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NZ Wind Energy Association Disappointed at Exit of Hauāuru mā raki Development

The New Zealand Wind Energy Association is disappointed that Contact Energy has decided to exit the Hauāuru mā raki wind generation development on the Waikato coast.

“Wind generation is powering ahead globally,” said NZ Wind Energy Association CEO, Eric Pyle. “There is a real understanding internationally that as a clean, cheap and efficient energy source it is hard to beat.”

“We appreciate that this country currently has flat demand for electricity, but if New Zealand is to reach the bipartisan target of 90% renewable electricity by 2025, then we need new wind farms,” said Mr Pyle.

Contact Energy is maintaining its option to build the Waitahora wind generation development project near Dannevirke that would have 58 turbines and generate up to 156MW of electricity.

The NZ Wind Energy Association is keen for Government to put policy behind the 90% target so that the electricity industry can have certainty that will drive investment in renewable generation.

“15% of NZ’s CO₂ emissions come from the electricity sector and it wouldn’t be hard to reduce those emissions by more than 4 million tonnes of CO₂ per year. To meet the 90% target we need to phase out of our fossil fuel plant and install some of the renewable generation that is already consented,” said Mr Pyle.

NZ Wind Energy Association understands that there may still be a future for the 500MW Hauāuru mā raki wind farm, which is commonly known as HMR.

“HMR could also work as set of smaller embedded generation developments,” said Mr Pyle. “The project is fully consented and ready for construction, all it needs is the finance.”

Hauāuru mā raki is a joint venture between Contact Energy and Wind Farm Group Ltd.

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More information on Hauāuru mā raki can be found at <http://windenergy.org.nz/nz-wind-farms/proposed-wind-farms/hauauru-ma-raki>.

More information on Waitahora can be found at <http://windenergy.org.nz/nz-wind-farms/proposed-wind-farms/waitahora>.

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