



THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR NATURE

[www.savetheeaglesinternational.org](http://www.savetheeaglesinternational.org)

**Save the Eagles International**

MEDIA RELEASE

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### CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS DENOUNCE MISREPRESENTATIONS FROM THE WIND INDUSTRY

The World Council for Nature (**WCFN**) and Save the Eagles International (**STEI**) object to misrepresentations spread by the wind industry, in particular those appearing in the CBC article of June 27th on the Campobello Project (1). It is indeed incorrect to say that some wind turbines cannot kill birds or bats because they move too slowly.

The turbine in question in the article, to be erected in the path of eagles and ospreys on Campobello Island, NB, has blades moving at 226 km/h at the tip. A 2-ton blade travelling at that speed will kill these living treasures, and any other birds or bats that happen to fly too close to the rotor. The windpower spokesman quoted in the article also argues that cats and buildings kill more birds than do wind turbines. But the question being asked by WCFN and STEI is: do cats and buildings kill eagles and ospreys? – They don't, but wind turbines do (2).

#### **Blade speed:**

The first wind turbine to be installed on this small island in the Atlantic Flyway, where many thousands of birds stopover during their migrations, is an Aeronautica 47-750. According to the company's specifications published on Internet (3), this turbine has 23.5-meter long blades with a tip speed of "62 – 63 m/s at full load". In plain language, this is an optimal speed of **223-226 km/h**: 63 meters per second x 60 seconds = 3780 meters per minute x 60 minutes = 226,800 meters per hour, ie 226 km/h

Says Mark Duchamp, who speaks for both WCFN and STEI: "Brian Kuhn, spokesman for Associated Wind Developers, was **spreading misinformation** when he said "the turbine's propellers move too slowly for birds to crash into them" (1). Kuhn also pretends that birds crash (stupidly) into wind turbines, whereas the truth is that they get whacked by blades coming from above their heads, or under their bellies, at

226 km/h. Clearly, the blades do the killing. "Birds crashing into wind turbines" is a wording frequently used by agents of the wind industry and, like the term "wind farm", has been carefully crafted to project **a misleading image of harmlessness** for the industry."

### **The cats-and-buildings-kill-more-birds argument:**

WCFN and STEI do not deny that domestic cats, buildings, cars, telecommunication towers, power lines, and other man-related hazards are responsible (for the moment) for more bird deaths than are wind turbines. But this is an invalid justification, explains Duchamp, because:

- Nobody should be allowed to kill eagles "because power lines kill more of them". It is completely absurd, and a measure of the sophistry being used by the wind industry to excuse their killings.

- Windfarms **cause more power lines to be built**, often in sensitive natural habitats, decimating more endangered birds like (for instance) great bustards in Spain (4).

- In a world where so many birds are being killed because of human activities, with their numbers dwindling as a result, wind turbines are the legendary **drop that spills the glass**. They already are (spilling the glass) for some endangered species such as the Tasmanian Wedge-tailed Eagle (6), the Great Bustard (4), etc. Save the Eagles International has warned the international community about this threat (7).

- Bird species that found a haven far away from the usual man-made hazards are now being invaded by wind turbines in their own natural reserves (e.g. IBA's and national parks, as on Campobello Island). It is irresponsibility bordering on madness, or more simply, a **perverse form of pork-barrel politics** - perverse in the sense that it doesn't benefit communities, but harms them instead.

- Cats and buildings mostly kill common birds, like sparrows, finches, thrushes, etc. whereas wind turbines and their power lines kill eagles, falcons, cranes, and other rare birds.

- **Cats, cars, buildings etc. don't kill bats, but wind turbines do, millions of them yearly** (5), whose dwindling populations are of conservation concern. It so happens that bats are attracted by turbine vibrations, and/or by insects attracted by their lights. This will have dire consequences on agriculture, causing an increased use of pesticides, with more bird deaths and higher food prices as a result.

- The number of wind turbines throughout the world, if the industry has its way, will be multiplied by 10-20 times. Wind turbines will be omnipresent. Hundreds of thousands of kilometers of new high-tension lines will be built just for them. These are as deadly to birds as are the windfarms themselves, especially to large birds like eagles, geese, cranes etc. **There won't be any safe place for bird life**. Many bird and bat species will become extinct as a result, with unfathomable consequences for the conservation of the natural world as we know it, and things that depend on it like our agriculture.

### **Conclusion:**

When asked why bird societies have not warned the world about these dangers, Mark replied: "ornithologists need an income like anyone else. The tragedy is that they can only get one from the wind industry or the government, and of course they can't bite the hand that feeds them. On the other hand, WCFN and STEI have no financial ties with anyone. We are unpaid volunteers, so we can tell the truth."

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**REFERENCES**

(1) - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/story/2012/06/27/nb-birds-wind-turbines.html>

(2) – Eagles killed by wind turbines: <http://www.iberica2000.org/Es/Articulo.asp?Id=3071>

– Ospreys killed by wind turbines: [http://savetheeaglesinternational.org/?page\\_id=843](http://savetheeaglesinternational.org/?page_id=843)

(3) – Specifications of wind turbine Aeronautica 47-750:  
[http://aeronauticawind.com/aw/library/Spec\\_Sheet\\_Norwin750-54\\_new.pdf](http://aeronauticawind.com/aw/library/Spec_Sheet_Norwin750-54_new.pdf)

(4) – **40 to 60 great bustards killed by the power lines of the Villasilos windfarm, Spain.**

This compares to a previously estimated population of 260 individuals, immatures included, for the whole province of Burgos. The Villasilos area being the principal habitat in the province for these 10-14 kilo birds, where most of them show up at one time or another, the windfarm is actually acting as an ecological trap, a population sink for this endangered species. This is how “carefully” the wind industry places its windfarms. – STEI [http://savetheeaglesinternational.org/?page\\_id=947](http://savetheeaglesinternational.org/?page_id=947)

(5) – **6-18 million birds and bats killed yearly by 18,000 wind turbines in Spain:**  
<http://www.seo.org/2012/01/12/seobirdlife-presenta-una-nueva-guia-para-la-evaluacion-del-impacto-de-parques-eolicos-en-aves-y-murcielagos/>

(6) – The Tasmanian Wedge-tailed Eagle is being driven to extinction by windfarms:  
[www.iberica2000.org/Es/Articulo.asp?Id=4382](http://www.iberica2000.org/Es/Articulo.asp?Id=4382)

(7) – Wind turbines already driving some species to extinction: <http://savetheeaglesinternational.org/>