



## PRESS RELEASE

for more information please contact Paolo Berrino  
T: +32 2 400 10 55 - M: +32 486 277 169 - [www.ewea.org](http://www.ewea.org)



### With increased research, renewable energy can supply more than 20% of Europe's energy demand

Delegates at the closing session of the European Wind Energy Conference and Exhibition (EWEC) today were reminded of the benefits that wind energy can bring. Provided a stable legal framework is put rapidly into place at European level, wind energy will bring security of energy supply, a stronger economy and a boost to employment, as well as helping tackle climate change. Speakers at the session focused on countries and regions which have already gone beyond the EU ambition level for wind power and other renewables.

Key-note speaker **Janez Potočnik**, EU Commissioner for Science and Research, introduced the session by highlighting the crucial role that research will play in going beyond the ambitious 20% target.

"Wind energy is a remarkable European success story. Europe is a global leader in the sector thanks to the skill of the research sector," said Commissioner Potočnik.

"But it is clear that we need more than a "business-as-usual" approach. The current mechanisms and models of cooperation for wind energy are insufficient to meet the challenges faced by the EU energy policy. By encouraging European Industrial Initiatives, we will strengthen energy research and innovation undertaken by industry and its partners. So a European Wind Industrial Initiative is a timely opportunity", said Commissioner Potočnik, referring to the European Commission's Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan), which was adopted by the EU Council at the end of February 2008. A further initiative for research is the European Wind Energy Technology Platform (TPWind), whose Strategic Research Agenda, which will be released later this year, highlights the sector's research priorities.

Commissioner Potočnik was followed by representatives of some of the best-performing European areas for wind energy. Schleswig-Holstein in Germany gets over 30% of its electricity from wind. **Dietrich Austermann**, regional Minister of Science, Economic Affairs and Transport, spoke of the 7,000 jobs that have been created in the region through the use of wind power, the €3 billion that has been invested in the sector and the business opportunities created.

"Wind energy has been a real business success for the region. Some of the leading wind plant manufacturers and service providers have relocated there," he explained.

The correlation between wind energy and a strong economy can also be seen in Denmark. The country is the world's third most competitive economy according to the World Economic forum, and 21% of its electricity comes from wind energy.

**Anne Højer Simonsen**, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Climate and Energy, Denmark, said, "The Danish example shows that there is no contradiction between a competitive economy and large amounts of wind power. Since 1980, Denmark's economy has grown 75%. We are aiming to have 30% of our electricity coming from wind energy by 2025."

**Ricardo González Mantero**, Director of Energy and Mining, EREN, Spain looked at the Castilla y León region of Spain, which gets half of its electricity from wind power. He discussed the policy

tools that have helped the renewables development (including the wind energy plan of 1999) and the heavy investment in wind in the last decade. He then outlined the essential elements for a significant energy contribution from renewables and wind energy.

“To enable a strong wind energy share, the most important things are dialogue, the exchange of knowledge and experience, favourable resources and political and public commitment”, he concluded.

At EWEC this year there were a record 6,000 participants from 82 different countries. EWEC 2008 drew to a close this afternoon, as EU Commissioner for Science and Research Janez Potočnik awarded the wind energy sector’s most prestigious prize – the Poul la Cour prize - to Jos Beurskens from the Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands (ECN), for his outstanding achievements and many years’ service in the field of wind energy. Afterwards, Belgium handed over the role as host of EWEC to France, where next year’s conference will be held, in Marseille, on 16-19 March 2009.

**Jean-Louis BAL**, Director for Renewable Energy at the French Agency for Energy and Environment (ADEME) said, "ADEME is delighted that the European wind industry has selected France for its annual conference in 2009. This prestigious event will focus attention on the abundant, yet largely untapped, wind energy potential in France and facilitate a discussion on the main barriers and challenges to the mainstream exploitation of this indigenous resource. The EWEC 2009 event will also help deliver sustainable solutions to energy markets across Europe."

**Arthorous Zervos**, EWEA President, concluded that “The four days of discussions and presentations at EWEC 2008 have reinforced the importance of wind energy as a potent energy and climate solution for Europe and the rest of the world. We have seen exactly how crucial it is that the European Commission’s proposed Renewable Energy Directive is effectively and quickly adopted and implemented. In this way, Europe will benefit from all wind energy has to offer, and witness the coming of a new generation of energy supply.”

[For more information on EWEC 2008 please click here](#)  
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