



COLABORADORES

[Thousands of wind turbines to obstruct Nº1 migration route in the world.](#) (2631)
ZAPOTECOS AND OTHER AMERINDIANS THREATENED IN THEIR LIVELIHOOD.
[An association of indigenous people from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec asked the author for help. Bird societies are notably absent from this unfolding biodiversity disaster.](#)

Usuarios Registrados

E-mail:

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[A meeting was held on location this past week by affected indigenous communities. The representative from Greenpeace, invited to speak, surprised his hosts as he spoke in favour of the wind turbines. I was more critical, as may be expected.](#)

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The call for help from the Amerindians of the Isthmus is reproduced in the footnotes (1).

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To enlarge map, go to: [MAP OF ISTHMUS](#) and click on the part of the map you want to enlarge (Juchitán de Zaragoza, south of the isthmus), as many times as needed.

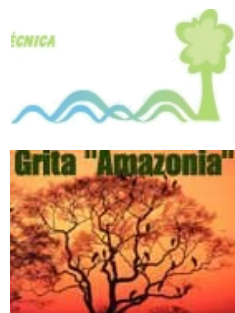
Already, seven wind turbines have been erected in La Venta (c.20 km East of Juchitán de Zaragoza). I visited the windfarm: dead birds are routinely being found on the dirt road under the turbines. A neighbour who walks the road every day testified that the victims are mainly "pigeons and ducks", and also include vultures and other raptors.

The regional plan calls for 2,000 MW to be installed by 2010. Judging from the next project "La Venta II", which will use turbines with an installed capacity of just under 1 MW each, this could represent about 2,000 turbines. It is expected that many more will be erected in the following decade. Judging from declarations to the press, this windy region of Mexico could end up with 5,000 machines or more.

In such numbers, whatever their alignment, the turbines will constitute a deadly obstacle of the first order. The existing 7 turbines, even with their East-West alignment, are already killing many birds.

The migrants are reported to be flying along a North-West/South-East axis. The strong and frequent side-winds will make their crossing of the isthmus a perilous exercise on 2 counts: 1) when blowing, the predominant northerly wind will arguably push them into the East-West rows of turbines, and 2) the same winds will force them to fly low, within reach of the blades.

The isthmus is 125 miles/200 km wide, an unavoidable passage point for many land birds migrating between the Americas. In La Ventosa, another selected windfarm location distant c.15 km from La Venta, 690,000 such birds were recorded in a single day. The Zapoteco Indians claim their region is the most important migration bottleneck in the world.



Most bird societies state in their policies that they oppose windfarm projects placed on migration routes. Yet, they are notably silent on this plan to site thousands of turbines on the world's N° 1 flyway.

As they remain equally silent on the future installation of thousands more on migration chokepoints around the world (2), we can only conclude that there is a major discrepancy between what they do and what they say. This reinforces the already widespread suspicion that they have a strong interest in the uncontrolled expansion of windfarms worldwide, regardless of their effect on bird life and biodiversity (3).



Short-toed eagle killed by a wind turbine in the province of Aragón, Spain. Courtesy of: el Sekano
[MORE PICTURES OF BIRDS KILLED IN ARAGÓN](#)

EFFECTS ON THE ECOSYSTEMS OF THE ISTHMUS.

The indigenous people of the Isthmus are notably poor. Their survival as sustainable communities hinges upon fishing and the production of food crops (principally corn). The shallow lagoon of Laguna Superior, south-east of Juchitán de Zaragoza, is important to them as it yields appreciable quantities of shrimps. These, and some fish, are caught in nets using small, mostly non-motorized boats.

One windfarm development is to be built on Cabo Santa Teresa*, a 35km-long strip stretching to the south of the lagoon. During the wet season, the strip is flooded, and this allows marine life to enter the lagoon on a broad front. Once the windfarm is built, the raised access road will be a major impediment to the free-and-wide circulation of the vital shrimps, and more generally to the ecology of the main water bodies.

[*MAP LAGUNA SOUTH](#)

It is also feared that spills of lubricants and cleaning liquids used by the windfarm will pollute the shallow lagoon and its mangrove. See: [Windfarms negative - contamination of aquifers and ground water](#)

Regarding the agriculture interests across the Isthmus, the threat of bush fires is noteworthy in the dry season. Thousands of wind turbines will increase the risk significantly - see: [Windfarms - an ecological and human disaster in the making](#) scroll down past 1st picture.

