



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health: Danish government to treat Danes as guinea pigs?

The European Platform Against Windfarms (EPAW) and the North-American Platform Against Windpower (NA-PAW) - representing a total of nearly 600 associations from 26 countries - are pointing at evidence showing that VESTAS, the world's leading wind-turbine manufacturer, applied pressure on the Danish government in a bid to establish noise regulations favourable to its business. They are also criticising the Danish authorities for "kowtowing to the interests of the Denmark-based multinational company, as the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA) subsequently manipulated noise regulations so that wind turbines in Denmark may continue to be installed dangerously close to habitations."

In his letter of 29 June 2011 addressed to Karen Ellemann, then Minister for the Environment, and copied to Lykke Friis, then Minister for Climate and Energy, the Chief Executive of Vestas, Ditlev Engel, complained that the draft of the revised noise regulations applicable to wind turbines would hurt the interests of the industry:

"...low frequency noise (regulations) will ... increase the distance requirements to neighbours for close to half of the projects... In a small country such as Denmark this means that a significant number of projects will not be viable as the increased distance requirements cannot be met whilst maintaining a satisfactory business outcome for the investor." (1)

Of particular interest are the following words, which could imply that the Danish people are to be treated as **guinea pigs** for the greater good of the wind industry: "Denmark has a role as a forerunner country and **a full scale laboratory** for conversion to renewable energy." (1)

The fact that Vestas would ask the government to protect its interests is neither surprising nor illegal. But EPAW and NA-PAW argue that asking that the Danes be part of a "full scale laboratory" is over the top and unethical. What is downright illegal, they add, and perhaps even criminal, is for the **Danish Environmental Protection Agency** to "manipulate measurements in the interest of an industry and to the detriment of people's health. The new, revised noise regulations proposed by DEPA earlier this month are so lax that **for 33% of neighbours it will feel "as if a truck is idling just outside their homes"** (2)." How did DEPA

manage to do this? – The "PAW" platforms report that Dr Mauri Johansson, a Danish physician specialised in community health and occupational medicine (now retired), denounced that the noise limit of 20 dB was effectively increased by measuring the decibels with the windows closed, which is contrary to norm. (2)

According to the translation of an article published in Politiken, a Danish daily, "the new noise rules will permit the limit of 20 dB to be exceeded in 33 percent of the worst insulated houses. It is a break with normal practice. For example, the dB limit only was allowed to exceed in 10 percent of the coastal houses as the fast ferry Aarhus-Kalundborg some years ago was asked to dampen the low frequency noise." (2)

Joining Dr Mauri Johansson, and according to the same article, a team of researchers from Aalborg University led by Professor Henrik Moeller, an internationally-renowned acoustics specialist, are also critical of the draft noise regulations of the Danish government. They are themselves supported by Kerstin Persson Waye, professor of occupational and environmental medicine at Gothenburg University, Sweden. (2)

Warns Mark Duchamp, CEO of EPAW: "The health-threatening noise, low-frequency noise, and infrasound regulations of the Danish government are likely to be copied by health authorities around the world. Wind industry pioneer and leader, Denmark is often regarded as a model by other countries. But we should be careful: the Danish government is subject to a powerful conflict of interest. As a result, the health of a great many people may suffer, and not only in Denmark."

Coming on top of this warning, a new study was just published which seems to confirm the health risk associated with wind turbines: the Bruce McPherson Infrasound and Low Frequency Noise Study - Adverse Health Effects Produced by Large Industrial Wind Turbines Confirmed, by Stephen E. Ambrose, INCE (Brd. Cert.) and Robert W. Rand, INCE Member. (3)

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References:

(1) – Source: Vestas letter, English translation published here → <http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/letter-from-vestas-worried-about-regulation-of-low-frequency-noise/>

(2) - Source: article published in Politiken, a Danish daily, 14.11.2011.
<http://politiken.dk/indland/ECE1449860/miljoestyrelsen-anklages-for-at-fifle-med-vindmoellestoej/>

Translation available here: <http://www.epaw.org/echoes.php?lang=en&article=n71>

(3) - Bruce McPherson Infrasound and Low Frequency Noise Study - Adverse Health Effects Produced by Large Industrial Wind Turbines Confirmed, by Stephen E. Ambrose, INCE (Brd. Cert.) and Robert W. Rand, INCE Member:

<http://www.windturbinesyndrome.com/news/2011/acousticians-confirm-wind-turbine-syndrome/>