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## **Community Provides Alternative to Reduced Solar Rebate**

**Thursday 11 June 2009 – Daylesford**

Thousands of environmentally concerned Australians were surprised by the Government's decision on Tuesday to end the current \$8000 rebate scheme for domestic solar PV installation three weeks ahead of schedule. Many such households will now be considering their options, and one compelling option is investing in community-scale renewable energy generation.

A community project based in Daylesford has been working on an affordable alternative. The 750 investors of Hepburn Wind are set to build Australia's first community-owned wind farm in the first half of 2010. The two turbine wind park near Daylesford, will produce over 12,200 megawatt hours (MWh) of green electricity annually, almost enough to power all the houses in Daylesford and Hepburn Springs.

A typical 1 kW domestic PV installation in Melbourne will generate about 1.3 MWh annually, which is approximately 25% of the average household's needs. With the end of the current solar rebate scheme, the same system will now cost Victorians about \$8500.

Hepburn Wind's 4 megawatt wind farm will produce power for 2,300 homes and cost \$11.5m, which works out to be only \$5000 per home. For a 30% lower investment individuals can have four times the impact.

The project has secured funds in excess of \$9.5m, and is seeking further investment from the local and broader Victorian community. Investors will receive annual dividends from the sale of green electricity, while the community will further benefit from the project's grants exceeding \$1 million towards other sustainability programs.

By joining the Hepburn Wind co-operative and investing in the project, community members are making a statement that renewable energy is important, and are paving the way for all Australians to play a constructive role in the climate change challenge.

For more information regarding Hepburn Wind visit [www.hepburnwind.com.au](http://www.hepburnwind.com.au), email [info@hepburnwind.com.au](mailto:info@hepburnwind.com.au) or call (03) 9429 5629.

### **Contacts:**

Simon Holmes à Court, [simon.holmesacourt@hepburnwind.com.au](mailto:simon.holmesacourt@hepburnwind.com.au)

Adrian Nelson, 0418 102 672 or [adrian@futureenergy.com.au](mailto:adrian@futureenergy.com.au)