SUBMISSION FROM ALAN & TRICIA KEITH

Targets

Are the 2020 renewables targets (for electricity and heat) achievable? If not, why not?

Response - The targets are totally unrealistic and cannot be met. Research by competent independent organisations such as Poyry, National Grid etc. indicates that as the proportion of wind energy in the system increases, major problems in managing it will surface. No satisfactory means of dealing with these have yet been found. Potential methods of mitigating the threats to grid stability, such as energy storage, smart grids and demand manipulation are at early stages of development and experience tells us that viable solutions are many years away. Going forward with blind faith driven by academic ideals is not (or certainly should not be) an option for government. These targets must be drastically lowered if Scotland is to be saved from disaster.

What contribution will achievement of the 2020 renewables targets make to meeting Scotland’s CO2 emissions targets (a reduction of at least 42% by 2020 and an 80% reduction target for 2050) under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009?

Response - Even if the target were to be achieved (which is not possible as explained earlier) the contribution to CO2 emissions targets would be far less than predicted. The main reason for this is the use of optimistic figures for the reduction in CO2 due to use of wind produced electricity. The currently used figure of 0.43 Kg/kWh has already been shown to be unrealistic and the recent study by Fred Udu based on wind energy in the Irish system suggests that actual net CO2 savings may even be negative.

Will increase in demand from electric heat and transport be offset by efficiencies elsewhere?

Response – This appears to be wishful thinking.

Has the Scottish Government made any estimation of the overall costs of achieving the targets, and identified which parties will bear them?

Response. - No genuinely independent competent scientific and economically based research appears to have been carried out on the estimation of costs and who will bear them, although it is obvious that the man in the street will do so ultimately.

Challenges
(a) Technology

Is the technology to meet these targets available and affordable? If not, what needs to be done?
Response – it is evident that the technology available is either inadequate or at such an early stage in development that its eventual worth is not measurable. Wind is well-developed and will not increase in efficiency to any great extent. It’s costs are uneconomic without subsidy and true cost impacts that fully take into account the necessary balancing costs add to the burden borne by consumers. Other technologies such as solar, wave and tidal are also uneconomic and storage on almost any scale is highly uneconomic. What needs urgently to be done is to accept that the targets are unachievable and unnecessary and abandon them now.

Are electricity generating or heat producing technologies compatible with the need for security of energy supplies?

Response – Renewables, with the exception of hydro-electric are never going to be compatible with energy security due to intermittency.

Are our universities and research institutes fully geared up to the need for technological development, innovation and commercialisation?

Response – Probably not, as there is a tendency for academics not to understand the big picture in terms of macro-economics and social factors.

(b) Supply chain and infrastructure

Is the supply chain in Scotland in place to meet the targets?

Response – Clearly not.

What further improvements are needed to the grid infrastructure or heat supply networks both at a national and a local level? Additionally, are we confident that the necessary infrastructure can be developed and financed so that Scotland can export any excess electricity generated to the rest of the UK and/or the EU? What is the role for the Scottish Government here?

Response – The grid is adequate provided the plans for generating large amounts of wind energy are abandoned immediately as recommended earlier. This will avoid the massive damage to Scotland’s landscapes which is planned. Attempting to export large volumes of power to the UK and the continent is futile as there are no grounds to suppose that the level of demand for it will be worthwhile. The case of Denmark as shown by Sharman in his report of Sept 2009 proves that the economic case is flawed. The role for the Scottish government is to protect its people from fuel poverty, rather than grandstanding futilely as the saviours of the world.

(c) Planning and consents

Is the planning system adequately resourced and fit for purpose?

Response - No. It is deliberately made impotent by government instruction so as to be unable to protect local people from the blight of wind turbines.
How can national priorities be reconciled with local interests?

Response – In this matter it is not possible. The answer is to abandon costly and damaging national priorities.

(d) Access to finance

Will sufficient funds be available to allow investment in both the installation and the development of relevant technologies? What can the Scottish Government do to influence this?

Response – what is important is that proper independent research is carried out by the best people and organisations. This does not happen when vested interests are involved and where the work of inexperienced academics is relied on, as seems to be the case currently. Advice from experts such as Rupert Soames, CE of Aggreko, should be given more weight.

What will the impacts be on consumers and their bills?

Response – Unless a major change in policy takes place, with much less emphasis on wind, solar and other inefficient and unreliable renewable technologies, serious economic impact on the consumer will be unavoidable. Recent reports by Poyry, National Grid and others all indicate increasing cost in proportion to increasing use of wind power.

(e) Skills and workforce development

Will Scotland have sufficient home-grown skills to attract inward investment? Are current policies producing the desired move towards Science Technology Engineering and Maths subjects at schools and universities? Is the skills transfer from the oil and gas sectors being realised?

Response – Scotland should concentrate on developing expertise other than that appropriate to renewable engineering. Studies worldwide have shown that every job in renewables displaces more than one job in productive industries. It is essential for Scotland to develop alternative products and services as the renewable industry is already well served by overseas expertise and set to decline soon.

(f) Energy market reform and the subsidy regime

Are the reforms of the energy markets and subsidy regimes at both UK and EU level sufficient?

Response – Absolutely not. There is a critical need for review and change at all levels. The entire basis of the market is now fatally flawed. The need for carbon reduction is exaggerated by the climate change fanatics and a more balanced outlook is long overdue. Any proposals to reduce carbon emissions must be agreed on a world-wide
basis before any country implements measures, which must be based on good science rather than at present. Scotland and the UK must not continue to sacrifice their people in such a futile manner as at present.

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