

IEA Wind Task 28

Social Acceptance of Wind Energy Projects

SPECIAL Module 9: Evidence and Planning for Energy
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Outline

- Understanding social [community] acceptance;
- Task 28 and the social acceptance of wind energy projects
- Key issues;
 - Project context
 - Scale and ownership
 - Role of different actors

Task 28

- Operates under IEA wind Implementing agreements in two phases since 2007.



The International Energy Agency
Implementing Agreement for Co-operation in the Research,
Development, and Deployment of Wind Energy Systems

Projects Intranet pages
Task 28, Social Acceptance of Wind Energy Projects



- Membership of group includes: Ireland, Switzerland, Germany, USA, Japan, Netherlands, Italy, Denmark.
- <http://www.socialacceptance.ch/>

Task 28

- Annual expert meetings and local networks;
- Exchange of best practice guidance on social acceptance, learning from others, dissemination of lessons;
- Compilation of data sources, model policies etc;
- Joint projects; international, inter-disciplinary
- Briefing reports and advice:
 - State of the Art reports
 - Good practice recommendations
- Current work focusses on:
 - Measurement and *monitoring* of social acceptance
 - The role of “*neutral intermediaries*”



Thousands protest against pylons and wind turbines

Demonstrators march through Dublin in opposition to energy plans



Controversial windfarm plans are withdrawn



Support Melton Against Rural Turbines (SMART) has fought proposals to build four turbi...

Windfarm opponents to run in general election



Wednesday, October 28, 2015

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By Fíachra Ó Ciáin
Irish Examiner Reporter

Wind energy in the Netherlands: the storm has not yet calmed down

columns

They had come to Amsterdam by the dozens, to the Wind Energy Debate, to let themselves be heard. Opponents of wind energy. Their numbers and particularly their zest testified to it that the debate on wind energy has not calmed down by far. With such motivated opponents, the realisation of the goals of last year's national Energy Agreement is by no means a done deal yet.

to run a purely negative general election campaign against sitting n from re-election.



Battle over wind turbines in the land of Sleeping Beauty

by Matt McGrath
Environment correspondent, BBC News

Eco-Blowback: Mutiny in the Land of Wind Turbines

By Matthias Schulz



Germany plans to build 60,000 new wind turbines in forests, in the foothills of the Harz and even in

into the most scenic parts of Germany are across the country.

**The Concept of
Social Acceptance**
(after Wustenhagen et al 2007)

Community acceptance

Related to the acceptance of specific wind energy developments by host communities.

Social Acceptance of Wind Energy

Socio-political acceptance

Related to acceptance of wind technology as a viable energy source and supported in government policy and by the general public

Market acceptance

Related to the acceptance of wind technology by investors, financial institutions and consumers of electricity

Health and environmental impacts

Concerns over visual, bio-diversity, well-being impacts on local area etc.

Key drivers of
community concern



**Community
Acceptance
of Wind
Energy**

Fairness of consenting process

Lack of trust in developers, regulators and the transparency of the consenting regime

