DAY ONE

EWEA 2014

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BULLISH: Repowering older Spanish wind farms could quickly create industry and jobs, according to Enercon boss Hans-Dieter Kettwig, *below*

Wind needs to win Spain argument, says Enercon

The sector must fight hard to convince governments to keep supporting renewables, Hans-Dieter Kettwig tells **Ben Backwell**

"After I agreed to chair EWEA 2014, I thought 'oh my god' because Spain is not a very positive sign to show how things can work politically," says Enercon boss Hans-Dieter Kettwig. "But then I thought how important it is to show in Barcelona that green energy has a future. If we make this conference in Germany, it's easy to be positive, but Spain is the right place to start in this not-so-easy situation."

Kettwig points out the compelling arguments in terms of job creation and economic growth for Spanish politicians to renew their support for the wind sector, after two years of "destroying a completely new industry".

"Spain has installed 70,000 wind turbines with old technology," he

says. "They can carry out a huge repowering project that will allow them to create industry and jobs very fast."

Kettwig cites Enercon's wind turbine manufacturing complex

Continued on page 2

Photography | Getty | Enercon

The fightback begins here

BEN BACKWELL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, *RECHARGE*

When *Recharge* started talking with EWEA last year about the Barcelona event, I must admit I felt some apprehension.

Coming to Barcelona is always fun, but — along with many others — I was worried that the show could end up being very downbeat, given the disastrous policy turnaround in Spain over the past couple of years and the difficulties the nation's world-beating wind industry has faced.

> Hopefully, Barcelona can be the starting point for a revived, smarter and tougher industry

Since then, however, I have slowly come round to the idea that it would be hard to find a better place to host EWEA 2014. As an industry, we can't sweep the growing policy and regulatory challenges that we face under the carpet. It would be easy to move on to the next growth spot without assessing what has happened and why.

There is a point to be made and an argument still to be won in Spain, because despite the hostile environment in the halls of power, the country's wind sector has been a massive success. It has created a new high-tech industry, it has cut emissions and managed to reach almost unmatched levels of clean energy in the grid, and at the end of the day, it has done all this at a very reasonable price.

There are plenty of positives to be salvaged despite the slowdown and job cuts, as Spanish firms such as Gamesa, Acciona and Iberdrola have helped to develop new wind markets in places like Brazil, Mexico and South Africa.

But there are also lessons that the wind industry would be wise to learn. We need to become much better at communicating the benefits of wind power, taking a leaf out of Silicon Valley's book and ensuring we remain relevant and continue to be seen as a force for economic transformation and growth. We need to make sure that the widespread public support we enjoy translates into solid political influence where it matters. And we need to make sure that we form the right alliances with those companies and economic interests that are committed to the transition to a new energy matrix.

In Brussels in February, 91 companies and organisations clubbed together to call for ambitious, legally binding renewables targets for 2030. The initiative was a good start, but there is a lot of work ahead of us to ensure we get the regulatory frameworks and the European energy market that we need.

Hopefully, Barcelona can be the starting point for a revived, smarter and tougher wind industry. I look forward to working with you all in the next few days.

Ben Backwell will be speaking in the session 'Outside the box: finding new growth opportunities' on Wednesday at 9am.

The future of European wind 'depends on Energiewende'

From page 1

in neighbouring Portugal as a positive example, pointing out that it is now functioning as an export hub and supplying turbines to Brazil, France, Germany and Sweden, as well as providing employment for over 2,000 people.

While winning the arguments in places like Spain, where politicians have reacted against wind-power growth, is highly important, much of the current debate over European energy policy depends on the continued success of the energy transition in Germany.

"The biggest mistake would be if Germany says our target is not so high as in the past," says Kettwig, adding that Germany can act as a "blueprint" for other European countries such as France. "Germany must show that the *Energiewende* works. Then others will come."

Meanwhile, the traditionally Germany-focused Enercon is likely to become more internationally orientated in the coming period, and Kettwig says the company has considerable flexibility if German onshore wind development slows down.

