



EWEA Press Release

Wind energy as main contributor to the 20% target

Milan, 7 May - Wind power could be generating up to 16% of Europe's electricity by 2020, delegates heard at the opening of the European Wind Energy Conference in Milan, Italy today (7 May).

"Wind energy will be a main contributor to achieving the target for 20% of the European Union's overall energy supply to come from renewable sources by 2020," said Arthouros Zervos, President of the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

Energy policy and climate protection topped the agenda at the Spring Council in Brussels this March where EU heads of state and government committed to a binding target for 20% renewables by 2020.

Europe already gets more than 3% of its electricity from wind, produced by 50,000 megawatts (MW) of installed capacity. Last year was a record, with over 7,500 MW of new wind farms being constructed. By 2020, 180,000 MW could be operating.

The opening session heard positive messages from a number of prominent European politicians and industry figures.

Peter Ahmels, Conference Chairman and former President of the German Wind Energy Association, said: "If the new European target is achieved, more than a third of Europe's power will be renewably sourced by the end of the next decade. This has sent a clear political signal. It is no less than the beginning of a second industrial revolution."

Representing the German EU Presidency, Michael Müller, Parliamentary State Secretary at Germany's Ministry for Environment, said: "With the threat of climate change, we only have a little time to avoid destruction of the planet. The increased renewables share that is needed, will only be possible if the development of wind power, both on and offshore, is advanced as strongly as possible."

Fabrizio Fabbri, Head of the Technology Secretariat at the Italian Ministry of the Environment - representing the Environment Minister Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio - raised the issue of public acceptance as one of the main challenges for Italy: "If we want to achieve the European target, it is crucial to persuade people that we strongly need wind energy" he said.

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Mechtild Rothe, Vice-President of the European Parliament, said that the new 20% target had to be translated into national action plans, giving specific binding targets for electricity, transport and heating and cooling. She called on the European Commission for fast and balanced negotiations with each of the 27 Member States. "The sharing of the 20% target must be really European. Every country has a huge potential. I have not heard of any country in the world where the wind doesn't blow or the sun doesn't shine," she said. "It is not acceptable that some member states still argue that renewables are only for rich countries."

Fabrizio Barbato, Deputy Director General of the European Commission, said that a new legal framework for renewable energy would be proposed in the autumn, after having negotiated national plans with every member state. "We want national targets per sector and we want the efforts and the opportunities to be shared between the 27 countries. The Commission will then monitor very closely the progress made by every country", he said. "There is no doubt that renewable energy and energy efficiency will be the cornerstones of future EU energy policy," he added, "and wind energy is one of its main components."

Shi Lishan, Director of Renewable Energy at the Chinese Energy Bureau, who is leading an 80 person delegation to the conference, said that China was now following the European lead with a target for 10% renewables by 2010 and 16% by 2020. "I believe that China will soon be one of the fastest growing countries for wind power," he said.

Presenting figures to show that approximately one third of new generating capacity installed in Europe between 2002 and 2006 was wind power, Arthouros Zervos said that the crucial factor was that the market had expanded successfully outside its heartlands of Germany, Spain and Denmark. "Today Europe has 50 000 MW of installed wind capacity. In an average wind year this produces approximately 100 TWh of electricity, equal to 3.3% of total EU electricity consumption. If we reach 180 GW by 2020, this will produce more than 500 TWh of electricity a year which represents a five fold increase compared to today's production", Professor Zervos concluded.

To support its 2020 ambition, EWEA launched a new campaign, "Seize the Opportunity", which emphasised the benefits that wind power could bring for both energy supply and the environment. The video produced for the campaign illustrated opportunities for Europe in responding to the current energy and climate challenges by developing, deploying and exporting wind power technology to the rest of the world. This video will be sent to all European energy ministers.

3000 people are expected to attend the four day conference, organised by EWEA, which is taking place in the Milano Convention Centre until 10 May.

Note to editors:

- For more information about EWEC 07: www.ewec2007.info
- EWEA is the voice of the wind industry, actively promoting the utilisation of wind power in Europe and worldwide. It now has over 300 members from 40 countries, including manufacturers with a 98% share of the world wind power market, plus component suppliers, research institutes, national wind and renewables associations, developers, electricity providers, finance and insurance companies and consultants. This combined strength makes EWEA the world's largest and most powerful wind energy network.



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