Perceived distribution of costs & benefits

Fear that external companies accrue key benefits, while communities bear costs

Tunnes

Climate Change

Bio-Diversity

CZM

Location

Culture

Amenity

Economics

Local Benefits

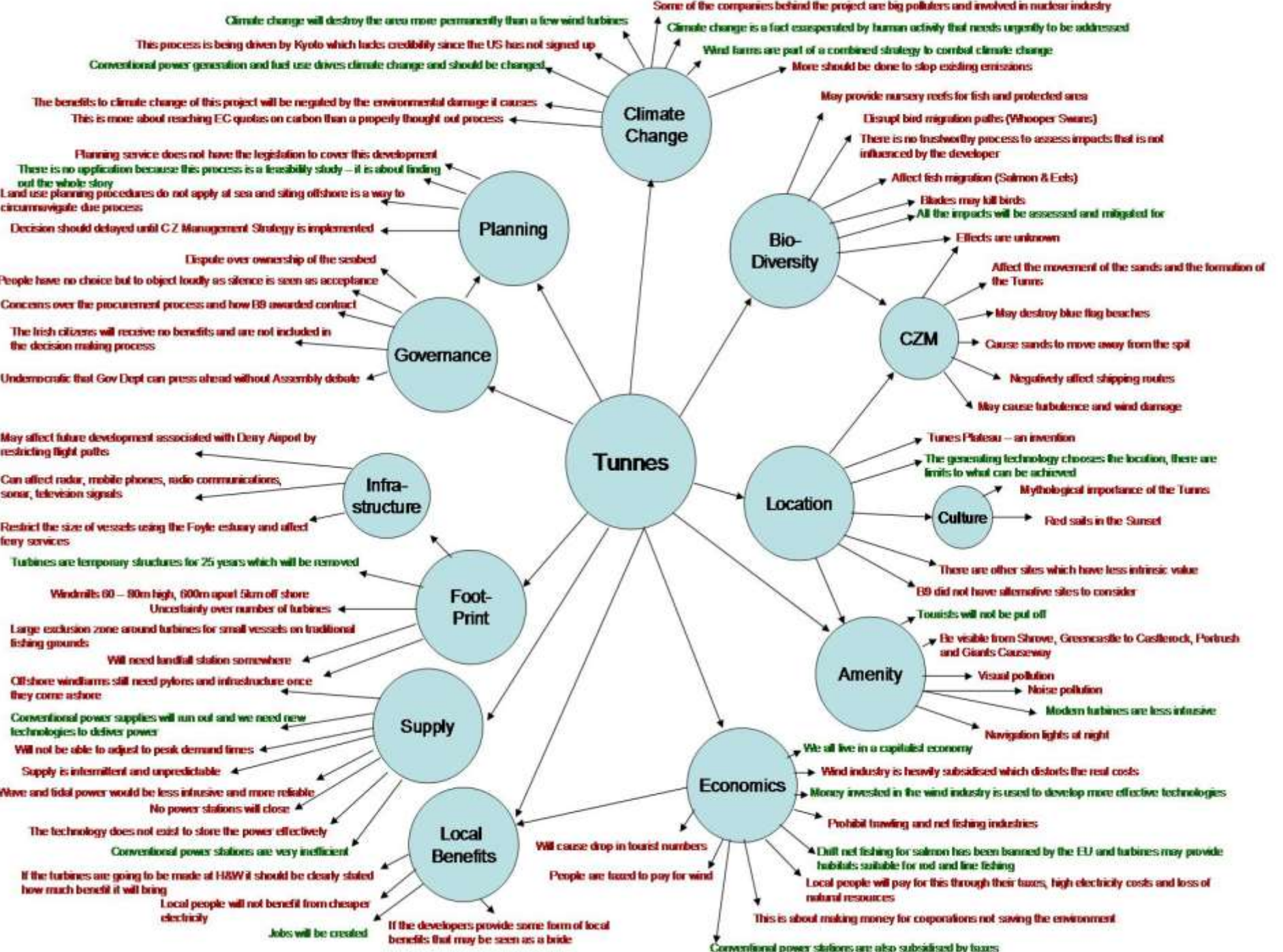
Supply

Foot-Print

Infra-structure

Governance

Planning



Some consequences of declining social acceptance

- Impacts on implementation: costs, delay legal challenge
- Broader erosion of national support and failure on renewables targets;
- Increased emphasis on offshore development;
- More demanding regulations
- Innovation in developer strategies, ownership models etc

