



NEWS RELEASE

for more information please contact Luisa Colasimone
T: +32 2 546 1981 M: +32 485 145 411 www.ewea.org

Wind power: 1st industry-wide coordinated R&D strategy released R&D is central to European wind leadership

Brussels, 27th January 2004 – An industry-wide coordinated Research and Development (R&D) strategy on wind energy was launched today in Brussels by EWEA – the European Wind Energy Association (1).

“Europe is the world leader in wind power and European wind turbine companies have a 90% world market share. R&D has been central to the wind industry’s success to date. The European industry’s future ability to maintain its global dominance in this sector depends on maintaining its R&D leadership, with the potential prize of an annual wind market of €75 billion by 2020. There is still much need to support long-term R&D in wind energy development, not least to develop new offshore technology”, said Prof. Arthouros Zervos, President of EWEA.

The European Commissioner for Research, Philippe Busquin, concurred that *“Wind power is a prime example of how an ambitious European R&D effort, supported by the European Union for more than 20 years, can give Europe a very strong leadership in a promising high-technology market, creating already more than 85,000 jobs in the Union. EWEA’s R&D strategy will now be an important reference for our activities in order to maintain Europe’s technological and industrial leadership in the future.”*

The R&D strategy outlines nine priority areas for further development and demonstrates to European institutions the industry-wide needs. The report also demonstrates how wind power can help attain overall EU objectives, such as those under the Lisbon strategy, and the Barcelona Objective, and how wind power can help resolve issues such as security of energy supply, tackle climate change, and contribute to economic growth.

Although wind power can be applied commercially under suitable conditions and has proved to be able to contribute significantly to national and regional electricity supply systems, continued R&D is required to bring costs down to the point where it competes fully with conventional electricity generation. This is the case as the external costs of electricity from traditional fossil and nuclear fuels continue not to be reflected in the price of electricity.

“As the industry grows stronger and is dispersed around the globe, present EU dominance will face stiffening competition in technology, markets and knowledge leadership. Its strength can only be achieved with increased R&D (2)”, said Zervos.

Last week in Berlin, the participants to the European Conference for Renewable Energy (Berlin, 19-21 January 2004) agreed in the conclusions that *“more research is needed to further develop renewable technologies, as well as to demonstrate and promote the applications currently available. RES-budgets in EU research programmes should be increased, in recognition of the growing commitment to using RES technologies in the future. R&D can drive innovation, reduce costs, and stimulate market development in both developed and developing countries”* (3).

Notes to Editors:

(1) *“The European Wind Industry strategic plan for Research & Development – first report: creating the knowledge foundation for a clean energy era”* is available at www.ewea.org

The Wind Energy R&D network brings together over 200 actors from across the wind energy sector. The report is the first R&D strategy based on a broad input from a large number of actors from the wind sector. It is also the first of a series of strategy reports, and at the next stage the priority goals will be translated into specific programmes.

The report is an outcome of the European Commission funded project “Wind Energy Thematic Network” under the Fifth Framework Programme.

Priority R&D areas are:

- Economic, Policy and Market issues
- Environmental and social impacts
- Wind turbine and component design issues
- Testing, standardization and certification
- Grid integration, energy systems and resource prediction
- Operation and maintenance
- New potentials
- Offshore wind technology
- Mega Watt and multi-megawatt wind turbines

(2) Currently, 20% of electricity consumption in Denmark is provided for by wind energy. In Bundesland Schleswig-Holstein (Germany) 27% of electricity consumption is wind-powered, while in the region of Navarre (Spain) the figure is 50%.

By the end of 2002, 31,000 mega Watts (MW) of wind power were installed worldwide, 25,000 MW of which in Europe. The global industry turnover was around 7 billion Euros, with an industry total of 95,000 jobs, and generating the equivalent electricity to supply 40 million European citizens.

(3) The conclusions from the European Conference for Renewable Energy – Intelligent Policy Options and more information on EU energy policy are available at:
http://www.erec-renewables.org/documents/Berlin_2004/Berlin_Conclusions_final.pdf
http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy/res/index_en.htm