

Not in Anyone's Backyard? Civil Society Attitudes towards Wind Power at the National and Local Levels in Portugal

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to explain the swift development of renewable energy, in particular wind energy, in Portugal, by assessing the socio-political, community and market acceptance of renewables. We examine, on the one hand, the institutional and policy framework, the approaches to planning, and the ownership of facilities, and, on the other hand, the attitudes of Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations and citizens towards renewable energy in general and local windfarms in particular. Results show that a highly attractive feed-in tariff system and a system of planning decisions at the national level has led to an expansion of wind power, regardless of a less than enthusiastic public opinion and a sceptical environmental movement. Keywords: renewable energy, public opinion, environmental non-governmental organisations.