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25 April 2018

Submissions

Interim Targets Independent Expert Panel
Melbourne VIC 3001

By – email

RE: WestWind Energy Pty Ltd – Submission to the Climate change targets 2021-2030

Dear Hon. Greg Combet and Panelists,

WestWind welcomes the opportunity to comment on the review of the Interim Emissions Reduction Targets for Victoria (2021-2030).

WestWind Energy Pty Ltd (WestWind) is an Australian company dedicated to the development, construction and operation of wind farms. Since 2004, WestWind has had 235 wind turbines approved in the Ballarat region of Victoria (equivalent to approximately 700 megawatts of installed capacity), and currently has a project seeking planning approval for an additional 800-1000 megawatts in Victoria.

One of the major issues facing the renewable energy industry in Australia has been the constantly changing policy and regulatory environment which has resulted in investment risk - be it real or just perceived. While legislation of the Victorian Renewable Energy Target is a positive step towards creating investment certainty, it simply is not detailed and robust enough to sustain long-term renewable energy investment in Victoria. We need aggressive long-term targets set for Victoria to provide investor confidence, and ensure development of infrastructure that mandates Victoria's contribution towards the global goal of containing global warming to a science-based target of less than 1.5°C to 2°C.

I believe Victoria must reduce emissions by as much as possible as quickly as possible. I am convinced that Victoria has the wind and solar resource, industry skills and expertise to deliver on an aggressive target for 2025 and 2030. With supportive legislation we can produce clean, reliable low-cost electricity that benefits the Victorian people, and puts Victoria on a path to rapid decarbonisation. These targets will generate additional positive benefits to our state including jobs and sustainable farming businesses for our rural communities.

Sound decision making on Victoria's emissions reduction targets will require the greatest level of accuracy about our current emissions profile. In the context of emissions reductions I would highly encourage the panel to also recommend investment in public transport; and power Melbourne's train network with solar, wind, and storage. Please also consider mandates to account for the emissions associated with aviation, shipping, and land use (including prescribed burning and fire regime associated with logging).

In terms of policy tools and technical and commercial feasibility, the panel can recommend that the government increase the Victorian Renewable Energy Targets to 100 percent by 2035 with an aggressive target of 60 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2030. I am in frequent conversations with investors that

are excited about investment in renewable energy projects, and these steps would help ensure investors have the certainty required to convert excitement into real investments to fund the infrastructure necessary to meet these targets.

Finally, I encourage the panel to limit any emissions offsetting included in the targets to initiatives in Victoria. There are known human rights abuses and negative environmental impacts associated with some international offsetting schemes. Limiting offsets to Australia, preferably within Victoria, will allow proper auditing and guarantee that our state captures the full economic and employment benefits of such a scheme.

As Australia's renewable energy inputs must significantly increase to continue de-carbonising and de-risking our economy in a global context, it is important to put in very aggressive targets for 2025 and 2030 that foster further growth of renewable energy uptake.

WestWind has invested tens of millions of dollars in Australia, overwhelmingly in Victoria, and has been a direct and indirect employer to dozens of people since 2004. In conclusion, I would like to invite you to our office to discuss these matters further and meet the WestWind team followed by a tour to our proposed 800-1000 MW Golden Plains Wind Farm site. I sincerely look forward to the panel's summary of responses in June 2018 and the final advice to the government in February 2019.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely



Tobias Geiger
MANAGING DIRECTOR