



CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY – THE FUTURE NOW



PS10 solar thermal station in Spain Photo ©Greenpeace/Redondo



- Australia is a land rich in solar, wind, wave and hot rock potential. These natural resources can provide clean, renewable energy.
- With strong government investment, the renewable energy industry could generate up to 500,000 new secure jobs in Australia by 2030. Renewable energy will employ many more workers than the coal industry, because the smaller scale of renewable energy technologies lends itself to manufacture in Australia.
- Renewable energy is cheaper than coal-fired power – when you factor in the costs of drought, bushfires, loss of tourism, and rising sea-levels caused by climate change.

- Renewable energy can supply baseload power and meet our needs 24 hrs a day. For example, power from a number of wind farms over a geographically diverse area (such as South-East of Australia), can be just as reliable as other forms of power. Concentrated Solar Thermal Technology is another example of 24 hrs a day power. Mirrors are used to concentrate sunlight onto a receiver that heats salt to store energy and drive turbines.
- Wind and solar power have smaller land requirements than equivalent coal power with open-cut coal-mines.
- In a recent survey, 84% of LHMU members said that Australia needs to switch to clean renewable energy.

“Wind power and solar power generate clean energy direct from nature – the best use of nature’s gifts. We have to change and speak up: it’s time for clean energy from wind and solar!” Heather Saunders, LHMU member

- Using existing technology, we could meet 100% of Australia’s energy needs from clean, renewable energy in our lifetimes. This would require a range of measures from government, such as a national clean energy bonus scheme (also known as a feed-in tariff), energy efficiency, an end to fossil fuel subsidies, a price on carbon, research and development, smart grid upgrades, direct investment and more.

Climate Justice Factsheet



‘Switching to clean, renewable energy sources such as wind and solar is the best investment that can be made in the fight against climate change.’ Climate change resolution endorsed by LHMU members at the 2009 National Council.

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LHMU member Chris Williams.

LHMU member Chris Williams lives near Australia’s largest wind farm in South Australia. Chris works in disability support, helping people with disabilities to develop skills and independence.

“I’ve made lots of changes at home to be more sustainable – using solar power, using low energy globes, growing my own vegies, installing 50000 litres capacity of water tanks, low water use shower roses and a heat pump storage hot water system.

“The windfarm is a good thing for the planet. It does have an impact on the skyline, but you get used to it, and it hasn’t damaged the native birds, which people were worried about. And it’s less of an eyesore than a freeway.

“Building and maintaining the windfarm brought in jobs for the community, and now it’s also a bit of a tourist attraction. It all depends on what you think is important – I’d certainly rather have the windfarm, and a sustainable world for my kids!”

LHMU member Heather Saunders also lives near Australia’s largest windfarm at Canunda. She works in a Kraft food processing plant testing to make sure the food meets proper standards.

“I got interested in climate change because I was in the safety, security and environment committee at work.

“The windfarm is a good, clean source of energy. Wind power and solar power generate clean energy direct from nature – the best use of nature’s gifts. Some people complained that the windfarm also has an effect on the environment, but everything we do has some effect – we just need to try and minimise it and eliminate the worst. And I don’t think the wind turbines are ugly at all, they’re very big and impressive. They’re just like a modernised windmill. My grandpa had a windmill to pump water – it’s a good, long tradition.

“You can’t be an ostrich and stick your head in the sand,” said Heather. “We have to change and speak up: it’s time for clean energy from wind and solar!”



Photo David Clarke



Canunda Wind Farm in South Australia is Australia’s largest. There are 99 turbines, which generate 239.5 Mega Watts of power – enough to power 120,000 homes, or a region the size of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Photo ©Greenpeace/Sneath