I write as an ordinary, member of the public, feeling utterly powerless and ignored, in the face of greedy, giant, multinational windfarm developers.

I would like to make some pertinent observations:-

**BACKING THE WRONG TECHNOLOGY**
Has no one noticed the 14,000 abandoned turbines, rusting in the Californian desert? They simply did not deliver the power promised at an affordable cost.
www.naturalnews.com

**RUN OUT OF SPACE**
One only has to glance at the SNH map, Highland council map, or CAWT map of windfarm locations, to see the disproportionately massive footprint required to supply a tiny trickle of unreliable, intermittent energy.
www.snh.gov.uk  www.highland.gov.uk  www.cawt.co.uk

**ENVIRONMENTAL DEVASTATION and VISUAL INTRUSION**
The quiet, rural nature of Scotland’s countryside is being overwhelmed by giant industrial machinery that is completely out of scale with the environment:
bulldozed tracks, pylons, millions of tons of soil removed, thousands of lorry loads of concrete, whole forests and hillsides, ruined by what is meant to be a green policy! Our National Parks are being surrounded by industrial turbines!

**DAMAGE TO TOURISM**
I have heard many adverse comments about windfarms, made by visiting tourists who come to Scotland for peace, quiet, scenery and seclusion. Please see attached letter – “I met a German”

Also Mountaineering Council of Scotland’s 11,000 members, John Muir Trust’s 10,000 members, outdoor enthusiasts, photographers, and most enlightened environmentalists object to windfarms.

Even Donald Trump’s huge investment in our tourism industry is being stalled!

**SUBSIDY FARMING**
“A cash crop for farmers” a neighbour of mine commented. Just one glance at the windfarm location map by CAWT surely indicates that some pretty dubious tactics are being employed by devious developers.

Aberdeenshire farmers can spot a moneymaking scam when they see it!
www.cawt.co.uk

**COST TO ECONOMY**
The escalating cost of paying ongoing subsidies during the recession is quite simply unaffordable. £25,000,000 to switch off when the weather is too windy is simply outrageous! Even Ofgem “has long standing concerns".  
The Times Jan 18th 2012
ROGUE DEVELOPERS
Local residents feel utterly powerless in the face of giant multinationals and rogue developers who repeatedly and willfully subvert the planning system. Speak to any resident of Cunningstong or Moray MSP Richard Lochead for information on that one! The letters pages of the Scottish press can also be illuminating.

DICTATORSHIP FROM HOLYROOD
Local Councils, and democratic decisions against windfarm developers are frequently overturned by Holyrood politicians, against the will of local people.

The planning system is clearly undemocratic, a shambles and not fit for purpose!

Notice how the Dorenell approval was sneaked out during the holiday period.

SOCIAL COST AND DIVISION
Fuel Impoverished neighbours of millionaire landowners feel resentful paying vast subsidies to obscenely wealthy aristocrats, who are often absentee landlords living abroad, caring not a jot for our environment.

DAMAGE TO HEALTH
A clearly specified, national minimum distance from industrial wind turbines is an urgent priority. Growing international evidence of major health issues are of real concern! The Waubra Foundation recommend at least 10 kilometres.

DAMAGE TO WILDLIFE
Thousands of birds are killed each year by turbines. Surely when we are trying to attract visitors to see our glorious environment and wildlife we must do better than this.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

SLOW DOWN!
Let’s retain existing plant and valuable engineering expertise we have in existing technology a little longer, to better support development in more reliable, emerging technologies. A single, new, clean gas power station would save our environment from the devastation of 25,000 turbines, and buy time!

RENEGOTIATE TARGETS
Energy is far too important to be a political issue. Trying to meet impossible deadlines in the current recession is hugely damaging. There would be no disgrace in reconfiguring the targets and much to be gained from a more modest, more prudent, more affordable timescale.

SWITCH SUBSIDIES
The subsidies for inefficient, intermittent, unsightly windfarms that require backup should be swopped to technologies that deliver reliable, predictable, constant power.
SUPPORT DOMESTIC SCHEMES
Small scale renewables, like the hydro scheme in Knoydart, small farmyard windmills, solar panels, energy conservation and efficiency are the way to go.

KEEP INDUSTRIAL SCALE INSTALLATIONS OFFSHORE!
There is no place for vast, industrial turbines on land. The iconic, pastoral nature of our landscapes is treasured by millions and must be kept that way.

“It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment”
Ansel Adams

Yours, trying to preserve the Highlands

George Herraghty
Member of Moray Mountaineering Club, Grampian Club and John Muir Trust
26 January 2012
Dear Mr Stevenson,

I met a German…

(a true story)

…walking across Scotland. We stood high on the hills above Loch Ness. He gazed out from under his black bonnet, white hair gently blowing in the wind.

We were standing on the site of a proposed wind farm.

His piercing blue eyes stared out over the landscape to the North, miles of unspoilt wilderness, blue grey to the horizon.

The preliminary bulldozed tracks were already evident at our feet.

A small bird took flight about fifty feet away. “A lark” I said. “No, it is a meadow pipit” he corrected. “I spotted him with the binoculars a while ago”.

“I have walked this way for many, many years, on holiday, and now there is going to be a wind farm” he said. “It is heart achingly beautiful”.

“How can the Scots allow this to happen?” he said.

“I thought the Scots were a proud, strong people who would defend their land, heritage and environment with their lives”.

We shared a dram, toasting the unspoiled wilderness. Both of us shed a tear.

George Herraghty