"At the moment we can't deliver enough in other countries because we don't have enough turbines, so if we have a 20% problem in Germany then we bring this 20% to other countries," says Kettwig. He points to a number of promising markets around the world, including Turkey, Canada, Sweden and South Africa.

At the same time, Enercon is likely to retain its traditional emphasis on quality rather than price. "We follow the same Enercon idea that cheap is not everything, because we see that many competitors' balance sheets are under pressure and that is not helpful for the industry," says Kettwig. "Everyone wants very cheap machines but it must run for 20 years, so sometimes we think it is not the right way."

Photograph | Fiona Compton


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Based on the 2.0-2.5 MW platform's proven technology, which powers 16.5 GW, **Gamesa's new G114-2.0 MW increases your output** by 20%* at medium and low wind sites.
This new turbine features **the highest capacity factor on the market:** a 114 m rotor and a 38%* bigger swept area.
The G114-2.0 MW boosts your profitability thanks to its tailored technology solutions.
*Vs. G97-2.0 MW
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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW: Iberdrola's Big Horn wind farm in Washington state. The company will direct a third of its investment to the US this year

Iberdrola spreads its wings

More than ever, the world's largest renewables developer is thinking global, its chief executive tells **Bernd Radowitz**

Although its Spanish home market is suffering from weak demand and regulatory uncertainty, Iberdrola is continuing its substantial expansion in renewable energy.

All of the €2.3bn ($3.16bn) that the world's largest renewables operator has earmarked to invest in the coming three years will be spent overseas. That should add 1.2GW to its already significant 14.25GW global capacity.

"Our experience to date puts us in a good position to focus on projects offering the highest-value potential, which means markets with stable regulation: onshore wind and, if expectations materialise, in wind offshore also," says Iberdrola Renovables chief executive Xabier Viteri.

Two thirds of the new capacity is slated to be added in the UK and the US; a further 18% is earmarked for Mexico; and 15% for offshore — mainly the completion of the 389MW West of Duddon Sands farm off northwest England that Iberdrola's UK unit, ScottishPower Renewables, and Danish co-developer Dong Energy plan to fully commission this year.

The biggest chunk of Iberdrola's renewables spending — 36% of overall investments in 2014-16 — is earmarked for UK onshore wind. That should boost its onshore capacity there by 420MW to 1.84GW.

UPBEAT: Xabier Viteri

"We see the UK energy reform as providing a good platform for continued growth over the longer term, up to and beyond 2017, when new strike prices come into effect, although it will be important to secure involvement of all supply-chain parties if projects are to move forward," Viteri says.

The utility is similarly upbeat on the US, the destination of 31% of its 2014-16 renewables investments. "The US remains a promising market for us because of high capacity factors made possible by improved performance from new turbine technology, making wind more competitive," he adds.

Iberdrola has qualified 700MW for the current production tax credit round, but Viteri acknowledges that further growth in the medium and long term depends not only on extending the incentive, or another support system, but also on "more reasonable energy prices".

"While pricing is still an issue, with some power-purchase agreements being signed in a low range, we are beginning to see evidence of a slight recovery in prices," he adds.

In Latin America, the company focuses on Mexico, where it sees energy reform that encourages private investment as a window of opportunity to add capacity.

"We're analysing the reform, but are encouraged that upgrading the transmission system will help development of new wind capacity and we have already signed development projects in [the southern city of] Puebla, which we hope will lead to around 150MW capacity during the three-year period."

The utility also has an impressive Brazilian pipeline of 900MW in its own projects and through co-development agreements.

But Viteri cautions that there are still issues in Brazil with interconnection risks that are currently assumed by the developer, and with price volatility. Wind tenders in Brazil have led to rock-bottom prices of, most recently, R$110 ($47) per MWh, which Iberdrola reckons to be too low to reach a sustainable long-term competitiveness.