UNACCEPTABLE RISK TO A POTENTIAL BIOSPHERE RESERVE

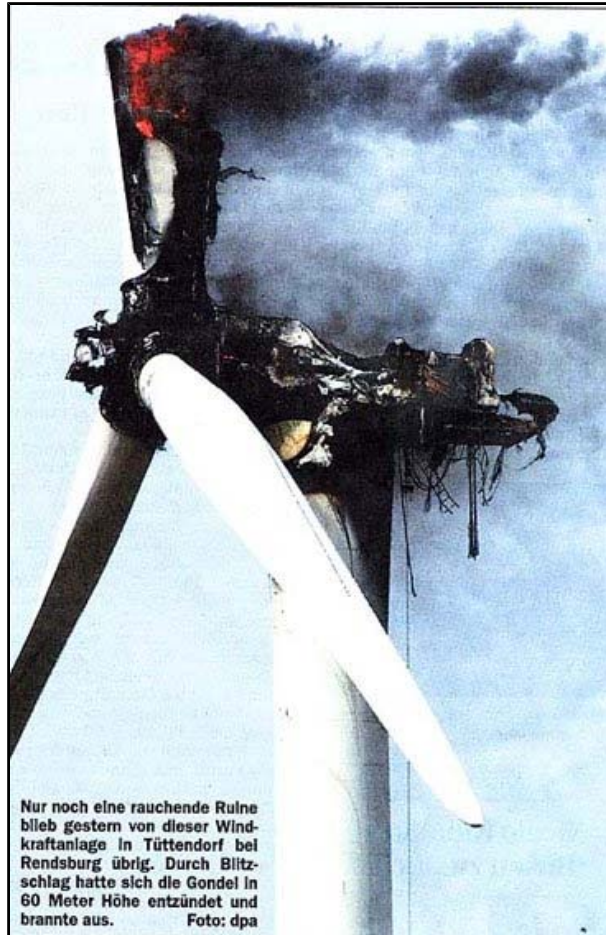
Fires could spell disaster for the Chimalapa forest, which is part of the larger Zoque forest - the second richest ecosystem on the American continent, biodiversity-wise:

"The Zoque forest stretches over the boundaries of the three states of greatest biodiversity in Mexico: Oaxaca, Veracruz and Chiapas. It is the most compact and best conserved continuous forest of North America, with a million hectares that include pine, holm oak and pine-holm oak forests, cloud or mesophile forests, and high, medium and low tropical forests."

"During the government of Ernesto Zedillo, there was a more misleading proposal: to declare Los Chimalapas a biosphere reserve, but this project could not be implemented due to its rejection by the local people."

More on this here: [CHIMALAPAS](#)

During the dry season, forest fires are a proven risk: [fire in Chimalapa forest](#)



CONCLUSION

Zapoteco Indians and other indigenous people of the Isthmus were not consulted on the windfarm development plans of the Mexican government. They resent that deeply, and the fact that environmental statements are released piecemeal without any assessment of the cumulative impact of the numerous projects. The ES themselves are not published in time to be reviewed.

The wanton turbinisation of the Isthmus is seen: 1) as an aggression to the migrating birds of the Americas, 2) as an unacceptable risk to an ecosystem of paramount value to the world (the Chimalapa and Zoque forests), and 3) as an act of contempt towards the Amerindian communities who value their agriculture-based culture and the ecological quality of the lagoon.

It is deeply regrettable that Greenpeace, WWF, and the world's leading bird societies have not seen as their duty to protect these conservation interests. I am calling upon them to review their stance on this and other issues involving windfarms worldwide.

Mark Duchamp.....October 1st, 2005
markduchamp@hotmail.com

[The negative effects of windfarms: links to papers published by Mark Duchamp](#)

FOOTNOTES

(1) Original email from the indigenous people of the Isthmus to Mark Duchamp:

"Estimado señor Mark Duchamp,

Le escribimos desde nuestro país México, de la región sur del Istmo de Tehuantepec, del estado de Oaxaca.

Nuestra pequeñísima organización se llama Gbuiña XXI, A.C. y somos indígenas zapotecos que estamos luchando por nuestros derechos en tanto pueblos originarios de estas tierras y contra la imposición de megaproyectos neoliberales destructores de la naturaleza y de nuestras culturas.

Etc. "

The whole email is reproduced here: [Indígenas Zapotecos, aves migratorias y ecosistemas amenazados por parques eólicos.](#)

(2) Other migration bottlenecks where windfarms are to be erected, with little or no opposition from the major bird societies:

- The Strait of Gibraltar (on both sides)
- Southern Morocco
- Southern Italy and Sicily
- Israel
- Egypt
- Hokkaido (Japan)
- Victoria (Australia)
- The Cook Strait (New Zealand)
- Southern Texas
- Chautauqua (N.Y.)
- The Appalachian Mountains

(3) Earlier papers evidencing the surprising role of bird societies in the unfolding windfarm-bird catastrophe:

- [Windfarms - Red Energy](#)

- [Birds and windfarms - Critical analysis of 4 reports on bird mortality at windfarm sites.](#)

- [Windfarms and Birds - the Chautauqua scandal.](#) The Audubon Society did not fundamentally oppose that model of ill-sited windfarm, that I know of.

- [Chilling Statistics](#)

Insertado por: marcos (02/10/2005)

Fuente/Autor: Mark Duchamp



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