



## **At Offshore Conference Drawing 4,000, Europe Sets Bold Transmission, Development Vision**

Bold visions and major findings concerning offshore wind power came out of the historic European Offshore Wind 2009 Conference, including research showing that if developed, existing or planned offshore projects would meet 10% of the continent's electricity needs.

The full extent of existing and planned European offshore wind projects is outlined in a new report called "Oceans of Opportunity," issued by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), which hosted the Stockholm conference. If developed, existing and planned projects would result in the avoidance of over 200 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions every year, according to EWEA.

"There is huge developer interest in offshore wind power," said Arthuros Zervos, president of EWEA. "The scale of planned projects is far greater than most people realize."

As for the bold vision, EWEA presented to governments and European Union officials a 20-year plan that includes construction of a "trans-national offshore power grid." Building on the 11 grids already in place and the 21 being studied by grid operators in the North and Baltic seas, EWEA proposed eight additional offshore grids by 2020 and six more by 2030.

The topic is highly relevant because next year the European Commission is due to publish a blueprint for a North Sea grid, while European electricity network operators will publish a 10-year plan for developing a truly European grid—considered essential for developing a single European energy market as well as for harnessing renewable energy and improving security of supply. The general theme of the initiative is not unlike what wind advocates are calling for in the U.S.: a unified transmission superhighway.

"EWEA's new offshore network plan will provide a truly pan-European electricity superhighway," said EWEA Chief Executive Christian Kjaer. "This will bring affordable electricity to consumers, reduce import dependence, cut carbon dioxide emissions and allow Europe to access its largest domestic energy source—offshore wind. EWEA urges the European Commission to incorporate our plan when drafting its Blueprint for a North Sea Grid, and the European Network of Transmission System Operators to do the same when drafting its 10 Year Network Development Plan."

At the Stockholm conference, which drew 4,000 attendees to make it the largest offshore event in the world, business leaders pledged to ensure that a sufficient supply of turbines, components, foundations, installation and cable-laying vessels is available to tap offshore wind resources. They called on national governments and the E.U. to take action to resolve planning, grid and other obstacles to harnessing Europe's enormous offshore wind energy potential.

The Stockholm conference was also the milieu for companies to make news. Siemens, for one, announced the release of a new 3.6-MW offshore wind turbine featuring a 120-meter rotor diameter (58.5-meter blades). The SWT-3.6-120 turbine is based technologically on Siemens' SWT-3.6-107, which according to the company is the world's most popular offshore wind turbine.

"The conference showed clearly how European countries are working collaboratively to reach their ambitious goals for the advancement of the offshore wind industry and related transmission infrastructure," said Jennifer Banks, AWEA's offshore wind and siting specialist, who attended the event. "Hopefully the U.S. offshore wind industry will be inspired by these ambitious goals to continue to move forward with their projects here."

To see EWEA's offshore network development plan and find out more about the European Offshore Wind 2009 Conference, go to [www.ewea.org/offshore](http://www.ewea.org/offshore).

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