In Spain, however, the retroactive character of key elements of the government's energy reform is driving away companies and foreign investment.

In particular, the principle of "reasonable profitability" — a cap of close to 7.4% before tax for the profitability of past and future renewables projects that is replacing a system of feed-in tariffs — takes away the business case for most projects.

"Without a doubt, we wouldn't take an investment decision [today] with those profitability levels," Viteri tells *Recharge*.

Unsurprisingly, his company has no plans to add to its 6.1GW of renewables in Spain in the coming three years.

Photography | Iberdrola

‘Renewables are not the devil’

BERND RADOWITZ

Spain’s main opposition parties strongly reject the energy reforms of the government of conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, with their steep and retroactive cuts to renewables support.

They want to establish a “new energy model” based on renewables that receive adequate remuneration.

“The energy reform doesn’t resolve the structural problems in Spain’s energy market, such as its energy dependency on oil and gas. It cements the predominance of large companies; small alternative producers have no chance,” Laia Ortiz, a member of parliament for the Initiative for Catalonia Greens, ICV, tells *Recharge*.

She says that if her leftist-green party were to take part in a government after next year’s election, it would reverse most of the current reforms. “The government needs to stop thinking that renewables are the devil,” Ortiz adds.

The ICV and the biggest opposition party, the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party, PSOE, support the Platform for a New Energy Model, which strives for an energy supply based on renewables, while at the same time gradually exiting nuclear and fossil-fuel generation.

According to the PSOE, the new policy should be cemented by a long-term political pact to ensure that policies will last even if governments change.

Spain had one of the world’s fastest-growing renewables sectors for much of the past decade, but installations came to a standstill last year when more details of the energy reform measures became known.

REVERSE GEAR: Laia Ortiz

Photograph | Office of Laia Ortiz

PSOE energy expert Hugo Morán says Spain’s current reform cannot be justified from a social, economic or environmental point of view.

An energy pact “is necessary to give continuity to strategic decisions and separate the development of the sector independent from the parties that form the government”, he says.

“The power market needs to be reformed gradually and deeply in order to give incentives to efficiency and to advance toward the full use of our renewable-energy potential, while reducing our external dependency.”

HELPING HAND: German energy minister Sigmar Gabriel, *left*, greets Greek minister Ioannis Maniatis at the Brussels meeting

Eastern nations drag their feet on green goals

CHRISTOPHER HOPSON

Ministers of EU member states have broadly backed proposals for a binding 27% Europe-wide renewables target for 2030 and a 40% greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal.

After two days of meetings in Brussels, 13 of the 28 ministers urged their heads of government to reach agreement on the main elements of 2030 environment and energy policy when they meet later this month, or risk deterring investors and delaying efforts to get a global climate deal.

However, there were few signs of decisive momentum towards the 30% renewables target and the imposition of binding national goals that many in the clean-energy industry are hoping for.

There was strong opposition to these aspirations from Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania, which issued a joint statement calling for the 2030 carbon goal to be set at a "realistic level" and to take into account UN talks about any global deal.

The meeting broadly supported the European Commission's policy vision, based around a 27% EU share for renewables (not binding on individual countries) and a fully binding 2030 target to cut carbon emissions by 40% compared with 1990 levels.

Europe's energy commissioner, Günther Oettinger, said after the meeting: "What we now need to agree in the next month is burden-sharing arrangements whereby the 'greener nations' of the UK, France and Germany voluntarily support the poorer nations of Europe to reach the new target.

"If we collectively start to fall short of an overall EU 27% renewables target, that is where burden sharing will fall into place."

German energy minister Sigmar Gabriel — who supports greater ambition in green targets — acknowledges that the positions of member states are still divergent.

Germany supports a greenhouse gas reduction target of at least 40%, a binding expansion target for renewables of at least 30% and individual national energy-efficiency goals.

The most prominent opposition among the 28 EU states came from Poland, which is no hurry to reach a political deal on 2030 targets. "We can work with Poland to get an agreement in March," said UK Energy and Climate Change Secretary Ed Davey. However, he added, "I'm not saying it's going to be easy."

A full legislative proposal is not expected until next year, when a new set of commissioners will have taken office, meaning it will take years to finalise a 2030 package. However, an outline agreement from all leaders this month would be a strong signal.

Next step looms for Samsung's 7MW giant

Samsung Heavy Industries' flagship 7MW S-7.0-171 turbine has entered final commissioning in eastern Scotland.

After commissioning, the turbine will begin type testing for certification. The prototype, which has 83.5-metre SSP Technology blades, has been assembled at Energy Park Fife in Methil.

A duplicate of the S-7.0-171's nacelle is undergoing trials at the National Renewable Energy Centre in northeast England.

RISING STAR: Installing the Samsung 7MW

German citizens choose Vestas

Vestas has received a turnkey order to supply 22 of its V112-3.3MW turbines to a project in northern Germany.

The 72.6MW deal for the Bürgerwindpark Eider citizens' wind farm in Schleswig-Holstein includes installation and commissioning, as well as a 15-year service agreement.

Delivery will begin in the third quarter of the year and the turbines will be commissioned in the fourth quarter.

Photography | Tashana Batista | Samsung

ON TARGET: The EC's big three climate and energy players, Günther Oettinger, José Manuel Barroso and Connie Hedegaard, launch the commission's 2030 White Paper

Photograph | Georges Boulougour/EC | Jason Bickley/EWEA

EWEA goes in to bat for a 30% renewables target

A more ambitious 2030 goal would reduce energy imports, create jobs and benefit industry, reports **Christopher Hopson**

Europe's wind industry has put a strong case for a 30% binding renewables target for 2030. Setting the goal at that level would achieve much higher fossil-fuel savings; create thousands more wind jobs; and lower energy costs for industry, according to the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

An EWEA study, *Avoiding fossil fuel costs with wind energy*, says replacing generation from hydrocarbons with wind would reduce energy dependency, while lowering fuel import bills and greenhouse gas emissions.

EWEA says the "unambitious" White Paper proposal for a 27% renewables target for 2030 would — according to the European Commission's (EC's) impact assessment — save €190bn ($262bn) on fossil-fuel import savings from 2011 to 2030. However, a 30% target would save €450bn.

Jacopo Moccia, EWEA's head of political affairs, says: "Europeans are shelling out over €1bn a day on importing fossil fuels from sometimes unreliable suppliers, when by investing in wind they can boost energy security and put money into a world-leading European industry that provides 250,000 jobs. This report shows the difference wind energy can make now and in the future."

EWEA argues that oil and natural-gas prices are volatile, and — as the commission and the International Energy Agency predict — will only increase over the next few decades.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE: Jacopo Moccia

"However, wind power does not require costly fuel to produce energy, and therefore its electricity generation is not exposed to these fuel price increases and volatility," the association adds.

EWEA recommends:

- Setting a binding EU 2030 target of 30% (rather than the proposed 27% which is non-binding on member states) to give the wind industry a stable regulatory framework.
- Ensuring that the Emissions Trading Scheme provides a high and stable carbon price to disincentivise investment in fossil-fuel generation.
- Guaranteeing public investment in R&D to increase the competitivenesss of wind energy.
- Building the power grid up and out to ensure Europe is joined up and wind can be transmitted to all consumers.
- Setting a minimum emissions performance standard for all newbuild power plants.

In a slap in the face for the EC, the European Parliament has already voted in favour of a 30% renewables target for 2030, backing verdicts by its energy & industry and environment committees in favour of binding targets for renewables, greenhouse gas emissions reductions and energy efficiency.

The proposed targets will be debated by European leaders at summits this month and in June. Firm legislative proposals are not expected before 2015, following European parliamentary elections and a change of commissioners this year.

