

INTEGRATION OF BAT CONSERVATION CONCERNS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND ENERGY PROJECTS IN SWITZERLAND [P]

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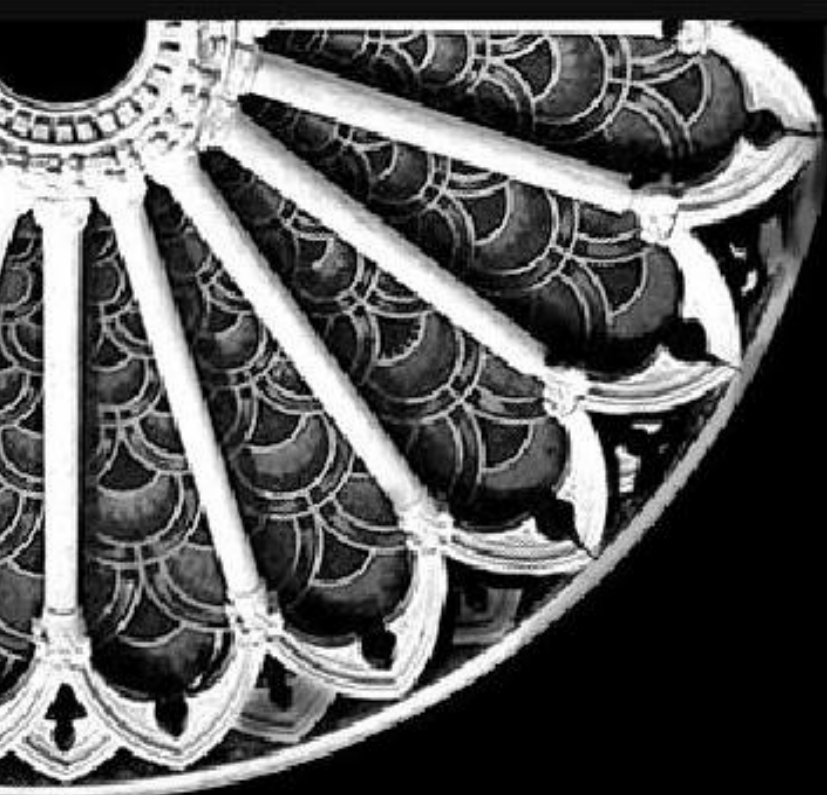
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Like several European countries Switzerland is promoting wind energy projects according to its exit strategy from nuclear and fossil-fuel power. As bats can be killed by wind turbines the Swiss government has charged the Swiss Coordination Centre for Bat Protection to elaborate recommendations for the integration of bat conservation concerns in the development of wind energy projects enabling the realisation of wind turbines. These propositions are based on the involvement of all stakeholders implicated in wind energy projects. The project resulted in the elaboration of a global strategy for the implementation of bat conservation in the following three important stages of a wind energy project: the feasibility study, the planning and building phase, and the operating phase.

Feasibility study: For the purpose of getting planning reliability for wind energy projects, a standardized procedure for a fast preliminary check of potential conflicts with the conservation of bats based on existing data and on a site evaluation has been generated. It leads to recommendations for the benefit of the wind energy planner regarding four different categories of potential impacts.

Planning and building phase: The preliminary checks build an important basis for the later investigations in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process for clarifying the potential impacts on bats. Therefore best practice guidelines have been developed. The extent of the investigations will thereby be adapted to the impact category of the preliminary checks but will allow site specific requirements. If populations of endangered bat species are affected, the displacement of the turbines should actually be envisaged.

Operating Phase: If required to reduce bat mortality, a site-specific stopping algorithm, when high bat activity is expected, should be established after the building of the turbines. Post-construction control of the success of these measures will allow an optimization of the stopping algorithm. The residual mortality should be compensated for by suitable measures in favour of the affected species.



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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS