



Surfrider Foundation®

CONSERVATION * ACTIVISM * RESEARCH * EDUCATION

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Media Release

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Surfrider Foundation Australia is the peak non-government environmental organisation representing Australia's 1.2 million surfers. Surfrider is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of Australia's oceans, waves and beaches for all people through C.A.R.E. – Conservation, Activism, Research and Education. Surfrider is active in all aspects of coastal environmental, economic, spiritual and social issues related to surfing.

Alternative energy projects such as windfarms are part of the new generation of energy sources for electricity. Windfarms are part of a suite of alternative energy sources that represent a reduction in our reliance on non-renewable fossil fuels for the production of electricity. While projects of this nature are supported in principle, Surfrider Foundation Australia (Surfrider) is concerned about a proposed Windfarm at Wilson Head in the Shire of Denmark and the impacts it will have. Our concerns are supported by many in the local community.

Coastal development is a very important issue in Australia. Nationally, Surfrider responds to and assists its branches and members deal with inappropriate development proposals and plans so that the legitimacy and importance of broad community concern about issues is recognised and accounted for in the planning and approvals process.

National Projects and Research Director, Mr. Neil Lazarow said that the proposal fell short on a number of important grounds:

- The current site is of high value and would be significantly compromised by the proposed development.
- The proposal does not comply with current 'best practice' coastal management and planning guidelines.
- Rezoning of the area will set a dangerous precedent for future 'unsightly and potentially destructive' coastal developments.
- Consultation with the community and broader stakeholder groups has been inadequate.

Unique coastal landscapes are a diminishing resource. All around the world, uncontrolled development has diminished the beauty and integrity of many of our special coastal places. Increasingly, surfers and other beach going tourists are visiting Australia because of the unique 'natural' experience they are able to enjoy from visiting places which, from a tourist perspective, maintain many of their original features and beauty. Surfrider believes that the proposal to build a windfarm at Wilson Head does not comply with 'best practice' coastal planning and management.

Lazarow says: "that until an independent and comprehensive study is undertaken to ascertain the best possible sites for windfarms, that includes economic, environmental and social factors, there should be a moratorium on this type of development."

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