



Title: *“Energisers”*

Description: Dawn at Āpiti Wind Farm with approaching northwest front

Photographer: Henrik Moller

Where, when: Āpiti, Palmerston North, March 2021.

Sustainability? This Norwest front loomed up on Te Āpiti Wind Farm near Palmerston North one dawn in March 2021.

It was surreal sitting under those blades churning away to enable New Zealanders to flick a switch as they stumbled out of bed for a morning coffee and breakfast. Around 80% of our national electricity supply is from renewable sources and about 5% comes from wind turbines, enough electricity to power the whole of New Zealand for 19 days.

The consensus from research in New Zealand and around the world is that the turbines are not dangerous to birds unless positioned at critical places along bird migration routes. Birds are effective energy minimisers – you might say “lazy” in human terms – so they mainly traverse ridges by flying up valleys to cross at the lowest point. Wind turbines tend to be positioned at the high points to maximise wind exposure. The turbines do make a low “whump, whump” sound which distresses some neighbours who don’t want them nearby. The latter is sometimes unfairly categorised as the ‘NIMBY’ (“Not In My Back Yard”) response. It illustrates the recurring challenge of environmental management – how do you balance the costs and benefits of a proposed sustainability intervention for individuals compared to the collective needs of society and economy? Often this power struggle emerges as a ‘locals’ versus ‘others’ contest.

A scrap is looming - for some New Zealanders these contraptions are majestic giants, heroes even; for others they are a blot on the landscape. Visitors to Europe will have seen lots of clusters of three turbines dotted across the landscape. So far New Zealand has chosen to concentrate the turbines in fewer but larger aggregations. What model will we use to get to the government's goal of 100% renewable energy production by 2050?

Photo notes: This exposure lasted 1/100s, and used a wide-angle lens (18 mm), f/8 and ISO-640.

Digital specs: 6,984 x 4,660 pixels (33 MP).

Key words: Wind energy, Āpiti Wind Farm, Renewable energy, NIMBY, birds, Henrik Moller, Aotearoa, New Zealand, Sustainability.

Price: \$150 (incl. GST) for use of the digital image.

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Donation: The price includes a \$100 donation to a sustainability organisation or project of your choice, or otherwise for the *Climate Navigator* <https://www.climatenavigator.co.nz/>

I recommend that the donation goes to *Climate Navigator* because they are a social enterprise that works with a variety of organisations and businesses (whānau, community, civic, all the way to corporate level) to both adapt to and mitigate climate change. They are also taking a holistic social-economic-environmental approach to promoting positive change.

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