

Social impact management at
MT GELLIBRAND
wind farm
Australia





Mt Gellibrand AUSTRALIA

LOCATION

Shire of Colac Otway, Victoria, Australia.

OWN PROJECT

Construction and O&M

INSTALLATION

132 MW

BUDGET

258 million Australian dollars (183 million euros).

Mt. Gellibrand Wind Farm has developed and maintained a positive relationship with the community and stakeholders since the early stages of the project.

The stage consisting of dialogue with local communities and proposals of measures is essential to managing the social impact of projects carried out by ACCIONA.

Once it begins operating, planned for 2018, Mt. Gellibrand will generate an estimated 429 Gigawatt hours (GWh) per year, equivalent to the electricity

consumption by around 60,000 Australian homes, avoiding the emission to the atmosphere of some 412,000 tonnes of CO₂ from coal-fired power stations.

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STUDY OF LOCAL
COMMUNITY
CHARACTERISTICS

2
IDENTIFICATION AND
EVALUATION OF
IMPACTS

3
PROPOSALS OF
MEASURES AND
DIALOGUE WITH
COMMUNITIES

4
IMPLEMENTATION
AND MONITORING
OF MEASURES



PERMANENT DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

1 STUDY OF LOCAL COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

- Project located in a rural area between the populations of Colac and Birregurra in Victoria state.
- Population in the area of influence of the project: 13,000 inhabitants.
- 20% of the population are migrants.
- Main economic activities: livestock grazing, crops, dairy, timber harvesting and tourism. In recent years, the area has undergone a structural change in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

2 IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF IMPACTS

POSITIVE IMPACTS

- Increase in demand for local goods and services.
- Local contracting throughout the construction and operational phases.
- Increase in economic activity of different local companies in Victoria due to demand for supplies from the Wind Farm.
- Improved access to roads near the project for residents.
- Training and capacity development for local employees.
- Awareness-raising in the community about renewable energies.
- Increase in local eco-tourism activities.
- Diversification of earnings for landowners in the area of the project.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS

- Alteration to the normal functioning of some farms during the construction phase.
- Deterioration of some roads from transportation of heavy machinery.
- Disturbance to the community in the project area because of noise and dust during construction.
- Visual impact on the local community.

3 PROPOSALS OF MEASURES AND DIALOGUE WITH COMMUNITIES

INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS

- Newsletters distributed quarterly among the local community.
- Monthly information to neighbors and local companies informing them of progress with the project.
- Meetings between ACCIONA and landowners to develop construction and operation protocols.
- Creation of the Community Reference Group, made up of different actors (neighbors, landowners, local business owners, shire council, local contractors). Information about the project and its construction is shared at the meetings and consensus is built on mitigation measures to take. To date, 4 meetings have been held, with most of the stakeholders identified represented.

EDUCATION

- Visits to the Wind Farm by local school groups, Colac Otway Shire Council, landowners and journalists.
- A Community Benefit Fund has been established for the operating life of Mt. Gellibrand Wind Farm, which will be used for the dissemination of information and knowledge about renewable energies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Roads around the project have been improved.
- Around 150 local people have been contracted at the project's peak.

SAFETY AND HEALTH

- Traffic management plan for residents.

4 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF MEASURES

The measures proposed are being undertaken during the pre-construction and construction phase. Some of them will be maintained during the operation and maintenance of the Mt. Gellibrand Wind Farm. In carrying out the project in a rural farming area, the relationship with landowners and the local community must be constant. For this, a bi-directional communication channel has been established with a free telephone number, community events, newsletter and door-to-door campaigns that lead directly to commitments from both sides.