



EUROPEAN
OFFSHORE WIND 2009
Conference & Exhibition
14-16 September 2009, Stockholm, Sweden



Offshore wind power can help revolutionise Europe's energy future

STOCKHOLM — It is fitting that a new plan to power Europe in the future with a massive increase in offshore wind energy was released today here in this historic 13th century city of islands on Sweden's southeast coast where Lake Malaren meets the relentless Baltic Sea.

Swedish mariners have known for more than eight centuries that the combined power of wind and water is an unstoppable force to be reckoned with, feared, admired and exploited.

Today in Stockholm, at the Offshore Wind 2009 conference, politicians from Sweden and throughout the European Union learned from a new report called *Oceans of Opportunity* that the 100 GW of offshore projects already being planned could produce 10% of Europe's electricity.

The same report, published by the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA), told politicians and others at the conference that those offshore wind projects could avoid 200 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

Not only that, the 66-page publication begins with the statement that Europe's future depends on offshore wind.

"Europe is faced with the global challenges of climate change, depleting indigenous energy resources, increasing fuel costs and the threat of supply disruption," the report says. "Offshore wind power provides the answer to Europe's energy and climate dilemma — exploiting an abundant energy resource which does not emit greenhouse gases, reduces dependence on increasingly costly fuel imports, creates thousands of new jobs and provides large quantities of indigenous affordable electricity."

On a similar note, Maud Olofsson, Swedish Deputy Prime Minister and President of the EU Energy Ministers Council, said wind power off Europe's coastline is a resource ready for exploitation and developers are eager to get started. "Provided governments are ready to play their part," she said, "we can revolutionise Europe's energy future."

Stan Messemaekers is one of the more than 3,000 people at the conference, Europe's biggest-ever gathering to plan the harnessing of its huge offshore wind energy potential.

Like Olofsson and the *Oceans of Opportunity* report, Messemaekers has faith in the amazing power of wind on water.

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“It’s going to be a booming business and a good one,” said Messemaekers, who is GeoSea’s offshore wind assistance manager. “I sincerely believe that oil-based energy will come to an end and offshore wind will help fill that void, certainly in Europe.”

He said GeoSea, which started in 2005 and is headquartered in Antwerp, has about 100 employees working across the entire offshore wind sector. The company, he added, is optimistic that offshore wind has an illustrious future. “It’s a necessity.”

With positive thoughts like that ricocheting throughout the conference, it seems a certainty that offshore wind power will help greatly improve the future for Europe’s economy, energy system and environment.

All we have to do is continue to believe in wind, just like those hearty and courageous Swedish sailors from yesteryear who depended on fully-charged sails bringing them safely back home across the formidable Baltic Sea.

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