Monday 10 March

HAPPENING TODAY

EWEA 2014 Grand Opening
14:00-15:30 (Room Ponent)
The Opening Session officially marks the start of EWEA 2014. Hear some of industry's leading advocates as they introduce this year's conference theme 'Getting back to business' (also interpreted in Spanish). Open to conference delegates and exhibition visitors.

UN climate talks: get onboard to boost business
16:15-18:00 (Room Ponent)
In just 18 months, the UN climate change summit in Paris will take place. How do we convince our colleagues that it matters to their business? And what are the consequences for the wind business if the Paris talks fail?

Get your single conference session ticket: Visit the New Visitor Registration Desks and ask for your pass to be upgraded with the conference session(s) that interests you.

Launch of the 'Avoided Fuel Report' at the EWEA 2014 opening session
This report looks at the phenomenal amount Europe is spending on importing fossil fuels — in 2011 these imports cost three times the Greek bailout up to 2013 — yet wind energy can replace this. Pick up your copy at the EWEA stand (Hall 6, D40) from 14:00

DNV GL On-Stand Seminar Series
Every afternoon (Hall 7, Stand 7B20)
Join DNV GL experts as they present a series of complementary seminars.

Opening Reception
18:00-20:00 (Siemens stand 7D10, Exhibition Hall 7)
Join the rest of your industry at the EWEA 2014

opening reception for the chance to network against an informal background of drinks, music and conversation.

DON'T MISS TOMORROW

Industry leaders' debate — what are you doing to get back to business?
08:30-10:30 (Room Ponent)
How has the industry been getting back to business amid all the political and economic uncertainty? What practical steps has the industry been taking to meet its responsibilities towards shareholders, stakeholders and employees to get investments flowing again? Hear ten of the industry's leaders share their experiences at this session and get set to be inspired with new business ideas and directions in Europe and beyond.

Interested in attending this session alone? Top up your exhibition pass at the New Visitor Registration Desks.

Do you support an ambitious renewables target?
Our industry needs an ambitious EU 2030 renewables target. More than 100 companies are already calling for one. Join them by adding your name to the signatories at the EWEA stand, Hall 6D40.

Side events and socials
Invest in Brazil
09:00-16:00 (Room Güell)

Reaching 2030 energy and climate with the right electricity market design
14:15-15:45 (Room Ciutadella)

Basque Energy Cluster
15:00-18:00 (Hall 8.1, room 8.17)

Fair wind for UK fades in France

ANAMARIA DEDULEASA

France and Britain — as they do in so many other ways — seem to be heading in different directions when it comes to renewables.

Wind reached a monthly record 11% share of the UK's electricity in February, the 2.7 terawatt hours beating the 10% set in December 2013.

In France, however, new wind installations dropped by 30% to 535MW last year, while solar additions fell 45% to 613MW.

Analysts say uncertainty over reforms to French energy policy and a review of renewables subsidies slowed installations. The latest figures cast fresh doubt over France's ability to hit its 2020 renewables target of 23% — wind and solar met only 4% of demand last year.

The two countries' contrasting fortunes are reflected by their industry spokesmen.

Jean-Louis Bal, president of France's Syndicat des Energies Renouvelables, warns that the 23% target "seems increasingly difficult without the implementation of a real recovery plan for renewable energy".

RenewableUK deputy chief executive Maf Smith says: "The need to develop a secure, home-grown supply of electricity in a cost-effective way is at the forefront of people's minds right now, so it's good to see wind energy consistently ticking all the right boxes, month after month."

Photograph | Areva

Stepping up

Areva Wind's UK country director, Julian Brown — a member of the *Recharge* Thought Leaders Club — has been appointed chairman of RenewableUK

'REAP THE BENEFITS': IEA chief Maria van der Hoeven

Flexibility is key to integrating green energy

CHRISTOPHER HOPSON
ANAMARIA DEDULEASA

Wind and solar generation can be integrated into networks at minimal cost — if systems are flexible enough and the process is properly planned, the International Energy Agency (IEA) reports.

