



Press Release

21 May 2008

For immediate release

Delaying the ETS risks electricity security

“Delaying the Emissions Trading Scheme risks discouraging investment in new electricity generation,” says Gerry Coates, Chair of the New Zealand Wind Energy Association.

Both the Government and National have expressed support for the 90% renewable electricity target. “This bi-party approach to sustainability of energy supplies is laudable. However there is a risk that even if the legislation is passed before the election National will change or delay it if it becomes the Government.

“Unless both parties make a firm commitment to progressing the ETS without watering it down – or else commit to another scheme that encourages renewables – they risk deterring investment in both renewable and thermal electricity generation,” says Mr Coates.

Concerns about low hydro lake levels, high spot electricity prices and increasing demand highlight the need for new investment in electricity generation. “Investment in new generation is needed to ensure we have a reliable and secure supply of electricity in years to come,” Mr Coates says.

“Wind can deliver energy diversity and security quickly if allowed to, and more new thermal plants aren’t necessary to do that,” Mr Coates says.

The EU, more than 20 States of the USA, China and Australia are all pursuing aggressive renewable energy targets. In doing so, these countries have acknowledged the benefits of renewable energy for energy independence and security of supply. Wind energy is recognised globally for the contribution it makes to electricity security. It helps to provide capacity and diversity in electricity supply, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and reduce the effects of rising gas prices.

New Zealand has a significant and clearly identified potential for wind energy. The use of this renewable resource for electricity generation has clear economic and environmental benefits for New Zealand. “But without stable policy we will not be able to make full use of our natural wind resource,” concludes Mr Coates.

ENDS

Notes

1) For more information please contact Gerry Te Kapa Coates, NZWEA Chair and past-President of IPENZ. (04 4727621 or 021 355 099)

2) The New Zealand Wind Energy Association (NZWEA) is an industry association that works towards the development of wind as a reliable, sustainable, clean and commercially viable energy source. We aim to fairly represent wind energy to the public, government and the energy sector. Our members include about 80 companies involved in New Zealand’s wind energy sector, including electricity generators, wind farm developers, lines companies, turbine manufacturers, consulting firms, researchers and law firms. For more information visit www.windenergy.org.nz.