GenCost24: A Critical Response.

1.Introduction and Perspective

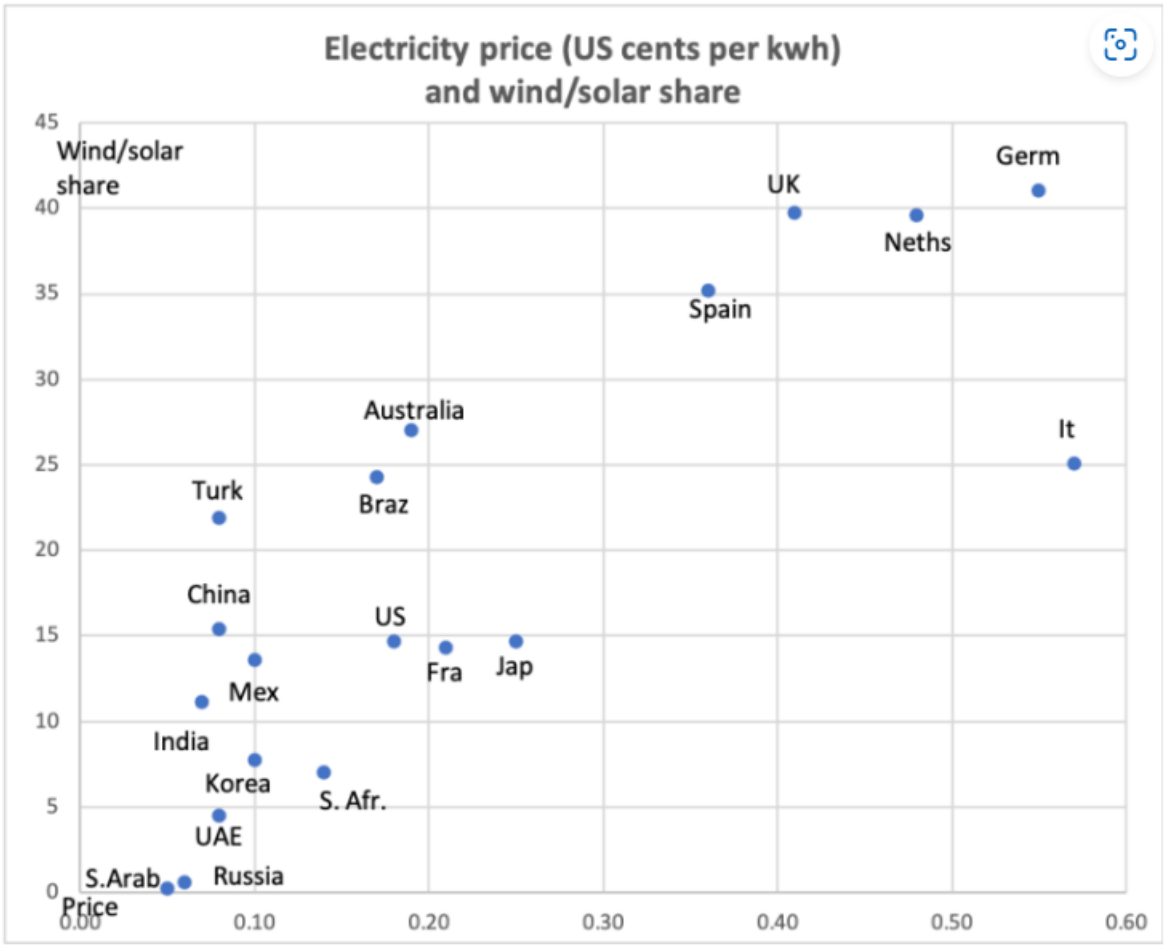
GenCost is used by our government to justify its continued message that renewables are the cheapest solution to move towards Net Zero.

Whilst GenCost is a complex and thorough document there are concerns about its consistency with real world electricity costs and about the whole cost of transforming our grid to mostly wind and solar sources of electricity generation.

