

Against the setting up of a windfarm of a 100 industrial turbines on the plains of Caen–Falaise and Trun in Calvados Lower Normandy, France

To the Regional Prefect of Lower Normandy

The plains of Caen-Falaise and of Trun in the administrative department of Calvados in Normandy are at risk of being invaded by **at least** 100 industrial wind turbines, if not several hundred perhaps, **under the pretext that this is not considered as « a conservation area »**. Indeed certain places are to be spared from the windmill turbine invasion by the departmental wind turbine scheme :

- The coast from Omaha Beach (Veys Bay) to Sword Beach (Honfleur, Cabourg, Deauville area) ;
- Auge country (le pays d'Auge) ;
- Swiss Normandy (la Suisse normande).

It is to be noted that the « conservation areas » are in fact tourist destinations, the interests of the inhabitants are not taken into account ; whilst for them the landscape is part of their everyday life, whether it be a tourist attraction or not.

Consequently, we, the undersigned, are perfectly aware that sparing the coast, the Auge country and Swiss Normandy from the setting up of wind turbines is **because these machines are in fact an eyesore**. If they are an eyesore for people who are travelling through the country they are even more so for the 60 000 inhabitants living permanently on the Caen-Falaise and Trun plains, in the middle of Lower Normandy.

It must be borne in mind that it is seriously unfair to try to make the inhabitants of these plains feel guilty, those who have no real economic interests to defend, by making them feel that their refusal, and specifically theirs, would jeopardize the future of the planet.

1° We therefore ask that, while you are preparing the departmental wind turbine scheme, to refuse any new setting up of industrial wind turbines in the open country between Caen and Falaise and Trun simply because they offer such an exceptional wide open landscape. It is rare to see this wide open country in Lower Normandy, which is especially famous for its « bocage » (mixed woodland and pastureland), and therefore it must be preserved.

The most original feature of this landscape is the far reaching vision to distant horizons which should not be altered by obstacles of such great height, with their pale colours and turning blades that attract the eye. We already can see 10 turbines to the south of Soulangy, Saint-Pierre-Canivet et Aubigny, to the east 14 turbines from Condé-sur-Ifs, Vieux-Fumé, Fierville-Bray et Airan and to the north 22 turbines from Garcelles-Secqueville, Chicheboville-Conteville and Frénouville. These 46 industrial turbines have already seriously damaged the landscape of the plain and disturbed the everyday life style of the inhabitants.

2° We would like you to refer to the **European Convention for the preservation of Landscapes** (<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=176&CM=8&CL=ENG>) drawn up and voted by the Council of Europe, ratified by France 17 March 2006. Its preamble is particularly clear :

« [...] the landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere : in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognized as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas. »

« [...] the landscape is a key element of individual and social well-being and [...] its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone. »

The explanatory report of this convention is even more explicit :
(<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Reports/Html/176.htm>). In the part concerning (*Aims and structure of the Convention*), it is indicated in points 21 - 23 :

« 21. Europe's populations want policies and instruments affecting national territory to take account of their wishes regarding the quality of their surroundings. In their view, this quality to some extent has to do with the feelings aroused in them by contemplating the landscape. They have come to realise that the quality and diversity of many landscapes are deteriorating as a result of a wide variety of factors and that this is having an adverse effect on the quality of their everyday lives.

22. Official landscape activities can no longer be allowed to be an exclusive field of study or action monopolized by specialist scientific and technical bodies.

23. Landscape must become a mainstream political concern, since it plays an important role in the well-being of Europeans who are no longer prepared to tolerate the alteration of their surroundings by technical and economic developments in which they have had no say. Landscape is the concern of all and lends itself to democratic treatment, particularly at local and regional level. »

The demands in Lower Normandy for the **production** (of wind turbine electricity) for the towns cannot go against the demands for the **protection** of the local environment and the lifestyle of the rural inhabitants who live on the plains.

3° We request that there be no more hierarchal discrimination between the landscapes of the department nor qualifying differently environments with varied landscape views. In a democratic republican country like ours, this discrimination does not conform to the principle of equality, nor to the recommendations of the European Convention for the conservation of Landscapes.

4° We request, before the setting up of the departmental wind turbine scheme, that an information campaign be organized to explain to the population what the quality and the characteristics of the landscapes of Falaise-Caen and Trun plains actually consist of, in keeping with point 24 in the explanatory report of European Convention for the conservation of Landscapes.

« 24. If people are given an active role in decision-making on landscape, they are more likely to identify with the areas and towns where they spend their working and leisure time. If they have more influence on their surroundings, they will be able to reinforce local and regional identity and distinctiveness and this will bring rewards in terms of individual, social and cultural fulfilment. This in turn may help to promote the sustainable development of the area concerned, as the quality of landscape has an important bearing on the success of economic and social initiatives, whether public or private. »

These are elements which have to be recognized and valorized by the regional and departmental administrations, instead of saturating the plains with wind turbines which condemn them to visual monotony and consequently impoverishment of their landscapes

In other words, if we want every citizen to take an interest in what would help him to favor durable development around him, where he lives, his landscape must not be deteriorated, in the same way as in the towns, a district must never be left to deteriorate, if the inhabitants are expected to respect their environment.

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