



NEWS RELEASE

for more information please contact Isabelle Valentiny
T: +32 2 546 19 81 M: +32 474 54 20 25 www.ewea.org



Barriers must be removed for full exploitation of offshore wind

Berlin, Wednesday 5 December 2007 - To support the necessary growth and expansion of offshore wind in order to meet the EU's 20% renewables target, several barriers need to be overcome. Low feed-in tariffs for offshore, limited and costly grid connections and complex authorisation procedures are seen as key obstacles by the offshore industry, delegates heard at the second day of the European Offshore Wind Energy Conference in Berlin.

Five countries have operating offshore wind farms so far: Denmark, Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands and Ireland. Other countries, such as Germany and France, are developing new offshore capacity. In a session today on national and EU policy, speakers from Germany, the UK, Spain, the European Commission and industry explained how certain barriers are slowing down the development of offshore and presented recent and necessary changes to policy framework.

In **Germany**, there are no current operational offshore wind farms. However, 22 projects have been approved in the Baltic and North Seas. The first project to be up and running should be the Alpha Ventus site, near the island of Borkum. This is currently a testing site for 12 x 5 MW turbines. It should be connected to the power grid from 2008.

Speaker **Hermann Albers**, from the BWE (German Wind Energy Association) focused on the key steps needed to help offshore wind power take off in Germany. Two of the barriers are the current tariffs, which are too low to encourage offshore development, and the grid connection costs.

“However, the meeting of Angela Merkel’s cabinet this morning should result in a changed feed-in tariff, which would be more attractive to developers”, he continued. This would be an important step towards offshore expansion in Germany. “For the future, a key challenge is to push turbine production to ensure a sufficient supply chain”, he added.

The session then moved on to the **UK**, where offshore wind is growing and could be supplying 17% of the country’s electricity by 2020, according to the British Wind Energy Association (BWEA). The rapid development is partly the result of an increase in government funding through Renewable Obligation Certificates which will take effect in 2009.

Gordon Edge, from the BWEA sees the main obstacle in the country as the “over-long and complex authorisation process for offshore farms, which can take up to 14 years”.

He gave two key methods, amongst others, of speeding up the process, by shortening the consenting time and the delivery time. In this way, the currently very strong UK offshore growth can be maintained.

Spain is one of the global leaders in onshore wind. Although it does not yet have any operating offshore wind farms, a programme has been launched in order to identify suitable development zones and establish a licensing procedure. Several projects have been suggested for the area of Cape Trafalgar, off the south coast.

Félix Avia, of CENER, the Spanish National Renewable Energies Centre explained, that offshore development had not taken off until now due to two main reasons: an over-complex authorisation process – once again – and feed-in tariffs which were not specific to offshore.

However, a Royal Decree from July 2007 helped remove these obstacles, redefining the procedures and criteria for offshore authorisation. Furthermore, it gave the power to authorise projects to just one office, and set the expected time period for installation to three years.

Mr Avia finished by saying, “Now that the new legal framework has tackled the key barriers, the future seems optimistic for offshore wind in Spain.”

Wolfgang Kerner, from the European Commission’s DG TREN, explained how the Priority Interconnection Plan (PIP) of the January 2007 energy package seeks to create a European electricity market and grid in order to facilitate cross-border exchanges. Thirty-two electricity lines have been selected around Europe and should be upgraded to help enable this. EWEA has been insisting on the need to upgrade interconnectors in order to promote cross-border exchange of power and to ensure security of electricity supply for a significant amount of time.

In addition, the European Commission has appointed four energy coordinators, including Georg Wilhelm Adamowitsch, whose specific role will be to facilitate future offshore projects.

Bo Mørup, from Vestas Wind Systems A/S, Denmark, gave the investors’ point of view, focusing on the question, “why do some countries take off while others do not?” He discussed the criteria that made some countries attractive to investors, namely the tariff level and the wind resource available.

More information on different national approaches can be found in EWEA’s policy recommendations document, launched yesterday, entitled “Delivering offshore wind energy in Europe”.

Visit www.ewea.org to learn more.

When:	4-6 December 2007
Where:	Estrel Convention Centre Berlin, Germany
Who:	Organisers:

	<p>European Wind Energy Association (EWEA)</p> <p>EWEA is the voice of the wind industry, actively promoting the utilisation of wind power in Europe and worldwide. It now has over 350 members from 40 countries including manufacturers with a 98% share of the world wind power market, plus component suppliers, research institutes, contractors, 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.</p>
More:	<p>A press room is available for journalists with computers, as well as catering, background information and press packs covering the main topics of the conference.</p> <p>For more information about the programme and registration form (free access to accredited press): http://www.eow2007.info/</p> <p>Contacts for press: paolo@ewea.org - +32486277169 / Isabelle@ewea.org - +32474542025</p>