Energy minister expects UK to miss renewables target, leaked letter shows

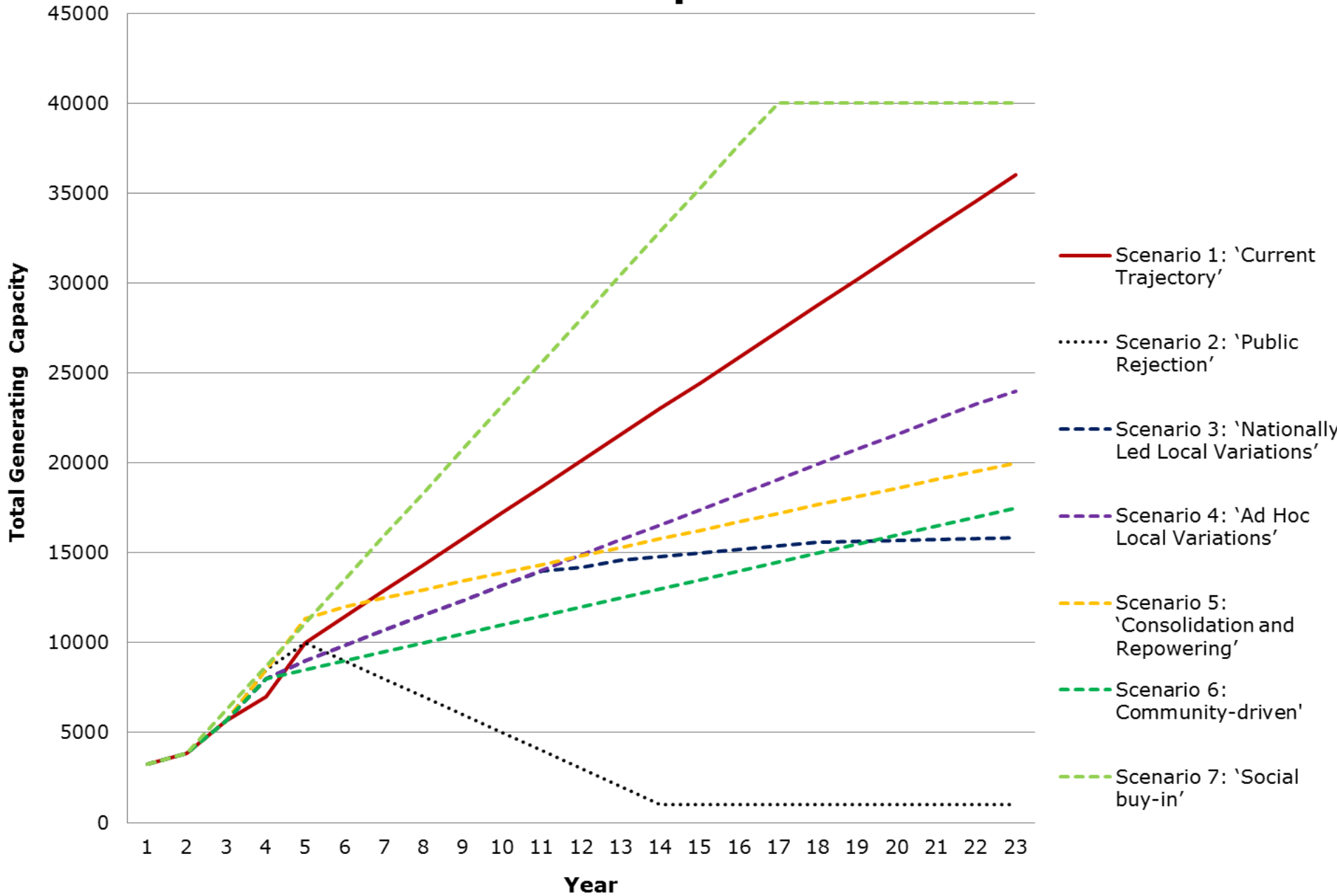
Letter from Amber Rudd revealing UK is forecast to fall 3.5 percentage points short of target exposes 'dark side of government energy policy', says

More wind turbines would be 'madness', says energy expert

Dr Anthony White says Ireland is trying to achieve renewables target the wrong way



Hypothetical trajectory of wind energy capacity under social acceptance scenarios



Differing perceptions

- (Generally) key actors project the cause of public opposition on to someone else:
 - Government may think it is a problem of delivery;
 - Planners may think it is a spatial problem;
 - Developers may think it is a 'NIMBY' problem;
 - Local a communities may think it is a technology, procedural, justice or design problem ... or all of these.

Host community opposition to wind energy projects is generally driven by:

- **Health and environmental impacts;**
 - Concerns over visual, bio-diversity, well-being impacts on local area etc;
- **Fairness of decision-making process;**
 - Lack of trust in developers, regulators and the transparency of the consenting regime;
- **Perceived distribution of costs & benefits;**
 - Fear that external companies accrue key benefits, while local communities bear main costs;

Unique contexts wind energy projects



'Universal' factors:

Technological performance (noise, efficiency, cost); alternative technologies; references to wider narratives (climate change, energy security etc).