The Paris-based body says rapidly growing deployment of variable renewable energy (VRE) has inevitably asked questions of existing power systems and their ability to adapt and operate cost-effectively.

Its study, *The Power of Transformation — Wind, Sun and the Economics of Flexible Power Systems,* concludes that integrating the first 5-10% of VRE generation poses no technical or economic challenges, so long as conditions such as uncontrolled local "hot spots" of renewables deployment are avoided.

And it confirms that integrating high shares — 30% of annual electricity production or more — of wind and PV can come at little additional long-term cost.

However, those costs depend on how flexible the system is and what strategy is adopted for the long term.

"Adding VRE rapidly without adapting the system is bound to increase costs," says Paolo Frankl, head of the IEA's renewables division.

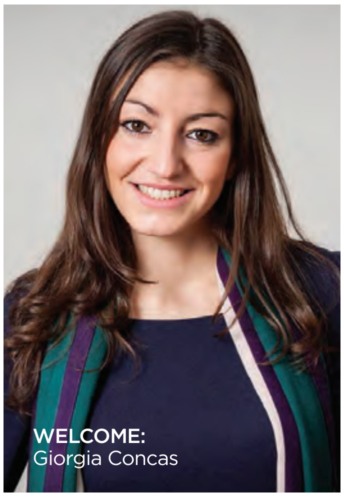
Managing this transition will be more difficult for some countries or power systems than others, the study adds.

IEA executive director Maria van der Hoeven says the challenges vary from areas such as Europe — "where there is a mismatch between the market conditions and the need to integrate renewables" — to growing economies.

In power networks such as those in India, China, Brazil and other emerging economies, wind and solar can be cost-effective solutions to meet incremental demand, van der Hoeven adds.

With proper investment, a flexible system can be built from the very start, in parallel with the deployment of VRE, allowing such nations to leap straight to a 21st-century power system and "reap the benefits", she concludes.

European Photovoltaic Industry Association policy adviser Giorgia Concas says: "This report rightly shows that the costs of renewables-based power systems can be minimised by adapting some planning and operational procedures. This way, photovoltaics and wind would bring higher benefits to the system."



WELCOME: Giorgia Concas

Photography | Gunnar Blöndal | Michael Chia

European wind zones go their separate ways

BERND RADOWITZ

The European wind market is splitting between north and south as new installations in former renewables champions Spain and Portugal have ground to a near standstill, with little hope of improvement in coming years.

That's the opinion of Lars Bondo Krogsgaard, chief customer officer and board member at German turbine manufacturer Nordex.

"I see some kind of north-south divide developing, in a sense that

> We see a real challenge in Spain and Portugal

financing — and financing decides what does and doesn't happen — has clearly moved towards the northern parts of Europe," he tells *Recharge*.

In addition to a pick-up in wind installations in Scandinavia and Finland, there is a significant volume in France, the UK, Ireland and Germany, he notes.

Suffering from a series of measures to cut support and slap additional levies on renewables output, wind installations in Spain plunged to 175MW in 2013, from more than 1GW in each of the two previous years.

"We certainly see a real challenge in markets like Spain and Portugal. Currently in Spain you have nothing, absolutely nothing happening. And in Portugal things are down to a very low number compared to the significant numbers that we had in the past," Krogsgaard says.

Nordex expects zero additions in Spain until 2017, and then a rise to a mere 200-300MW a year. For Portugal, the turbine maker envisages around 100MW in new wind being added each year over the next three to five years.

"That is, of course, a disastrous situation for those markets," Krogsgaard comments.

Having had only a small business in Spain, Nordex wasn't as exposed to the swings in Southern Europe as some of its rivals, he points out.

"I guess we were a bit luckier than many of our competitors, who had big positions in those markets. You know how hot that market was, and that has come down to nothing now." R

THE GREAT DIVIDE: Lars Bondo Krogsgaard describes the situation in Iberian markets as disastrous

Photograph | Nordex

Wind could complement desert solar

SUN, SAND AND... WIND: Gamesa turbines loom over the Egyptian landscape

DARIUS SNIECKUS

International desert-power alliance DII has turned a spotlight on the wind potential of the Middle East and North African (MENA), with research suggesting 2.7GW will be brought on line by next year and a further 20GW by 2020.

