



Wind power

Tory windfarm policy endangers cheap energy in UK, commission finds

Shell-sponsored group says wind is 'increasingly the cheapest form of electricity' and urges Tories to review ban on subsidised onshore windfarms

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A report found that by 2040, wind and solar would account for 45% of the global power mix. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

Conservative opposition to windfarms risks the UK missing out on one of the cheapest sources of electricity, according to the head of a Shell-funded industry group.

Adair Turner, chair of the [Energy Transitions Commission](#), said wind and solar power costs had fallen dramatically globally and urged the government to rethink its [ban on subsidised onshore windfarms](#).

"We have to at least understand that a ban on doing onshore wind is giving up the opportunity of what is increasingly the cheapest form of electricity. I would not personally have that ban on onshore wind," Lord Turner told the Guardian.



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A report by the commission found that the cost of wind power had fallen by 60% in the past five years. The analysis predicted that by 2040, wind and solar would account for 45% of the global power mix, with hydro and nuclear making up another 35%.

"We're basically saying by 2040, you can get the share of fossil fuel generation down to 20%, and that is quite ambitious," said Turner. "What is distinctive is the group of people who are making that statement. It's not just either industry or NGOs, it's both."

Membership of the commission, founded in 2015 to examine how energy systems can be changed to avoid dangerous global warming, includes the fossil fuel giants Shell and BHP Billiton, plus Bank of America Merrill Lynch, the investment manager Blackrock and the green thinktank the European Climate Foundation.

The group said that by 2035, wind and solar could provide 98% of power in developed countries such as Germany and the UK, with gas power stations or batteries providing backup. Nuclear would not grow its share because of cost, while progress on carbon capture and storage of emissions from coal and gas power stations had been "too slow".

Of Donald Trump, who recently issued an executive order rolling back Barack Obama's clean power plan, Turner said: "The Trump presidency is not good for climate change, we can't pretend otherwise." But he said renewable energy had such momentum in the US and globally that Trump would be unable to deliver a "fatal setback".

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Monopulse 22m ago

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Until recently we were told that the ROCs and other payments to wind farms weren't subsidies at all. Now we're being told that they don't need these subsidies - providing they're paid a guaranteed price twice the going rate for gas and hydro power.

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Arcid001 13h ago

2

My cynical side does notice that a report funded by a company heavily invested in wind power and heavily invested in supplying the diesel that would become increasing necessary for short term generation as the percentage of intermittent power sources applying it grows without improved energy storage technology to support it, recommends that we hugely increase the percentage of intermittent power sources, specifically wind power.

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