

# Mentions of Oxford and Oxbridge in Parliament

## January 2014

### Overview

1. 28/1/14: Expert evidence to ECC Committee, Commons
2. 17/1/14: Private Members Bill, Second Reading, Expert reference, Commons

1. [Energy and Climate Change Committee - Imperial College London, University of Oxford, Met Office - IPCC Fifth Assessment Review](#)

Tue, 28 January 2014

### Summary

### Overview

During a meeting of the Energy and Climate Change Committee on the subject of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Fifth Assessment Review, the Committee heard from:

- Professor Sir Brian Hoskins, Grantham Institute, Imperial College London
- Professor Myles Allen, **University of Oxford**
- Dr Peter Stott, Met Office

The session opened with questions about what **new findings** had emerged from the Fifth Assessment, and a brief consideration of its **impact on policymaking**.

Next, the Committee asked about the **scientific method** used by contributors, before raising questions about **natural variability** and the **alteration of other projections** concerning climate change.

Then, MPs asked about the **language of uncertainty** employed by the IPCC.

The witnesses were asked about the **case for action** arising from the deliberations, and then faced questions concerning **criticisms of the IPCC**. In a similar vein, **earlier oversights** on the IPCC's part and the **background of its participants** were raised.

Concluding, the Committee went on to ask questions about the recent **hiatus in global temperature increases**.

## 2. Commons Second Reading - Control of Offshore Wind Turbines Bill (Day One)

Fri, 17 January 2014

### Summary

MPs began debating the Control of Offshore Wind Turbines Bill at Second Reading but ran out of time. The Bill will next be debated on Friday 24 January.

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Control of Offshore Wind Turbines Bill

Second Reading

2.25 pm

Mr Christopher Chope (Christchurch) (Con): I beg to move, That the Bill be now read a Second time.

We do not have much time to discuss this Bill, but I am delighted that the Minister is on the Front Bench. I hope that, even if he cannot respond today to my points, we will have the chance to discuss these things informally.

On 4 January, an article in the Economist called Rueing the Waves said:

“Unfortunately, offshore wind power is staggeringly expensive. Dieter Helm, an economist at **Oxford University**, describes it as ‘among the most expensive ways of marginally reducing carbon emissions known to man’”.

Under a subsidy system, which was unveiled in late 2013, the Government guarantee farms at sea £155 per megawatt-hour. That is three times the current wholesale price of electricity, 60% more than goes to onshore turbines and far in excess of the £92.50 available to the new nuclear plant at Hinkley Point. The Bill would restrict those subsidies, along with a lot of other worthwhile things that would be popular with my constituents who are absolutely incensed at the prospect of having the Navitus Bay wind farm set in Christchurch bay, within sight of the cliffs of Christchurch and Highcliffe and within a short distance of a heritage site.

My Bill would also restrict to 100 metres the height of the turbines. At the moment, turbines are proposed in excess of 200 metres—higher than 600 feet—which is more than the height of Beachy Head. It means that they will be seen from tens of miles away, in the same way that one can see the cliffs of Dover from Calais. The turbines will be very visible, and my Bill would restrict their size, number and location.

2.28 pm

The Minister of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Michael Fallon): I congratulate my hon. Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mr Chope) on tabling this Bill, which would, as I understand it, restrict the location, the number and the height of wind turbines situated offshore within 20 miles of our coast.

The thrust of this Bill would run counter to our policy of supporting a range of different renewable technologies to increase the part that renewable energy plays in our energy mix. It would also, therefore, run counter to our policy that follows from that, which is that we should offer to offshore wind projects the same type, if not the same price, of strike prices that are on offer to other technologies. My hon. Friend directly referred to the draft heads of terms, the commercial agreements that we have reached with EDF Energy in respect of Hinkley. Of course the final electricity market reform delivery plan that we published in December confirmed a range of strike prices for all the different technologies, including onshore wind, offshore wind, which my hon. Friend wants to restrict, solar power and tidal and wave energy.

Turning specifically to offshore wind, it would not be right for us to restrict the deployment of offshore wind in the way that my hon. Friend suggests.