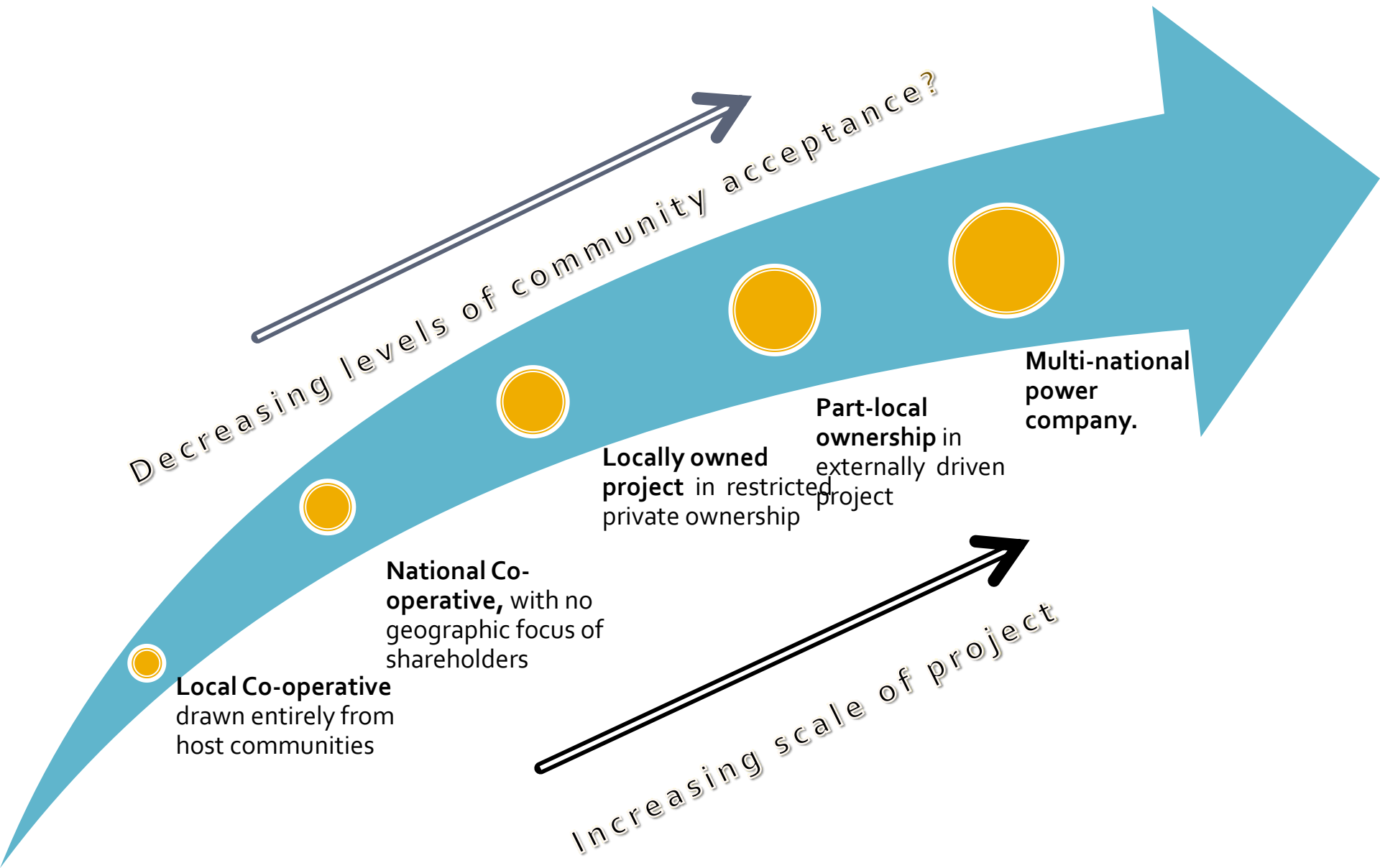
'Political/Regulatory' factors:

Trust; appropriateness of policy; compensation/subsidies; identification of 'acceptable' locations; defining expectations of stakeholders.

