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Saint-Cirgues-de-Prades, France, March 23rd 2014

## OPEN LETTER

to AMA President Dr Steve Hambleton  
to AMA Vice-President Professor Geoffrey Dobb  
to all members of AMA Federal Council,

Dear ladies, dear sirs,

We are a small environmental group in southeastern France, dealing primarily with local issues which have included, in recent years, environmental impacts of shale gas exploration projects, forest management in the context of the emerging biomass industry, and industrial wind turbine developments in rural areas.

We are aware that you recently issued a statement to the effect that no health effects should be feared from infrasound and low frequency noise (ILFN) from industrial wind turbines (IWTs).

We also understand that, following your statement, a number of counter-statements have been issued by individuals and organisations whose views on the matter diverge from yours, among them an open letter by Waubra Foundation which amounts to a comprehensive challenge to your pronouncement.

Based on our own research into that topic, we have reasons to believe that these counter-statements are made in good faith, and reflect rather accurately the reality of what happens around industrial windfarms. In particular, as we observe that Wind Turbine Syndrome (WTS) has been evolving, slowly but surely, into a worldwide "health scandal" - according to the definition of that phrase by a panel of french NGOs, we tend to regard the Waubra Foundation as credible, and therefore useful in their whistle-blowing role.

Consequently, we would like here to do three things:

1. to assure you that all aspects of the challenge raised by the Waubra Foundation in their open letter to yourselves seem to us meaningful, reasonable, substantiated, and fair;
2. to echo and illustrate in our own way, based on our own context and information, the same issues as the Waubra Foundation and others have been raising;
3. to raise our own questions regarding your approach to epistemology- and ethics-related aspects of the matter at hand.

### **What we have witnessed regarding effects:**

We developed an interest in noise pollution and health effects from IWTs after being approached by windfarm nearby residents in our area. As we investigated their stories and complaints, we met a number of them, often we went to their homes, we conducted

interviews, we recorded written evidence including medical statements, and we liaised with similar cases elsewhere in France and in neighbouring countries. The various symptoms that were presented to us ranged from mild or occasional annoyance, to more serious or permanent annoyance, to sleep disruption, to feeling ground-borne vibrations, and, in some cases, to very serious distress and life disruption.

Among the cases we recorded:

- one individual (admittedly hypersensitive) reported serious symptoms (severe annoyance and sleep disruption) at distances beyond 10km from wind turbines; that person indeed experienced symptoms even before envisaging any possible link with wind turbines;
- 2 other individuals mentioned that they could "feel" the wind turbines several km away, but described the resulting occasional annoyance as "manageable".
- at least 2, unrelated, individuals have been forced into part-time housing arrangements, one sleeping away from their home occasionally, the other one permanently;
- a retired couple reported serious sleep and life disruption with turbines sited less than 400m from their home; they also reported serious distress with an autistic teenage granddaughter of theirs, every time the young lady had stayed overnight at their home;
- one individual had their general practitioner diagnose WTS - in writing - and was referred by him to an admittedly specialised hospital unit where he was soon dismissed as "opponent to renewable energies" (sic).

Also, in the autumn of last year, in the region of Brittany, a survey by local groups compiled 180 cases of adverse health effects, together with the corresponding general practitioner statements; that report was sent to the Regional Health Authority and to the Regional Prefect.

Also, we have liaised with individuals and organisations in other french-speaking countries (Belgium, Switzerland, Quebec) who have been reporting cases similar to those we have witnessed ourselves.

The vast majority of these cases are individuals who do not speak English and could hardly be envisaged as responding to "propaganda" by the Waubra Foundation or other anglo-saxon groups.

In fact, most of these individuals live in remote rural areas and were only ever exposed to the official stance that IWTs were just "good & green".

### **What we have learnt about possible causes:**

As we researched through academic literature, we identified a number of papers dealing with either a description of ILFN as a physical phenomenon resulting from the operation of IWTs, or with a description of correlations between symptoms observed in nearby residents and the noise, audible and/or inaudible, and/or the vibrations produced by the turbines. These correlations were shown to be consistent with the general scientific understanding of human response to noise. Plausible hypotheses have been put forward linking specific symptoms to the characteristics of ILFN produced by wind turbines.

Among that body of literature, we paid particular attention to the "Kelley et al,1985" study,

<http://www.nrel.gov/docs/legosti/old/1166.pdf>

which included both a scientific model for ILFN emission and propagation, a rigorous description of the effects reported by local residents, and a logic that established causation between the emission/propagation model, the resonance characteristics of the dwellings, and the reported symptoms.

We have not come across any later study that would refute or invalidate that "Kelley et al,1985" report.

Generally speaking, we noticed that studies based on real-life data and conditions (actual sound measurements, actual measurements of symptoms - blood pressure, sleep patterns etc) tended to conclude that there was a health problem with IWTs, while studies which concluded that there was no problem were not based on real-life material, and papers which concluded that there was "no proof" never attempted themselves to prove or disprove anything in a scientific way.