In its report *Desert Power: Getting Started*, DII, which is shepherding the Desertec solar mega-project, points to a combination of high wind speeds and grid connectivity as boosting the region's short-term prospects.

"While 2013 figures recently indicated that the EU wind-energy market is consolidating, DII's analysis shows that south of the Mediterranean, conditions for onshore wind are particularly favourable," says the report. "Electricity from wind power costs €50-70 [$69-96] per MWh at good sites in MENA."

Targeted capacity build-out in the MENA countries, where wind speeds have been mapped at between eight and ten metres per second, includes: Egypt (7.2GW), Saudi Arabia (5GW), Morocco (2GW), Libya (1.5GW) and Jordan (1.2GW).

Currently, 1.4GW of wind projects are in operation in MENA, of which 22% were switched on last year, according to DII numbers.

Although onshore wind meets less than 1% of energy demand in the region, DII forecasts that this figure could mushroom to 50% "due to the cost-competitiveness of the technology and the vast quantity of available sites with favourable wind speeds".

It highlights Algeria as a first-mover in MENA. Wind farms in the North African country have achieved levelised cost of energy of €0.06-0.085/kWh — and as low as a "commercially competitive" €0.09-0.10/kWh when transmission costs to Italy via a high-voltage direct-current interconnector across the Mediterranean are factored in.

"Several non-economic hurdles have to be overcome: a self-sustained market requires sound regulation, and not just for the private sector," notes DII.

"Main measures include: secure land access, secure grid access, a transparent permitting landscape, access to creditworthy customers and high-quality meteorological data."

GE steps in to buy two Irish wind farms

ANDREW LEE

GE has bought into Ireland's wind market for the first time, acquiring two projects totalling 51MW from Element Power.

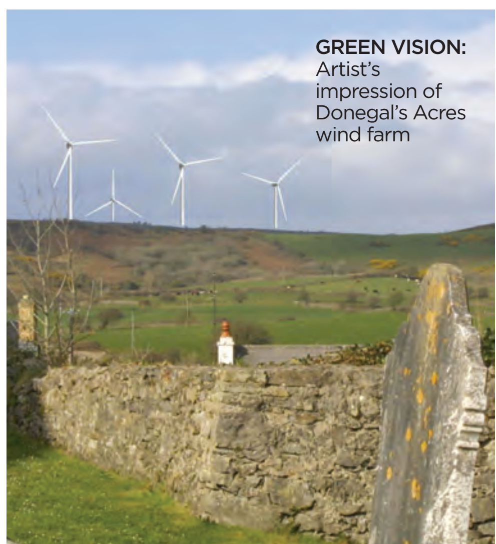
GE Energy Financial Services bought the 34MW Barranafaddock wind farm near Ballyduff, County Waterford, in the southeast, and the 17MW Acres near Ballyshannon, County Donegal, in the northwest.

Both projects will use GE 2.85MW turbines. Completion of Acres and Barranafaddock is due in the first and second quarters of 2015 respectively.

Element Power is overseeing construction of both projects and will manage their operation post-completion.

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Andrew Marsden, European leader at GE Energy Financial Services, says: "The combination of Ireland's strong wind resources with a stable regulatory regime and well-structured feed-in tariff for wind energy present attractive growth opportunities."



GREEN VISION: Artist's impression of Donegal's Acres wind farm

Photography | Gamesa | Business Wire

CLEANING UP: Glasgow may leverage its role as a low-carbon engineering centre

Photograph | Brian Smith

Glasgow would be Scots' green-energy centre

ANAMARIA DEDULEASA

Glasgow would become Scotland's green-energy centre if the country votes to become independent.

