



Danish homeowners in Sweden rebel against ill-sited wind farms

On 16th March, 2009, the Danish association for Danes with houses in Sweden, named Danske Torpare, addressed a statement about problems with windmills to the Swedish government. A copy was sent to the Danish government. Here is this statement translated into English:

Points of view regarding wind power in Southern Sweden

Since the 1960s the Danes have bought or rented good and well situated weekend houses in the most southerly areas of Sweden. Since the end of the 1980s the numbers have increased considerably and the Danes congregate not only in the traditional areas in the southwestern Småland, north eastern Skåne and southern Halland but have moved further north and east.

The association Danske Torpare (Danish Landowners) has since 1980 been an organization of interest to a lot of the Danes, and the association now counts app 10.000 members.

Sweden's expansion of wind power till 2020 can become a serious financial problem for many Danes with weekend houses in the country's southern forest areas. Erection of big wind mills in the locality can result in substantial depreciation of the property value and in certain cases makes it impossible for the owner to sell the property and who thus risks losing the invested capital. Apart from creating difficulties for the individual it is likely to influence the integration process in the Øresund Region. It is with increasing apprehension that the members of the association view this development. An increasing number of people contacts the association because of the predicted 150-200 meter high wind mills and the risk of a considerable noise nuisance, shadows, nocturnal flashlights and a spoilt view plus not least the economic losses of such a development. The association cannot and does not want to ignore all these many enquiries.

On November 27th 2008 the association therefore held an internal information meeting about wind power in Southern Sweden and more that 100 members participated who all one way or another are now affected by the situation. At the meeting an experienced estate agent, after having consulted many of his Swedish colleagues, informed that just a letter applying for erection of a wind mill in the vicinity immediately depreciated the value of the property by 30 per cent.

Wind mills that are placed closer than 2000 meters to a property can make it very difficult or impossible to sell for leisure purposes it was further informed.

It is the nature, the view, the tranquility that since the 1960s attracts still more Danish people to Sweden and through renovation and maintenance of their houses and hitherto derelict farms they contribute to the preservation of the Swedish cultural heritage.

Several Swedish councils are aware of this and have for instance on their website used this argument to attract the Danes. A good example is Klippan District council's Danish webpage. TAX Denmark has informed that in 2007 app 21.700 Danes were owners of Swedish properties. It is thus a considerable number of people that therefore can be affected by the expansion of wind power as well of course as the big number of Swedes that are in the same situation.

It is not the business of Danske Torpare to take a position for or against wind power. The association only wants to point out the concrete and very real problems to its members. We are keen to emphasize how much the association appreciates the readiness to co-operate shown by the

Swedes and that on principle we do not wish to interfere in Swedish affairs.

A big number of foreign citizens who own houses in Sweden may be seriously affected economically and we therefore ask the Swedish authorities to be mindful of this predicament.

We are greatly worried about the destruction of the extraordinary beauty of the Swedish nature – not because wind mills are not all right – but because there is a danger that they are erected in the wrong places, are too big and can have a number of negative and unexpected consequences. Danske Torpare predicts that many people will feel compelled to enter into legal proceedings about compensation with the Swedish courts of law. We would like to draw attention to the Danish compensation rules as a possible means of solving the problems.

On behalf of its members the committee of the association is willing to enter into dialogue with the Swedish authorities and politicians at all levels. We are ready – at any time and with short notice – to discuss this predicament in Sweden.

Yours sincerely,
The Committee of the Association of Danish Landowners “Danske Torpare”
Per Bonke
President



Editor's note:

It is worth remembering that the Danes in their homeland receive financial compensation when their house loses value because of intrusive wind farms in the neighbourhood. Here is how:

Windmills must be situated at a minimum distance of 4 x the height of the mill away from habitation. If the mill is erected closer than 6 x the height of the mill an estimation is carried out free of charge regarding the depreciation of the property value. If the loss is more than 1% full compensation of the loss in property value is paid out.

If the property is situated further away than 6 x the height of the mill, 4000 DKK are payable to have an evaluation of the loss in value carried out. If it is estimated that the depreciation is more than 1% the loss in value of the property is paid out and the 4000 DKK reimbursed. If it is estimated that there is no loss in value of the property the 4000 DKK are forfeited.

Owners of windmills have to pay the compensation.