ADVOCACY

AGAINST

INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINES

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How many industrial wind turbines are there in France? This is a data difficult to access. There is always talk of "connected power", terawatts, megawatts / hour, in short, the number of masts is not touted ... But the calculation is relatively simple, the total power of the 835 wind turbine "parks" of the hexagonal representing 9000 MW, there would be about 4500 machines in activity (a wind turbine with an average power of 2 MW), and it is expected that 5000 more will soon be connected to the network. The Aveyron, meanwhile, has already seen erect 94 industrial wind turbines, and 121 additional were granted a building permit. It would only be a beginning, if one believes the forecasts of the regional scheme, whose objective would be the implantation of a thousand masts. If the atom has already done collosal damage (and again this is just the beginning), would the wind industry that they are presented as its miraculous cure be a green caution at all the French nuclear? Is it not also the new speculative bubble of financial capitalism in search of new markets? In short, what is industrial wind?

Autopsy of an industrial wind turbine

Industrial wind turbines are not the windmills of our time, as we sometimes hear. The latest models are over 200 meters tall, more than four times the height of a Very High Voltage line tower. Their implementation requires several years of work, massive deforestation, the widening of existing roads and tracks to make parts bigger than those of an Airbus. 2000 tons of concrete are poured into the ground for each mast, the foundation of 200m3 is of a volume equivalent to that of an Olympic swimming pool. Each wind turbine contains 600kg of rare earth, mainly neodymium. The exploitation and refining of this metal is mainly done in the city of Baotou (in Inner Mongolia), nicknamed "the city of cancer". Chemical discharges from this industry have polluted the entire region: life expectancy is now 40 years and radioactivity is twice that measured at Chernobyl. Each wind turbine also contains more than 4 tonnes of copper mined in the South American deposits where entire villages are expropriated by

the armed forces to enable Western firms to exploit the wealth of the subsoil and the lives of the workers. To green here, we darken there.

Effects on the surrounding life

When it starts moving, an industrial wind turbine produces several kinds of noise. The first are related to the mechanics of the system, including the nacelle; others, more gloomy, are due to the airflow around the blades, which produce moreover, passing in front of the mast a whole range of infrasound. Once launched, the wind turbine makes a nagging noise that local residents describe as: "a plane that would pass at low altitude without ever landing"; they put double glazing, leave the windows closed and close the chimney duct with newspaper ... then they move, so miraculously they manage to sell their house. The day, the stroboscopic effect of the blades - jerks of shadow and light - is very difficult to bear. It causes headaches and nausea. At night, the luminous flashes at the

top of the masts eradicate the darkness for tens of miles around. Quarry and land animals are disrupted by this huge infrastructure and the creation of access roads. They change territory when they can. Many birds die chopped by the blades, even though the promoters equip the machines with anti-collision radars. Migration, nesting and breeding are highly disturbed.

WIND TURBINES, MONEY AND HUMANS

Who builds wind turbines?

The construction of a land-based wind turbine costs 2 million euros. Yet the promoters are most often presented as "small family businesses" with nice name: Wind Company, Energy Hills, Park Souleilla, etc.. Behind this search for social acceptability is actually the subsidiaries of EDF, Vinci, Total, GDF-Suez, AREVA and others. Let's take two examples of developers in South Aveyron. The first, RAZ energy, is a subsidiary of SAMFI INVEST, a "high-profit investment" company specialized in road transport with a fleet of 600 trucks. Another, Eneria (Melagues and Arnac-sur-Dourdou wind turbines) designs engines for marine, industrial and oil applications, and operates oil and gas in Algeria. The vast majority of promoters are actually large, polluting multinationals.

It is important to note that the parks are sold and redeemed at speculative speeds. In the Lévézou (still in Aveyron) some have been resold 3 times in just 5 years. Subsidiaries appear and then go into

liquidation. In such a system, one can legitimately ask oneself as to who, after 25 years of machine performance, will be in charge of dismantling these brownfields ...

A story of big money ...

