Wind Energy and the Tourist Gaze
Empowering, Entertaining or Total “Turnoff”

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Summary

- Number of tourism attitude studies on offshore wind farms is low; on-land turbine studies are more numerous.
- Offshore locations are commonly preferred to on-land sites.
- Tourism can successfully include wind turbines and farms, both rural and urban.
- When used to brew beer, wind turbines are accepted by 99% of the population.
Questions to think about…

• What factors make wind energy acceptable to the traveling public?

• Would the presence of wind energy initiatives affect your willingness to visit a destination?

• Are your attitudes towards wind energy different when on vacation than at home?

• At what point or under what conditions can wind energy itself become a tourist attraction?
Growing interest in “Green Travel”

– 87% of U.S. consumers are seriously concerned about the environment (GfK Roper);
– 30% of consumers make an effort to avoid buying products from corporations they don’t feel are environmentally responsible (GfK Roper);
– 22% boycott those that are harming natural resources (GfK Roper);
– 73% of consumers consider it important or very important that companies have a good environmental track record (BCG January 2009);
– Despite current economy, 67% of US consumers that claimed to buy green products reported buying the same amount, 25% reported buying more, and only 8% are buying less (Harris Interactive March 2009)
Traveler Likelihood of Visiting Green Attractions

- Somewhat less likely to visit: 1%
- Much less likely to visit: 1%
- Neutral: 29%
- Much more likely to visit: 24%
- Somewhat more likely to visit: 45%

Source: PGAV Destination Consulting
Traveler’s Concern with Climate Change is Rising

Source: U.S. Travel Association and Ypartnership, *Travelhorizons™*
Green Practices Travelers Look for at Destinations

- Recycle bins: 87.9%
- Use of energy efficient lighting: 86.6%
- Solar panels: 80.2%
- Sell F&B in reusable or biodegradable plates, cups & silverware: 77.1%
- Reusable shopping bags: 76.5%
- Offer water in biodegradable cups instead of selling water bottles: 76.0%
- Natural landscape: 73.3%
- Occupancy sensors attached to lighting: 66.9%
- Use of hybrid company vehicles: 65.2%
- Composting: 64.1%
- Using all natural product cleaners/insecticides: 63.7%
- Encourage guests to bring own reusable mugs with them: 57.1%
- Serving organic fruits and vegetables: 52.5%
- LEED Certification of the facility: 50.9%
General Consensus of the Green Travel Market

1. Green is mainstream and awareness of the issues and environmentally-responsible behaviors are increasing.
2. Affluent, educated and higher-end travelers are the most sustainability-oriented.
3. Consumers do not understand the intricacies of the cost of traveling green.
4. There is a significant market for price premiums.
5. The travel industry is not yet satisfying consumers’ green needs.

PhoCusWright, Inc. 2009 Market Research and US Travel Association 2010 Market Outlook
Imagine...
Maldives

Photo credit: www.skystreamenergy.com
“We want the Maldives to be the place to test renewables. We want the Maldives to be the place to build renewables. We want the Maldives to be the place to invest in renewables. We will position the Maldives as a showcase for renewable energy”

President Nasheed
“Nine out of ten tourists visiting Scotland's top beauty spots say the presence of wind farms makes no difference to the enjoyment of their holiday, and twice as many people would return to an area because of the presence of a wind farm than would stay away.”

*British Wind Energy Association*
Not only is it the country’s first Brewery powered by a wind turbine, its also the first and only restaurant.

-O.B.B.
Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort, MA

Zephyr Wind Turbine

Can This Be a Tourist Attraction?

Photo courtesy: www.gonomad.com

Photo courtesy: picasaweb.google.com
Atlantic City, NJ

Does This Tourism Really Blow?

Courtesy A.C. Weekly

Photo Courtesy http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10692195/
Toronto

Can wind turbines themselves be tourist attractions in Urban settings?
The Future of Wind in Tourism . . .

Norway’s Concept of an Off-Shore Wind Farm Resort.
(combine turbines with tourism = “turbines”)

A Wind Energy Celebration Center Built Into the Base of a Wind Turbine.

Photos courtesy inhabitat.com
Factors affecting attitudes as reported in the literature

- Cumulative effects on projects clustered closely together;
- Proximity to important features;
- Energy policy opinion;
- National good/security of supply;
- Perception of the developer;
- Economic effect—property values;
- Social impact on community fabric;
- Local impacts of construction;
- Impact on the local environment.

Price $$$ of gasoline
References


• Norwegian turbine city could be the next big eco-tourism attraction. Online news article.