

Wind farms

A new report from the Sustainable Development Commission suggests that the UK could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by building more wind farms, re-igniting the debate about *clean energy*.

- 1 What is a wind farm? Describe a wind turbine. Are wind farms or turbines used in your country?
- 2 Study the results of two opinion polls and select the correct figures. Then, scan the letters to a newspaper to check your answers.

British Wind Energy Association	BBC
<p>Of 500 people interviewed in Northern Ireland about wind energy ...</p> <p>(a) almost 70% / 80% / 90% agree that wind farms are necessary to help meet the country's current and future energy needs.</p> <p>(b) 56% / 66% / 76% said they would be happy to have a wind farm in their local area.</p>	<p>1,004 people were questioned in the UK about nuclear power. Is it right to build more nuclear power stations?</p> <p>(i) 9% / 39% / 52% – right (ii) 9% / 39% / 52% – wrong (iii) 9% / 39% / 52% – don't know</p>

30 May 2005

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Dear Sir or Madam

I was delighted to read the result of the recent survey in Northern Ireland. I am greatly encouraged by the fact that nearly 90% of those questioned agreed that wind farms are necessary, with 66% saying they would be happy to have one locally. I hope this will help to convince those who reject this cheap, clean form of energy generation.

In order to meet its Kyoto target of a 12.5% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the UK must look for 'cleaner' sources of energy. We have the best wind resources in Europe, so we should be using them to meet our energy targets.

I accept that building wind farms will change the landscape – but not as much as climate change will. It is clear that we cannot continue to rely on shrinking supplies of fossil fuels. Wind, by comparison, is inexhaustible. Yours faithfully, Janet Wood

Dear Editor

Wind farms will spoil the landscape. There is an expression – NIMBY – “not in my back yard”. Most people who say they would welcome more wind farms would NOT like them where they live! Wind farms harm wildlife - killing birds, for example, and destroy an area's natural beauty. There will also be implications for the tourist industry in beauty spots. Who enjoys driving through landscapes with giant turbines on the horizon?

According to a recent poll, only 39% of respondents were pro building more nuclear plants (as opposed to 52% against). What these NIMBYS fail to realise is that nuclear energy is the only way the UK can reach its targets set out in the Kyoto agreement. Why? Because renewable electricity technologies can only provide a fraction of our energy needs. Regards, Kevin Collins

- 3 Read both letters and decide which one you agree with more.
- 4 Match a word in the first column with one in the second column to complete the collocations.

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|----------------|---------------|
| (a) wind | (1) change |
| (b) fossil | (2) agreement |
| (c) greenhouse | (3) farm |
| (d) renewable | (4) gas |
| (e) Kyoto | (5) energy |
| (f) global | (6) fuel |
| (g) climate | (7) warming |

- 5 The Kyoto agreement set targets for reducing carbon emissions. How can this be achieved? Prepare for a meeting. Use the note cards below. Can you suggest any further ideas? Agree on an action plan for your government.

Build more wind farms
Invest in solar energy

Make cars "cleaner" (how?)
Tax CO2 emissions by companies

Build more nuclear power stations
Subsidise clean technologies