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Objections to Albany Wind Farm
Buffalo Kloof Private Game Reserve
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10 JUNE 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Objection to Albany Wind Farm, Makhanda

I am writing this letter of objection to the proposed Albany Wind Farm on behalf of all owners, staff, and interested parties of Buffalo Kloof Private Game Reserve. Buffalo Kloof is a protected area of 20 000ha, protecting a diverse array of fauna and flora, many of which are endangered. It is a privately owned and run business, our key passion is to provide a natural space for critically endangered animals to thrive and roam free. To sustain this model and fund our conservation projects we offer private Safari Experiences, ethical harvesting, photographic safaris, and an opportunity for guests to understand and contribute to first-hand conservation.

Our guests travel from far and wide to visit our beautiful reserve and to feel completely immersed in nature. Driving to Buffalo Kloof from either Port Elizabeth or East London they will get visual of the wind turbines. Without the income from tourists, we cannot support our staff, protect our wildlife, or support our neighbouring yendella community, who also have land within

Buffalo Kloof and rely on tourism. Many livelihoods depend on the survival of Buffalo Kloof Game Reserve.

Buffalo Kloof Private Game Reserve objects for the following reasons:

- Visual amenity

Turbines are too close to people's homes and will be alien structures in such a picturesque and rural environment. They will become an immediate eyesore on the natural Eastern Cape landscape and ruin the historical views around Makhanda. The distractions will deter visitors from Makhanda and lose its valuable tourist appeal and onward financial depreciation for local businesses

-Visual Impact

The proposed turbines would be visible for a significant distance, seen clearly as you leave Grahamstown along the N2 to Port Elizabeth, Port Alfred and East London, and across the rural areas to Kwandwe Private Game Reserve, Great Fish River, and Beaufort. We can see the current wind turbines South West of Buffalo Kloof during the day and the flashing red strobe lights during the night, certainly not aesthetically pleasing.

- Noise pollution during construction

Guests who visit Makanda for big events such as the Arts festival and school sports festivals will be put off by the noise pollution and an

increased number of construction vehicles congesting our traffic. Which in term means fewer day visits to our reserve with less tourism.

- Disturbance due to increased traffic during construction

As said above, construction vehicles congesting our already damaged roads.

- Disturbance of delicate fauna and flora

Leopard and other mammals use these undisturbed areas as passageways to neighbouring reserves. We had a large male leopard who we collared with a GPS unit he travelled through the proposed area for wind turbines across to Kwandwe Private Game Reserve, and back to our reserve. We have proof from our GPS unit of his route travelled. Has a fauna and flora assessment/EIA been done by a persons with no bias interest in the windfarm or the landowner where the windfarm will be placed? Have all fauna and flora species been identified in this area?

Have the following below been considered?

- a plant rescue and protection plan;
- a re-vegetation and habitat rehabilitation plan;
- an alien invasive species management plan;
- stormwater and fire management plans; and
- traffic and transport management plans for site access roads.

- Bird Species which will be killed by the turbines

The blue crane which is a vulnerable bird species on the IUCN list, uses Buffalo Kloof and Kwandwe Game Reserve as nesting and breeding sites, traveling to and from. The wind turbines could contribute and accelerate their vulnerable status to endangered. A study must be done on the impact a wind farm would have on these birds.

- Bats which will be killed by the turbines

- The inevitability that more turbines will be constructed

-Possibility of our elephant herds being negatively affected, due to the seismic vibrations according to various studies Dr Brendan Cole has mentioned. Will a study be conducted? Kwandwe Private Game Reserve, Kariega Game Reserve, Pumba Game Reserve have elephants too.

-Health

Several physicians from around the world - e.g., Amanda Harry in England, Robert McMurtry in Ontario, Robyn Phipps in New Zealand - have recorded a common set of ill health effects among people living near industrial-scale wind turbines. The symptoms began when local turbines began to turn, and they are relieved when the victims leave. The symptoms to include:

sleep disturbance, panic episodes with sensations of internal pulsation or quivering which arise while awake or asleep, ear pressure, dizziness, vertigo, nausea, racing heartbeat (tachycardia), ringing or buzzing in the ears (tinnitus)

Dr. Nina Pierpont of New York has called it "wind turbine syndrome" and determined that its primary cause is the effect of low-frequency wind turbine noise on the organs. Dr. Pierpont's work has led her to recommend that large wind turbines not be sited closer than 2 kilometres (1-1/4 miles) from a home. It is also a severe risk to anyone with epilepsy. Will it affect low-income people living close by?

Whilst we are not completely against the harnessing of natural energy in an attempt to lower the carbon footprint, we do feel there is a valuable balance between landowners seeking financial gain on local land against the knock-on effect on local residence, tourism and business. This area should also be protected against such monstrosities being built with no value other than individual landowners' financial gains.

I deplore the committee to take into account all local residents' issues and concerns raised.

We have poured blood sweat and tears into Buffalo Kloof to get to where we are now, intending to extend buffalo Kloof to create spaces for wildlife to freely roam where they are protected. We rely solely on tourism, as do all the people we employ. Surely the protection of South Africa's endangered species, ecosystems, and habitats are more important? Our eco-systems and wildlife are detrimental to mankind's survival, without these, the wind farm is a fruitless endeavour. Please reconsider this windfarm, I am sure there are other areas more suited for a wind farm.

Kind regards

Mr Warne Rippon

Owner of Buffalo Kloof Private Game Reserve