the Government's recognition of irreversible impact as a key detraction of Renewables development, as observed in its recently released Renewables Policy statement.

Save Central acknowledges that Climate Change is a 21st-century issue of singular importance, yet does not agree with assertions to the effect that all Renewable Energy is necessarily 'greener', or more economic.

Commenting on the National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation, Save Central coordinator, Graye Shattky, said that the new requirement to have 'particular regard' to the reversibility of adverse environmental effects is likely to rule out future consideration of outstanding natural and heritage landscapes as sites for major wind farms.

'In theory it may be feasible to remove turbines and pylons, but the network of roads, access tracks and laydown areas will remain as scars on the landscape for hundreds, if not thousands of years.', said Mr Shattky.

While motivated by commendable ambitions, the Government's Renewables strategy also lacks a solution for extended still periods of low rainfall, such as occurred in the 2008 drought, when wind notably underperformed, winter demand rose, and the nation was heavily reliant on thermal generation.

Save Central welcomes the new policy's requirement that local authorities enable the development of small, sensitively located, community-scale-oriented generation from renewable resources. Yet Shattky remains concerned that, for the present, Central Otago's outstanding landscapes remain unprotected.

'The Central Otago District Plan presently fails to identify and adequately protect all of Central Otago's outstanding landscapes from the adverse effects of industrial development. The Government's new policy, specifically its provision with regard to "reversibility", places further pressure on the CODC to urgently remedy this deficiency.'

As yet, no national policies on wind farms and their construction exist to minister appropriate development of industrial wind farms in terms of size, cumulative impact, bird-kill, landscape, heritage and ecological issues, or proximity to homes.

For your more information, contact:

Graye Shattky

Coordinator

Save Central

027 499 5141

03 447 3744

exemplar@xtra.co.nz

Richard Reeve

Media Liaison

Save Central

027 716 4038

03 482 2215

save.central@xtra.co.nz

Or visit savecentral.org