



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 12th February 2013

NFLA report shows the role a wide range of renewables can provide in our future energy mix and in 'keeping the lights on'

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) publish today a report providing its member authorities with a thorough and detailed analysis of the future energy mix in the British Isles and the essential role a wide variety of renewable energy sources can provide in ensuring energy security and reasonably priced bills for customers. (1)

The report is part of a suite of forthcoming policy briefings which are informing its membership of a variety of critical energy issues which could impact on local government across the British Isles. Last month the NFLA produced a detailed overview of the environment effects of shale gas extraction (2). Further reports on fuel poverty, energy efficiency, the Green Deal and the UK Energy Bill are all in preparation and will be published shortly.

This NFLA report considers how the UK Government's Energy Scenario for 2020 – 2030 would benefit from the development of a wider range of renewable energy being more actively pursued. Considerable development of current renewable energy generation has focused largely on onshore and offshore wind generation, which the NFLA believes is a key component part of future energy generation in the British Isles. This report also considers the prospects of developing a whole range of other non-wind renewables such as solar, tidal, wave, biofuels and geothermal energy.

The key conclusions of the NFLA renewable energy report include:

- Between 2020 and 2030 DECC sees a sudden levelling off in the growth in renewables, and a rapid growth in nuclear and gas.
- But this is not an inevitable consequence of meeting climate change objectives. By allowing offshore wind to continue growing at the rate it will have grown in the previous decade, and then looking to bring in a batch of other renewable technologies, including solar, geothermal, hydro and wave and tidal; there is scope to move towards a more sustainable renewable energy system which does not require new nuclear power or large-scale gas.
- A key part of such an energy scenario includes a much greater emphasis on energy efficiency measures. As the Friends of the Earth have noted a massive 155 Terawatts per hour (TWh) could be saved through such measures – 140 TWh of which would be at a negative cost.
- The growth of wind energy can continue beyond 2020 and it is possible to cope with variability and intermittency issues.
- UK wood resources would best be used to provide renewable heat or possibly some combined heat and power generation, or there is a danger of moving towards unsustainable use of such resources.
- Biofuels may be able to provide a sustainable fuel for transport, but only if the focus moves away from crops which compete with food for land towards biomass waste. Efforts to produce biofuels from algae appear to require more research to avoid the need for a large input of water and fertiliser.

NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett said:

"I welcome this briefing as providing information which shows how a wide range of renewable energy technologies are preferable to new nuclear build or a dash for gas and still ensure adequate energy security across the British Isles. It is yet more evidence that, rather than dangle billions of public money in front of EDF to build new nuclear power stations, the UK Government should be diverting resources to a combination of renewable energy, microgeneration and energy efficiency."

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES



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NFLA Steering Committee Policy Advisor Pete Roche said:

"The idea that we won't be able to keep the lights on and meet our climate change objectives without nuclear power is clearly bogus. In fact the reverse is probably true. Evidence from Finland and France suggests new reactors will be over-budget and too late to help reduce carbon emissions. We should be putting our intellectual and political energy into getting a second wave of renewables off the ground so they can make a major contribution in the 2020s."

Ends

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Notes to editors:

- (1) The NFLA Policy Briefing on Energy Scenarios 2020 – 2030 is attached with this briefing.
- (2) NFLA Policy Briefing on shale gas and extraction, 30th January 2013.
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A219_\(NB105\)_Shale_gas_fracking.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A219_(NB105)_Shale_gas_fracking.pdf)

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