The "Kelley et al,1985" as well as other studies conducted by NASA, or under NASA's supervision, in the 1980s, identify inflow turbulence as the main cause for ILFN generation. As neither switching to upwind-bladed turbines nor any amount of subsequent technical enhancement of turbine design could do away with inflow turbulence, we deem reasonable to believe that modern wind turbines continue to generate, to some degree, the kind of ILFN as was identified in the NASA studies, and we deem unreasonable to assume otherwise.

Indeed a recent study at Shirley, Wisconsin (USA) showed patterns of ILFN emission entirely consistent with the broad model established in the 80's.

<http://www.windturbinesyndrome.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Shirley-Wisconsin-ILFN-Report-copy-2.pdf>

As to symptoms reported by residents, they have been the same for the last 30 years.

Consequently, there is a burden of proof on anyone who would wish to claim that modern wind turbines can not be responsible for the sort of health effects as were studied by Kelley et al. This simply by application of the principle that similar causes will produce similar effects.

### **How we see health authorities deal with the issue:**

Two pronouncements ("advices") have been issued by French health authorities: first the French Academy of Medicine (2006), then another body called AFFSET (2008). In their assessment of ILFN, both are totally unconvincing. The inputs and literature they rely on, as may be judged from bibliographical references, dwell on peripheral matters, typically general beliefs and attitudes towards infrasound, rather than on any insights into actual acoustic phenomena around IWTs or observed health effects on residents.

Neither "advice" mentions Kelley nor any of the other NASA-driven studies conducted during the 80's.

All the while, one bibliographical reference takes for granted the model developed by NASA whereby inflow turbulence is identified as the main cause for ILFN generation while the turbine operates - an unwilling admission that that model still stands at the time the Academy of Medicine and AFFSET reports are produced.

Besides that, Academy of Medicine did recommend a precautionary setback distance of 1500m, and also recommended that epidemiological studies should be conducted. In the

event, a 500m safety distance was later on negotiated, after frantic lobbying by the wind industry, and, 8 years on, no epidemiological studies have been carried out.

Thus, anyone here with a general scientific background, and through only a cursory examination of available literature, may legitimately form the view that:

- there is no comprehensive scientific description of the acoustic phenomena, at least not in the public domain, and at least none that refutes or otherwise supersedes Kelley's;
- without a proper scientific basis, wind turbine proliferation is a technology-driven process that is "flying blind" as to its impacts and consequences on human health and nature in general;
- official pronouncements and policies on the part of health authorities are essentially empirical (why 1500m? why not 1000? or 2000?);
- equally, technical, environmental and health-related "norms" are blind to ILFN as a set of novel physical phenomena generated by IWT technology; "normality" becomes divorced from reality;
- society thus finds itself plunged into "cognitive fog", so to speak, conducive to a huge deal of confusion, acrimony, endless litigation, and pointless suffering;
- there seems to be no drive, other than on the part of whistleblowers, towards treating the discipline on the basis of a standard scientific process, ie iterating around a sequence of postulating hypotheses, developing a model, producing predictions, making real-life measurements, reconciling with predictions and explaining discrepancies, then adjusting hypotheses and revising the model etc;
- that in turn is bound to fuel either suspicions that there is actually more knowledge around than is in the public domain – in which case one may surmise that building that knowledge involves deliberately using residents as guinea-pigs, or to visions of a slow descent into an obscurantist, totalitarian technocracy.

### **Other relevant perspectives on the wind industry:**

The ongoing renewable energy programme, as driven by the wind industry in France and in Europe, has now been exposed as a scam in its claims as a valid substitute to nuclear power or fossil-fuelled electricity generation; also a scam in its claims to environmental protection and climate change mitigation; and also a scam in its claims to being an engine for economic prosperity.

A recent report by a French governmental strategy-advising group describes the results of that programme as "*the crisis in the european electricity production system, which seriously puts at risk the continuance of electricity supplies, the purchasing power of consumers, the competitiveness of businesses as well as the fight against greenhouse gases emissions*" (ca 85% of French electricity production is of nuclear or hydraulic origin, both of which produce no emissions, and German carbon emissions have been on the increase in the last two years as a result of coal-powered stations coming onboard to supplement intermittent wind and solar production).

[http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CGSP\\_Report\\_European\\_Electricity\\_System\\_030220141.pdf](http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CGSP_Report_European_Electricity_System_030220141.pdf)

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of small investors in Germany are discovering that they have been or are being swindled through "green energy" investment schemes.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/wind-power-investments-in-germany-proving-riskierthan-thought-a-946367.html>

If one leaves aside that no major financial institution seems to be in danger of collapsing as a result of it, the renewable energy "bubble" has most of the characteristics of the US subprime scam of a few years ago.

The governments of our 4 major industrial countries (Germany, France, Britain, Italy) have just indicated to the European Commission that they intend to keep control over their national energy mix, an implicit warning that they will not have imposed on them renewable energy production targets at the horizon of 2030, as are currently being mooted in Brussels.

