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To: Renewable Heat
Subject: Renewable Heat Consultation

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First of all, we do not have enough electricity generation to heat our homes. Offshore wind energy will not solve this as it is correlated with onshore wind. So heat pumps will not work. They will simply transfer the emissions from heating to power generation. Moneypoint and Tarbert power stations cannot be shut down for stability reasons. Tarbert was due to shutdown about ten years ago. It is still open and can't be done without.

This then leaves biofuel and biomass. It is acknowledged in the document that there is no renewable supply of either developed yet in Ireland. The idea seems to be that we will eventually develop our own supply. In the meantime we will rely on imports which are not sustainable and need to be transported on diesel powered ships. Unintended consequences will inevitably result such as :

1. By increasing demand for biofuels, the demand for cheap crop based biodiesel, such as palm and soy oil will also increase. This will result in the destruction of rainforests in Asia and South America. In fact, it is estimated that about 10% of the world's orangutan habitats have already been destroyed because of the rush for biofuels. The Sunday Times this year reported that 5 million litres of palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia have been burnt as "renewable" fuel transport in Ireland over the past three years. That this was counted towards our renewable targets is madness. We are saving the planet by destroying it.
2. A large amount of fossil fuel is required to produce, grow, harvest, transport and process biofuels. So by moving to biofuels, emissions will simply be transferred from transport to agriculture and other sectors. With biomass, trees are cut down with petrol chainsaws. The phrase moving chairs around springs to mind.
3. Local fuel sources will tend to get replaced with imported ones, e.g. peat briquettes have recently been imported from Estonia, Latvia and Germany into Ireland. This simply transfers the emissions on to the shipping industry and increases emissions in other countries. **Climate change is either a global problem or an Irish problem, it cannot be both.** If it's a global problem, then the focus needs to be on reducing imports.

The best strategy would be a judgement based policy rather than a targets based policy. If something makes sense then it should be done. For example, Iceland had a lot of geothermal power. They didn't need targets to use it for heating, it just made sense to do so. It would be better for Ireland to do what is sensible for Ireland, instead of striving to reach targets which can have unintended consequences. We do not want to repeat the "cash for ash" scandal that occurred in Northern Ireland.

Advantage should be taken where possible of District heating. Data centres should only be granted planning permission where they can provide district heating to local houses. Any waste heat from new power stations should also be used in the same way.

Waste heat from chimneys could also be diverted for use in radiators. More research needs to be done on this.

Therefore, following on from the above, I do not agree with a renewable heat obligation.

Regards