First Minister Alex Salmond says the energy department of an independent Scotland would be co-headquartered in Aberdeen and Glasgow, with the latter specialising in clean energy.

The new department, which would have a staff of around 300 across the country's largest and third-biggest cities, would capitalise on the expertise of oil and gas in Aberdeen, and on Glasgow's influential role as a low-carbon engineering centre.

Scotland votes on 18 September on whether to split from the rest of the UK.

Energy would be a key sector in an independent Scotland, as well as presenting an "unrivalled opportunity to boost our energy wealth, support employment and grow our economy", Salmond adds.

The country would have new powers in areas such as energy regulation and the ability to target and apply financial incentives.

With a locally based department and control over key economic levers, Salmond claims the potential to boost the energy industry and bring benefits to consumers and the wider economy would be enormous.

His government has made much of its credentials as a renewables pace-setter since coming to power in 2011.

Dongfang nabs historic order in Sweden

ANDREW LEE

Dongfang Electric has struck a deal to supply 30 of its 2.5MW turbines for the third stage of Sweden's Blaiken wind farm.

Under the SKr600m ($92.3m) deal — said by developer Skellefteå Kraft to be the first major order for a Chinese supplier in Sweden — Dongfang will install the direct-drive turbines in 2015, adding 75MW to the existing 150MW from phases one and two.

The awarding of the contract to a Chinese equipment supplier will come as a disappointment to European manufacturers, especially Germany's Nordex, which in 2011 won the order to supply 60 2.5MW turbines for the earlier phases.

Skellefteå Kraft says that Dongfang offered "the best overall solution" for the third phase and its cold-climate demands.

A spokeswoman tells *Recharge*: "It was about the technology and the total package that Dongfang offer as a supplier. We of course looked at other possible solutions, including the Nordex solution we had before."

Blaiken, in northern Sweden, is majority-owned by Skellefteå Kraft, with energy group Fortum holding a 40% stake.

EU's 'risky' gas imports questioned

CHRISTOPHER HOPSON

CUT THE RISK: Thomas Becker wants to reduce EU reliance on energy imports

Photograph | Jason Bickley/EWEA

Thomas Becker doesn't bother disguising his contempt for Europe's energy policy — "nothing more than a redistribution of wealth to already very wealthy clans in the Middle East and Russia", he calls it.

"Instead of investing millions of euros in the development of renewable technologies and the creation of thousands of new European jobs, we choose to spend it on fossil-fuel imports from politically risky regions," the EWEA chief executive tells *Recharge*.

As fears grow over the energy implications of Moscow's confrontation with Ukraine, Becker's call for the EU to loosen its dependence on Russian fossil fuel could hardly be more timely.

EWEA is counting on Europe's politicians to do the right thing on renewables. For an example of where politicians have got it catastrophically wrong, look no further than Spain.

Becker describes Madrid's energy policy as "quite disastrous towards wind", and "nothing to do with rational thinking", with the government apparently convinced that renewables are one of the causes of their economic crisis".

"We consider Spain a lost cause and we don't want to spend too much of our time on the present government in that country. We have tried, having had several meetings with them, but we haven't made much progress".

The big fear now is that other countries will start emulating Spain's retroactive cuts to green subsidies. EWEA's lawyers are meeting the European Commission (EC) to discuss how to prevent the problem spreading.

Meanwhile, Europe risks losing its global lead in cutting greenhouse gas emissions if it does not adopt a 30% renewable-energy target for 2030, Becker warns. The wind industry is "disappointed" by the EC blueprint for EU climate and energy policy to 2030, which recommends a 27% renewables goal, non-binding on individual member countries.

Becker strongly urges the 28 EU heads of government, due to meet on 20-21 March, to set their sights higher and vote for a 30% nationally binding renewables target as the best way to promote green growth, jobs and industrial leadership.

"We doubt a 27% renewables target, binding only at an EU level, can benefit Europe by driving the investments and growth in the wind-power sector," he says.