Also, the wind industry has been exposed as riddled with unethical practices:

- Our own dealings with wind developers were limited to a kickoff presentation a team of them made in a nearby town a couple of years ago: that afternoon, we listed 15 blatant lies in their 1.5 hour Powerpoint presentation, which also included a doctored map of the area;

- Countless cases of alleged illegal behaviour by local officials, or corruption of regional state agents, have been reported in France alone, while the number one windfarm operator in Italy was shut down and indicted a year ago after their links with the Mafia were uncovered;

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2013/11/24/01016-20131124ARTFIG00221-eoliennes-des-maires-attaques-pour-conflit-d-interets.php>

<http://www.lesechos.fr/entreprises-secteurs/energie-environnement/actu/0202681016770-cosa-nostra-le-roi-italien-de-l-eolien-court-circuite-en-sicile-554846.php>

- Accusations of widespread "moral corruption" have been made including by a retired high court judge in supposedly impeccable Denmark (Copenhagen Post, 16th November 2012);

<http://cphpost.dk/commentary/opinion/opinion-myth-denmark-corruption-free-country>

- A mainstram French media recently relayed a warning by Europol that the wind industry is "*totally infiltrated by organized crime*".

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2013/11/24/01016-20131124ARTFIG00221-eoliennes-des-maires-attaques-pour-conflit-d-interets.php>

### **Questions to yourselves - Epistemology:**

What is your general epistemology framework for assessing whether ILFN from IWTs are, aren't, or may be causing adverse health effects in nearby residents?

Specifically, on what scientific description of the generation and propagation of ILFN do you base your assessment?

In your assessment, do you rank as equally informative, or unequally informative, a piece of information or study that is derived from data observed and measured "in situ", and one that is derived from somewhere else, such as for instance a review of literature?

Do you share the view that the reality of IWT-related health effects boils down to "*allegations*" made "*in parts of rural Australia and on the Internet*", as the first sentence of a recent study by Pr Simon Chapman et al has it?

<http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/8977?>

Do you share the view, re those same effects, that "*people in Europe have never encountered the problem*", as asserted again by Pr Simon Chapman on RN Drive Radio on June 12th, 2012?

[http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2012/06/rnd\\_20120612\\_1916.mp3](http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2012/06/rnd_20120612_1916.mp3)

Do you consider that an observation to the effect that waves on a beach produce infrasound, made by the same Pr Chapman in that same radio show, can convey knowledge about the characteristics of IWT-generated ILFN and the possibility of their having adverse effects on humans?

If so, how would you rate a statement that nuclear power facilities are nothing to worry about since such and such geological terrain emits radioactivity naturally?

How is your assessment informed by various so-called "nocebo studies" and other psychogenic theories as have come out in recent years?

<http://docs.wind-watch.org/Crichton-Can-Expectations-Produce-Symptoms-From-Infrasound.pdf>

<http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/8977>

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191886912004783>

Do you hold the view that any of these studies might in effect convey insights into the reality of phenomena leading to IWTs producing ILFN and that ILFN in turn potentially causing adverse health effects?

Or do you realise that any talk about nocebo or other psychogenic effects in relation with a potentially pathogenic physical agent actually tells you precious nothing about whether that agent itself is or isn't pathogenic - until/unless you have also studied that agent itself, which here none of these studies has done?

If you do realise that, are you prepared to confirm that you regard these nocebo studies and psychogenic theories as pointless diversions for anyone who would attempt to form a scientific view as to whether acoustic phenomena generated by IWTs may produce adverse health effects on humans, which here is the question that is both of medical interest and of public interest?

If you are not prepared to confirm that, could you explain why?

### **Questions to yourselves - Ethics:**

Do you realise that, here in France, and throughout Europe, a now sizeable number of citizens have grasped that there are serious unknowns in the science behind wind technology; equally serious flaws in the model for implementing it - in the form of the current industrial model; huge costs and few, if any, benefits to match; and a general mindlessness in the public policies, at all levels, which have led, over the past decade, to wind turbine proliferation?

Are you aware that, as these citizens open their eyes to these realities, their reactions range from complete dismay to outright outrage, which fuels growing disenchantment, undermines the legitimacy of both national governments and European institutions, and, sadly, also undermines the long term potential of renewable energies?

Do you realise that, of all the ills that the wind turbine industrial model has brought along, failure to protect the health of residents near windfarms is deemed by ordinary citizens to be the less forgivable, to be indeed unforgivable?

Do you realise that common decency deems sleep deprivation, if inflicted knowingly and consistently, to be criminal?

Do you realise that when WTS whistleblowers refer to the effects of ILFN on sleep patterns as "torture", they mean it in the literal, not in a metaphorical, sense of the word?

Do you realise that, AMA being a top-level medical authority in one of the most advanced countries in the world, and one which consistently ranks among the top ten in the Transparency International table, people around the world look to your organisation to produce authoritative, enlightening pronouncements that are beyond any possible suspicion of being under inappropriate influences?

Do you realise that the open letter by Waubra Foundation, and the many other counter-statements as have been issued, both by citizens in your country and worldwide, are amply sufficient to create just that sort of suspicion?

May we therefore respectfully insist that you respond, very specifically and precisely, to each of the questions included in the open letter by Waubra Foundation, and to each of the other counter-statements as have been addressed to you?

Yours truly

for ADTC – Avis De Tempête Cévenole  
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Richard Ladet', written over a horizontal line.