2. Real World Electricity Costs

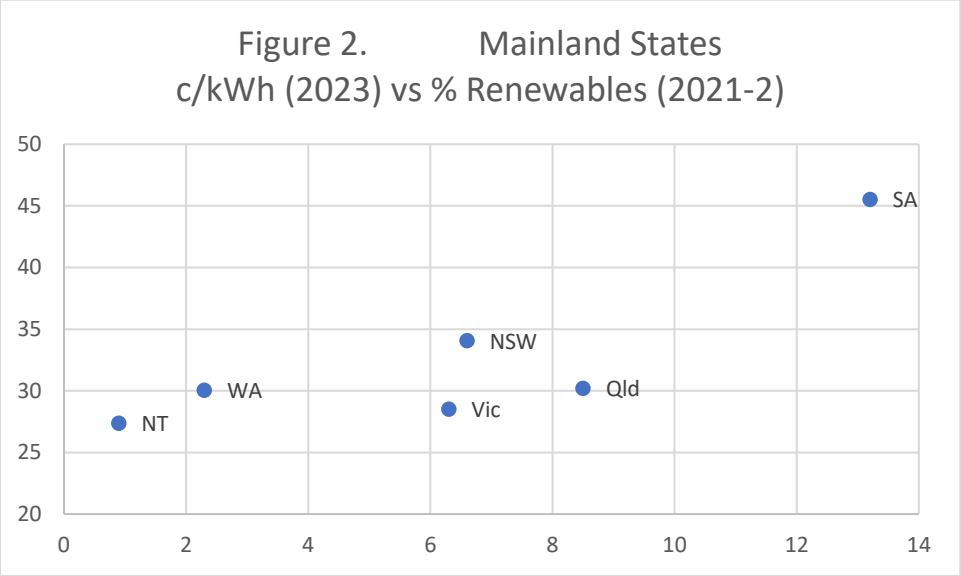
Figure 1 indicates that on a country basis, there is a correlation between a high percent of renewables and high electricity prices. This is contrary to the results from GenCost.

Figure 1. Source: Ref 1.



A similar contradiction exists closer to home when we observe the relationship between cost of electricity and % renewables across mainland Australian states in Figure 2.

(data sources Ref 2 and 3).



To summarise, there is yet to be observed in the real world, the relationship of renewables and electricity cost, predicted by GenCost.

3. Costs Not Accounted for by GenCost24.

Below is a list of items that can be assigned monetary values. They are all required to achieve the installation of a high percentage of renewables in our grid.

- Damage to our ridge lines and landscape views by huge numbers of windmills.
- Local heating resulting from windmills and solar farms.
- Loss of farmland on a huge scale.
- Breakdown of local communities due to the aggressive theft of their space.
- Bushfire danger to farms and open spaces due to transmission lines restricting vehicular access.
- Loss of native flora and fauna on a country-wide scale.
    - Vast tracts of land will be cleared and roads and Windmills/solar panels will march across the land. Apparently it is recommended use a sharp blow on sites in Queensland to "finish off" injured Koalas (Ref 3). It is well known that birds and bats are routinely killed and injured by windmills.
- The environmental and greenhouse costs of manufacturing windmills and solar panels in China.
- The threat to Australia's security by being so dependent on China which would not hesitate to switch off our grid if it was in China's interest.
- The cost and environmental cost, of disposal and replacement of batteries, windmills and solar panels after their short lifetimes of 10, 20 and 25 years respectively.
- The cost of the insurance premium that covers the probable situation when the final owner of these assets is bankrupt and the cleanup must be supported by the taxpayers.

4. Conclusion

The rush to Net Zero is coming at a huge cost to our way of life. There has been no cost benefit analysis comparing the cost of adapting to global warming, vs our chosen path of achieving a Net Zero economy. That path involves investing in huge changes to our electrical grid. The grid is the key to our standard of living, our ability to support manufacturing and farming, as well as our defence in increasing dangerous times.

This note raises questions about the relationship between GenCost24 predictions and the real world which need to be answered.

It raises the bigger question about all the significant costs missed completely in GenCost24.

It is time our leaders opened up a dialogue with the people lest the intrusion into lives and the environment enabled by tools like GenCost24 weakens our Economy and our Nation.

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Ref 1. Spectator, Sep 2023, FLAT WHITE, Unexpected costs, Alan Moran

Ref 2. https://www.energy.gov.au/energy-data/australian-energy-statistics/data-charts/australian-energy-mix-state-and-territory-2021-22

Ref 3. Animals Injured by Wind Turbines to be Euthanised, The Epoch Times, Jessie Zhang, 8 November 2023