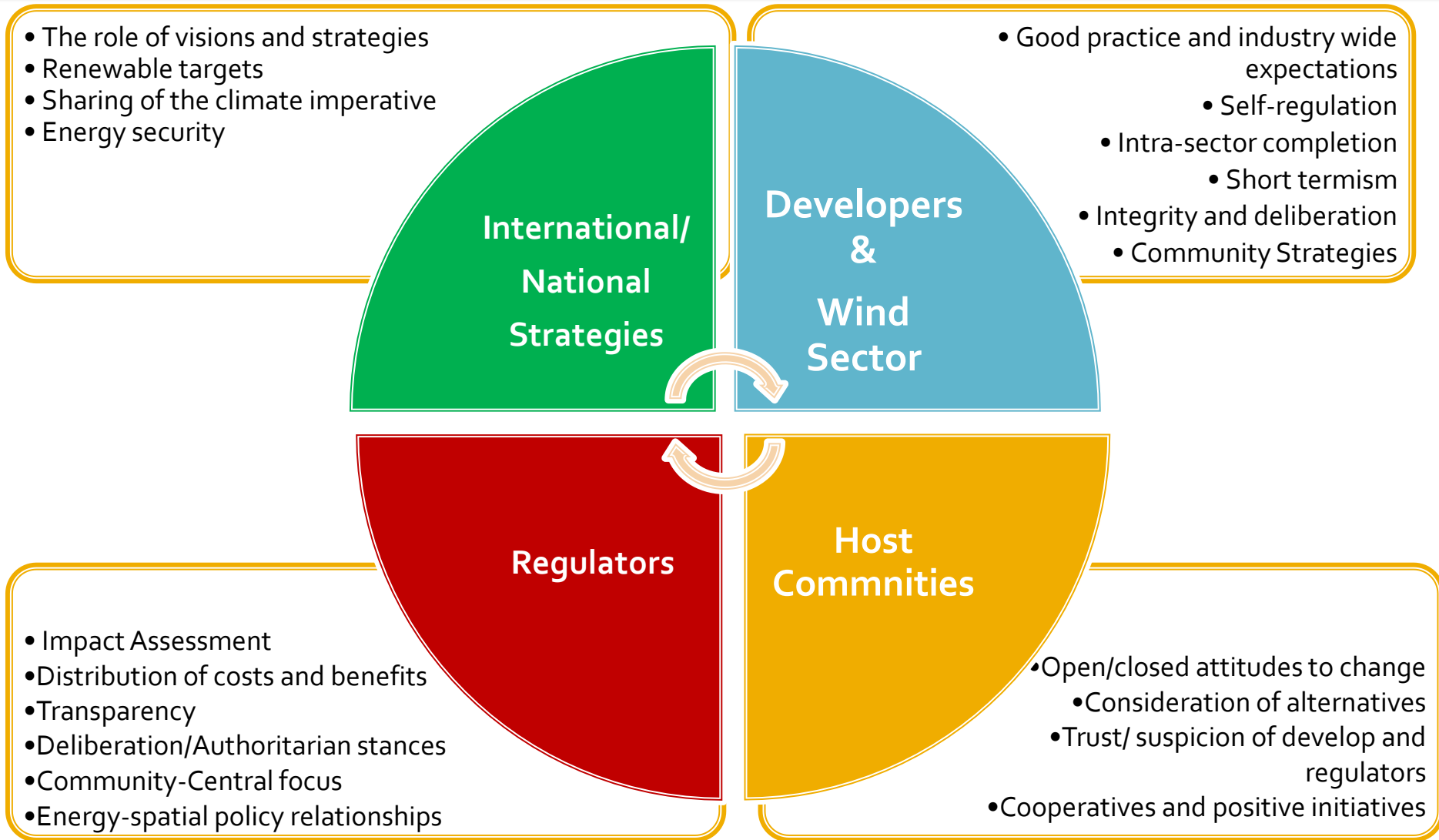
'Project specific' factors:

Project size; physical location; cumulative impacts; community make-up and attitudes; developer behaviour.

Scale-acceptance trade offs?



The role of stakeholders in social acceptance



Elements of a better approach to community acceptance



Some potential initiatives...

■ **Government Actions:**

- A 30 year national transition plan- structures, cultures, practices
- Local energy transition plans (LARES?)
- Community energy strategies
- A focus on trust building in policy and decision making

■ **Regulator Actions:**

- Transparent decision-making with adequate opportunities for voice, in which all are respected;
- Linking planning policy with energy policy;
- Compulsory local share offers;
- Community benefit register;
- Rethinking ownership of wind as an asset?

Some potential initiatives...

■ **Developer actions:**

- Recognising, mitigating and avoiding local impacts;
- Promoting innovation through competition for sites: Community wind auctions;
- Greater self regulation or accreditation?

■ **Community actions:**

- Local advocacy and links to sustainability strategies (e.g. Transition Towns, LA21);
- Promotion of Co-operatives and community asset transfers;
- Increased use of intermediary bodies;
- Deliberative processes for local energy strategies.

Final words

- Social acceptances continues to be a (the?) key constraint on the development of wind energy projects;
- Complexities of issues, with no quick fix: requires initiatives by governments, regulators *and* communities.
- A need for more radical experiments in:
 - Ownership?
 - Regulation?
 - Developer practice?
 - Problem framing/communication?
 - Participation



Thank you:
Any Questions?



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