

EnergyGreenPaper2006@dcmnr.ie

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### **Comments to Energy Green Paper Submissions**

This is a further very welcome addition to the Irish literature on energy issues. Before commenting I would like to congratulate the Minister and his Department for their initiative in establishing the Power of One campaign. Many people could find difficulty in understanding the issues in the Energy Green Paper. The Power of One explains well why the critical period between 5pm and 7pm is so important. People need to know why they must change their lifestyle.

I responded in considerable detail to the Energy Research, Development and Demonstration Consultation Paper on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2005. My paper had the heading "The Time is Short." This title was taken from the introduction to my book "Sun Power", ( see J.C.McVeigh, Cleland McVeigh for this and some other publications ) where I warned that this was the only message I could give to those who were in a position to influence national energy policies towards an increasing use of solar energy.

#### **The Ministerial Forward**

"We have a strong economy and a growing population leading to increased energy demand into the future, which will have to be met against the background of legally binding environmental commitments and carbon constraints."

Unfortunately increased energy demand is not an option. *All developed countries have to reduce their energy demands very drastically. Not some years ahead –2010, 2015 or 2020 BUT STARTING NOW.*

Global Warming could seriously alter Ireland's climate within the next decade, not in 30 to 50 years time.

The comments on Global Trends as part of General Policy Context, are deeply flawed. The projections for the year 2030 cannot be reconciled with the known and generally accepted views on the availability of fossil fuels.

The International Energy Agency has been warning the world about these issues for some years. The most serious problem is that energy statistics are not reliable.

#### **Problems with energy data**

Two years ago, October 2004, Claude Mandil, executive director of the Paris-based International Energy Agency, presented a reassuring assessment of the prospects for global energy supplies, but drew attention to serious concerns about energy security, investment, the environment and energy poverty. He called for more vigorous action to "steer the global energy system onto a more sustainable path". He continued "Our continuing heavy reliance on carbon-emitting fossil fuels and the predicted inexorable increases in global energy demand from now till 2030 is deeply troubling" (Mandil, 2004).

The increasing unreliability of energy statistics has been highlighted (IEA, 2004), where attention is drawn to the major challenges that have arisen in recent years. Maintaining what they call the "very high calibre" of IEA statistics has become increasingly difficult because

national administrations have faced growing problems in maintaining the quality of their own statistics. Breaks in time series and missing data have become frequent in some countries. The IEA compound this lack of clarity by lumping together and adding "at least as much non-conventional oil". IEA (2005) warns that known reserves of oil and gas are limited. Projected growth depends on large new discoveries in the Middle East and North Africa. Therefore the known reserves in these countries are not a sufficient basis for the projected production increases. (ASPO, 2006).

#### **Demand Side Management**

This should have immediate priority. The technology is not new. It needs no research. Fergus Wheatley has pointed out that Demand Side Management [DSM] does not appear to have been considered by the ESB and could provide about 1GW of firm power (the output of small nuclear power plant?) and add very substantial stability to the grid without using any fossil fuels (Wheatley, 2004)

#### **Some Encouraging Signs**

There are some encouraging signs that rate of growth for all the renewables in Ireland is increasing and change is beginning to happen. For some it is a realisation that oil prices, and associated commuting costs, can only have an inexorable upward trend. Others are beginning to embrace a new culture, with many excellent school and third level energy related projects making the parents more aware of the financial benefits of not wasting electricity or conventional heating fuels. Ireland's maritime islands and the western peninsulas of Cork and Kerry are in a unique position to give a lead by moving very rapidly to their own independent local power stations powered by a combination of renewable energies, including biomass, wind, ocean energy and tidal current devices.

#### **References**

ASPO The Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas [www.peakoil.net](http://www.peakoil.net) or [www.asponews.org](http://www.asponews.org)

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Wheatley, 2004 Commission for Energy Regulation, 2004, [www.cer.ie](http://www.cer.ie). See Fergus Wheatley for Demand Side Management

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