Wind power is one of the most profitable investments of the moment because the purchase of "renewable" electricity is at a price of gold, well above market rates, with the guarantee of the States and Europe. And who is funding this buyout? All of us, through a tax levied by EDF on consumers: the CSPE (Contribution to the Public Service of Electricity). The public service thus provides logistics for massive diversions of funds to the private interests of the promoters. Municipalities and landowners receive the crumbs of the money - several thousand euros per year and per mast anyway. On the other hand, the value of the surrounding houses falls and forces residents to suffer nuisance by staying in unsalable houses. From a job standpoint, those created locally are counted on the fingers of one hand: the manufacture, installation and maintenance of wind turbines are performed by specialized technicians dispatched from large urban centers to hundreds of kilometers of the. As for holidaymakers who are still sensitive to areas that have not been disfigured by mass tourism or industry, they will go for a walk elsewhere. Wind turbines standardize territories, their characteristics disappear so much we see more than them. Each "park" becomes an industrial zone like so many others in France.

... and corruption

How, in these conditions, the promoters manage to impose their machines? They have for this, in addition to retribution, an argument that will not fail to bend the recalcitrant: "If you refuse wind turbines on one of your land, away from your home, your neighbor will accept

them, in his field that adjoins your house. " The same devastating logic is reproduced at the scale of the communes. This is all the more serious as our countryside have not yet been contaminated by the general indifference with which the inhabitants of large metropolises are gratified. There is still attention, links, minimal solidarity between neighbors. But with the arrival of the wind turbines, irreducible conflicts settle down, the villages cut in two, municipalities go to war. The role of municipal councilors is central. While some logically refuse any implementation, for others the convictions for illegal capture of interest continue to fall. One example among many others in Melagues in Aveyron: a former city councilor was sentenced to 2 months suspended prison sentence and a fine of € 1,000, as well as a two-year ban on her civil rights. She had participated in the vote on a wind turbine project on land owned by her husband, sister-in-law and brother-in-law. A series of settlements that brings in 46,500 € rent per year.


Foundations of an industrial wind turbine

AEROGENERATORS AND ECOLOGY

The industrial wind would help to get out of the nuclear

This is an argument as widespread as it is fallacious. We were once imposed nuclear on the pretext of progress, we would now want to impose wind turbines on the pretext of ecology. But in France, despite the massive implementation of "renewable energy" for 10 years, not a reactor was stopped. On the contrary, in January 2015, Ségolène Royal clearly displayed the country's energy policy: "we must program the construction of a new generation of nuclear reactors" or again: "We will not oppose the energies to each other" . The leaders are brandishing the "energy transition" and announce "the reduction of the share of nuclear power in the French energy mix". But it is a relative decrease, in a context of increased production, circulation and energy consumption. There will always be more coal plants, more nuclear and many more wind turbines or photovoltaic plants. As Luc Oursel, CEO of Areva, says, nuclear and renewable are "two natural allies". What is at work is not a transition, but an energetic accumulation. In this context, the picture of and bucolic landscapes serve to add a good conscience and legitimacy to a centrally organized production system around nuclear power plants. They are the green disguise of the leap forward perpetrated by the same companies that created and perpetuate the disaster they claim today to cure. Finding new technologies to enrich is the challenge of green capitalism.

Industrial Wind Turbines and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The operation of a wind turbine obviously depends on the wind: it starts when the wind blows at 10 or 15 km / h and stops when it exceeds 85 km / h. It does not turn when it is too hot (generator cooling problem) or when it is too cold (risk of frost). To summarize, it only works at full capacity 20% of the time. Neither wind nor electricity is storable. Yet the power grid must maintain a general balance between production and consumption under penalty of cutoff general, the famous blackout. To compensate for the intermittency of the wind, thermal power plants (coal or gas) are therefore (re) commissioned! These are maintained continuously in operation to be able to take over instantly if a part of the wind production stops. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that in this scheme, wind turbines are co-emitters of greenhouse gases. And from this point of view, we can better understand that GDF-Suez is one of the main promoters of wind farms.

