



2015-9

Landscape values and wind generation in west Mayo, Ireland

Ken Boyle

Technological University Dublin, ken.boyle@tudublin.ie

Follow this and additional works at: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/beschspcon>



Part of the [Environmental Studies Commons](#), and the [Natural Resources Management and Policy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Boyle, K. (2015). Landscape values and wind generation in west Mayo, Ireland *European Conference of the Landscape Research Group Energy, Landscapes Perception, Planning, Participation and Power*, September 16th – 18th, Dresden, Germany

This Conference Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Transport Engineering, Environment and Planning at ARROW@TU Dublin. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conference Papers by an authorized administrator of ARROW@TU Dublin. For more information, please contact yvonne.desmond@tudublin.ie, arrow.admin@tudublin.ie, brian.widdis@tudublin.ie.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 License](#)





European Conference of the
Landscape Research Group

Energy Landscapes

Perception, Planning, Participation
and Power



organized by:



in cooperation with:



sponsored by:



Abstracts

Edited by

Markus Leibenath
Gerd Lintz
Peter Wirth
Maria Elena Zegada

*The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s).
Publication does not imply endorsement by the Landscape Research Group or the Leibniz Institute of
Ecological Urban and Regional Development of any of the views expressed.*

Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development (IOER)

Weberplatz 1, 01217 Dresden, Germany
Tel.: + 49-351 4679-0
Fax: + 49-351 4679-212
e-mail: info@ioer.de

Copyright IOER 2015

Cover Photos: © George Hodan – PublicDomainPictures.net, © rcfotostock – Fotolia.com,
© Thorsten Schier – Fotolia.com, © UbjsP – Fotolia.com

This publication should be cited as:

„Leibenath M., Lintz G., Wirth P. & Zegada, M.E. (eds.) (2015): Abstracts. Energy Landscapes: Perception, Planning, Participation and Power. European Conference of the Landscape Research Group, Dresden, 16-18 September 2015. – Dresden: Leibniz Institute of Ecological Urban and Regional Development. – Available online: lrg2015.ioer.info“

A5 Special perspectives

Landscape values and wind generation in west Mayo, Ireland

Kenneth Boyle; Dublin Institute of Technology; Environment and Planning; Dublin; Ireland

Keywords: landscape and resource values; blanket peat; wind power; Delphi survey; landowners

14 | Abstracts | Energy Landscapes: **PERCEPTION**, Planning, Participation and Power

The landscape of west Mayo, in North West Ireland, is dominated and shrouded by an extensive area, 3,539Km², of blanket peat soils. The landscape and its habitats have multiple values associated with them including a source of peat for fuel, agriculture, forestry, conservation, tourism, biomass production, tourism, cultural and archaeological. Historically communities have relied on peat as a source of energy and in the 20th century the state harvested peat on an industrial scale to generate electricity. Biomass production using willow (*Salix spp*) on cutover blanket peat and extensive planting, on deep peat, of *Picea sitchensis* and *Pinus contorta* was part of the expansion of the Irish afforestation programme. In recent years a long fought dispute over bringing gas to land from the Corrib gas field has highlighted the issues of how locals and outsiders react to the actions of multinationals and the state in the exploitation of natural resources.

This study examines the future of wind power in this landscape. Ireland's first wind farm is located in Co Mayo but today the county generates from wind a fraction of what it could potentially generate. Mayo county council, the local authority, has identified areas it considers to be priority and preferred sites in the west Mayo landscape for the location of wind farms. Much of this area is within the blanket peat landscape. Using the Delphi method three expert panels, resource managers, landscape professionals and local landowners are asked to identify locations for future wind generation in the landscape and to outline the extent to which wind generation will impact on other values in the landscape. The work seeks to answer the question are the values and futures that landowners hold for the landscape different to those held by landscape professionals and resource managers and to what extent do the expert values and futures for this landscape agree.