



Economic Benefits of Wind Energy

When we think of wind energy we think of clean energy, clean air and climate change. Wind Energy also provides huge economic benefits to communities across Ireland.

Sustainable Income for Land Owners: Land owners receive significant land rents for hosting wind turbines on their property which offers long term income certainty. Wind turbines typically last 20-25 years. Bellacorick, Ireland's first wind farm will celebrate its 21st birthday in 2013 and its original turbines are still harnessing the winds of County Mayo.



Local Authority Rates: Local Authorities receive annual rates from wind developers with an average of €6866 per MW. In 2013 local authorities will benefit to the tune of €11.9

million. In some counties commercial rates from wind energy can account for more than 30% of the total commercial rates intake. Unlike property, the wind industry has shown its reliability to county councils and has helped improve local infrastructure in localities around Ireland.

Creating Jobs: Approximately 2,200 people now work in the Irish wind industry. As of the 28th December 2012 there is 1,738MW of wind capacity. To progress and meet the 40% EU electricity target, Ireland will have to build in excess of 275MW per year between now and 2020. By meeting these targets and realising the potential of a further 6GW of energy for export, Ireland could create 18,000 jobs by 2020.



Local Support Services: Jobs are created and money is spent locally to procure material and services during construction. Local support services play a critical part in the maintenance of a windfarm.



Improved Infrastructure: Local Infrastructure like Roads, Power, Transportation etc. is upgraded and improved as wind farms are developed. This is an added incentive for both local communities and the local authorities which will receive almost €12 million in rates during 2013.



Wind Energy is cost competitive The cost of generating electricity from wind has fallen considerably over the past decade with wind energy being the least expensive of all other

forms of alternative energy. This has left the Wind Industry as a leading competitor on price with fossil fuel sources of generation. Newer technologies are making the extraction of wind energy much more efficient. The wind is free, and we are able to benefit from this free source of energy. As fossil fuel prices increase and wind power costs fall, wind becomes even more attractive. Fossil fuels are not going to last forever and it is becoming harder to predict what the cost of these fuels will be in 5, 10 or 15 years time. Renewable energy provides a hedge against these uncertainties and with wind, the cost is always known.



Boosting The Local Economy: Annual local expenditure is undertaken during the operation and maintenance phase of a project. By keeping capital flowing within localities instead of being exported to other nations – energy independence becomes institutionalized at the local level.