Wind turbines and carbon credits

Building a wind farm is a practical solution for the most polluting multinationals around the world. In fact, in order to fight against global warming, the Kyoto Protocol requires them and the states to limit carbon emissions and greenhouse gases. This limit does not mean that companies are forced to pollute less; on the contrary, they can pollute beyond the limits, provided that this overrun is offset by the acquisition of "carbon credits". There are several ways to obtain such credits: by buying them on an international market (which acts as a sanction), by investing in protected natural areas (that is, by planting eucalyptus monocultures and by clear cutting once the trees at term) or ... by investing in supposedly green energies like wind turbines! The wind turbines are therefore the perfect solution for multinationals: the carbon credits they obtain by building them allow

them to comply with international regulations without reducing, and even increasing their pollution. They reap profits by selling electricity at subsidized rates, and cherry on the cake, they can even sell their surplus carbon credits to other polluters. And of course, all this with tax credit. The so-called expected effect is reversed, carbon credits, far from encouraging restraint, generate industrial activity and open additional rights to pollute.

Compensation of the disaster

Compensation in this system is the node around which hang the new strings of international finance, the ideological nest of his new hobby. Companies destroy the environment, admittedly, they are only asked to "compensate" the damage. A very strange vision of the world around us, as if everything were in pure equivalence: a forest or a hedged farmland here is equivalent to a forest replanted at the end of the world (more often on agrarian lands, depriving the villagers of food) , the pollution of a chemical company is equivalent to ten wind turbines, or to a cluster of "chimpanzee" actions that specialized banks offer. And the excuse for investors is that these compensations report, as is the case of wind turbines. And all this by fueling the state's ecological discourse, which prides itself on its energy transition at low cost, when it is actually only a transaction ... Because, as one promoter asserts, "proactive management of the environment generates value.”

WIND TURBINES AND THE WORLD AROUND THEM

Wind Turbines and Industrial Zones of Electricity

The question of industrial wind is ultimately not a question of energy. The implementation of wind turbines does not come to meet a local need. France exported 47.2 TWh in 2013 and this balance is constantly increasing. In addition, wind turbines are usually located in sparsely populated areas, close to other power plants (photovoltaic, hydro, wind, etc.). EDF will then claim that this energy is consumed "locally", since the electricity goes to the nearest. But when the local needs rise, for example, to 2 MW, it is impossible to consume the 40 MW produced. The remaining 38 are therefore exported. Because there is a global market for electricity in full expansion (in particular the development of all electro-digital: computer, server, internet and other "smart" objects), where the label "renewable" allows to garner substantial profits. But it is still necessary to be connected to networks to access these markets. Electricity is difficult to transport, the losses on the lines are enormous, especially if the voltage is low. Here we find the sense to concentrate the production units: the closer the production units are to each other, the more it is possible to connect them quickly and easily to gigantic transformers for high and very high voltage. The ultimate goal is to join a 400,000 volt line from which it is possible to sell throughout Europe.

And it is RTE, with the backing of public money, that installs the infrastructure necessary for this business. Once it is in place, they irrefutably call for new energy production projects ... It is this logic that is at work in the south-Aveyron around the seven-hectare mega-transformator project in Saint-Victor-and-Melvieu.

Wind turbines and territory

For a decade now, associations of residents impacted by wind projects have been carrying out decisive legal work to slow down and complicate their implementation. So much so that these annoyances (litigation costs and appeal deadlines) are now integrated by the promoters in their costs and schedules of implementation. But the wind lobby strengthens, it pushes relentlessly to administrative and legislative simplifications, supported by international deregulation treaties (such as TAFTA) or national decrees, such as the Macron law. It is now necessary to oppose on the ground a popular and political struggle rooted in the territories that we wish to defend. The refusal of the inhabitants must appear in broad daylight on the posters and on the walls, in demonstrations, by pressure on the elected officials and the various bodies participating in the promotion of wind turbines (prefectures, regions, departments, communes, natural parks .. .) but also by physical blockages of all the wind logistics (building sites, convoys, canvassing ...) and the occupations of the future worksites. We will not let them continue with impunity the rampage of our territories.