



Dr Benny Peiser
The Global Warming Policy Foundation
55 Tufton Street
London SW1P 3QL

11 July 2018

Dear Dr Peiser

Thank you for writing to Today. We welcome feedback and I am sorry to hear that you did not enjoy the interview with Lord Deben on 28th June. As the Chairman of the Climate Change Committee which advises the Government he has an official role in this area and we felt it was an opportunity to hear his views of the Government's track record as his committee's report was being published that day.

The three areas you cite were all Lord Deben's examples and each raises complex issues. Let us take the first – communities and on shore wind farm developments. You are correct that there is no ban on these but that is not what Lord Deben said. These were his words:

What on earth is the government doing saying that even where a community wants to have an onshore wind farm it can't have it ! This is sheer dogma!

The Government as you will know changed the guidance to local authorities on granting onshore wind farm applications in 2015. The change means applications are now restricted to sites already marked suitable for wind development on a local plan and they must also have local approval. Since 2015 there has been a sharp drop in the number of approvals and some environmental groups have argued that there is a shortage of such designated sites and the uncertainty over what 'community backing' is required deters groups from making applications. Others would say this means onshore wind farms only get the go ahead when they do have full local support. In other words, there are different views on how much help the Government has been here and Lord Deben is giving his opinion, which is on the side of the critics.

On the issue of what onshore wind power costs compared to other ways of generating electricity you are correct to point out that there are many factors that may be taken into account. As the chart you supplied from the BEIS analysis does show, onshore wind is cheapest overall. Of course you are right to say that taking out some costs will affect this but we judged that Lord Deben's comment was a passing reference and not the cue to move the interview onto the assumptions that lie behind the levelised cost analysis or how energy costs are calculated overall. His point was the Government is not doing enough to promote low carbon low cost sources of energy and John wanted to challenge him on levels of public support for this. We wanted to keep this as the thrust of the interview on this occasion.

You also raise Lord Deben's reference to China and the Paris Agreement. If you listen again you will hear that this was qualified – he said China is *in many ways* doing more than any other country. He was setting out that countries around the world are taking action and his point was that Britain

should do more if it wants to be seen in the lead globally. We don't agree the reference to China was factually wrong – it is taking a lead in many areas, including on developing solar and wind technology – and again further questioning of this detail about China was unnecessary and would have interrupted the flow of the interview which was on Britain's role. It should be noted that Today did highlight the rise in emissions in China when introducing an interview with Cristiana Figueres, former UN climate change chief, on 31st May.

I hope this explains our thinking. Having reviewed the interview we do not agree that there were factual errors that needed correction or clarification and we are satisfied that the exchanges were sufficiently robust and challenging as regular listeners to Today would expect. In a live and fast-moving interview, it is not always possible to challenge the claims that interviewees make. Presenters have to judge when to intervene and when to move the interview on. In this case this is what happened. John was keen to explore Lord Deben's view of what the Government is and isn't doing to tackle the challenges posed by climate change and the targets it has set itself to achieve.

Thank you once again for writing to Today

Yours sincerely



Sarah Nelson
Today