

# Scottish Energy News

## SNP attack Energy Minister Rudd's plan to pay for overseas renewable energy projects whilst cutting UK subsidies



**The SNP has reacted ‘with astonishment’ after Energy Minister Amber Rudd admitted that the UK Government is considering paying for renewable energy projects overseas in order to meet targets – after slashing support in Scotland.**

In a leaked letter to the Treasury, UK Energy Secretary Rudd said that the UK will fail to meet an EU obligation to deliver 15% of energy consumption from renewable sources by 2020.

Rudd has also suggested that in order to meet the target, the Treasury could support renewable energy projects in other EU countries – despite ending support for onshore wind next year and consulting on cuts to solar energy generation in the UK.



**Holyrood MP Dennis Robertson (SNP, Aberdeenshire West)** (pictured left) commented: “Given the sustained attack from the Tory government on the renewable industry, it comes as no surprise that the UK Government will fall short of its obligations on renewable energy.

“But I am absolutely staggered that they are considering supporting projects overseas while cutting vital support here in Scotland.

“Scotland is leading the way on green energy – figures show that almost half of the electricity used in Scotland in 2014 was generated from renewables. Yet Tory cuts to support for the sector could see a £3 billion loss of investment in Scotland and put more than 5,000 jobs at risk.

“Through its wrong-headed and ideologically driven cuts agenda, Tory Ministers are putting at risk jobs and investment in a key growth sector in Scotland.

“But even the suggestion that they could now pay for renewables projects abroad in order to meet targets shows that their energy policy has descended into farce.”

**A spokesman for DECC** said: “We do not comment on leaked documents. As the secretary of state has set out clearly in the parliament, renewables made up almost 20% of our electricity generation in 2014 and there is a strong pipeline to deliver our ambition of reaching 30% by 2020. We continue to make progress to meet our overall renewable energy target.”

**Dale Vince, founder of Ecotricity renewables**, commented: “The leaked letter shows that Amber Rudd’s public position that we are meeting our legally binding renewables target is quite simply not the truth.

“One option Rudd discusses is to pay other countries to build renewables for us, but there’s no indication at all that this would be cheaper than supporting them in the UK, which has Europe’s best and most economic wind resource. And given the reason for Rudd’s cuts to renewable energy support was cost, you’d think that cost ought to be a prominent feature of any discussion. Not only would paying other countries to build renewables for us cost more, but we’d also be exporting jobs and industry... it all seems a little un-thought through.

“Rudd acknowledges the need to meet the target and that we will fail. This has clearly been caused by the recent cuts, which are driven by the false claim that we can’t afford more renewables – the cheapest energy available to us.

“It rather looks like DECC are panicking, faced with the inevitable consequences of the ideologically driven renewables cull – their Plan A. Plan B appears to be either to pay the fines or to pay another country to do the job for us. Both options are short sighted and economically illiterate.”

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