



EUROPEAN
OFFSHORE WIND 2009
Conference & Exhibition
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In two years time, the European Offshore Wind Conference will be held in Amsterdam. EWEA talked today to Imar Doornbos, who works in the ministry of economic affairs as a renewable energy advisor for The Netherlands, about offshore wind and the opportunities it offers.

Question: Tell me about your job and how it relates to offshore wind?

Answer: Most of my activities are in offshore wind. Over the last couple of years I headed a number of electricity policy projects. Last year I headed the North Sea Offshore Grid project. Also, I'm involved in international cooperation with regards to offshore wind.

Q: As the Offshore Wind 2009 conference winds down here in Stockholm, what has been your overall impression of both the event and what the many sessions add to the overall discussion about offshore wind power driving Europe's energy future?

A: Conferences like these are very important to networking in the industry. It's so easy to meet people. Development of renewable energies starts with ambitions sometimes helped by governments. And then you need platforms like this where industry and research institutions and other agents can meet. It's all about projects and contacts and contracts.

Q: As a nation, The Netherlands has historically been involved with using both water and wind to improve its society. Does your geography dictate this dynamic and do you ever see a time when this will not be the case?

A: It's obvious that our starting point for our economic development is our geographical position. I guess no, for me, it would not be easy to see a future where water and wind will not play a major role.

Q: Will The Netherlands continue to develop offshore wind parks off its coastline in the future or is there a plan to limit their construction?

A: Oh no, this government has ambitions. There's an objective of 6,000 MW of offshore wind power capacity by the year 2020. So far we have realised 228 MW. This government has committed itself to another 900 MW by 2012. At present we are working to get everything in place to allow for the further development of the remaining 4,800 MW in the period up to 2020.

Q: Working in the ministry of economic affairs, can you briefly describe the financial benefits offshore wind farms provide?

A: We are talking about clean energy technologies here. Wind is always available. It makes us less dependent on imports from other countries. It's clean, there's an

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opportunity that it will become cheap and it's always available. Security of supply, environmental qualities and competitiveness, these are key.

Q: What are the other benefits that offshore wind brings for your nation?

A: There's the development of a body of knowledge, of research institutions and industry. Also, there's the development of international cooperation. In the end, it's know-how, turnover and employment.

Q: How important to The Netherlands is the possibility that within two decades there will be a dedicated transnational grid that offshore wind can be funneled into?

A: There will be an offshore grid before 2030, I'm convinced of that. On the question as to when the grid will combine the function of trade with wind farms, I am less sure.

Q: Is your nation actively supporting this idea?

A: We are looking into the possibility of further developing offshore links. Presently we are looking at the cost of it and the regimes you would need to develop and finance it.

Q: How important is the idea of a single European electricity market to both offshore wind and your nation?

A: There's an obvious reward to the establishment of a common European electricity market. It's important for our nation. It will, as a matter of fact, also be important for the further development of offshore wind. It doesn't help trading of offshore wind power if there are different support and regulatory regimes in Europe in different markets.

Q: How important is offshore wind power development for your nation in meeting its renewable energy targets?

A: It will play a very important role. In The Netherlands we have this objective of 20% renewable energy by 2020. This relates to 35-40% renewable electricity. It's obvious that without offshore wind power, we will not be able to meet those objectives.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: We are very pleased to see the offshore wind conference coming to Amsterdam in the year 2011. We are looking forward to welcoming this event because it will allow the government to show its ambitions for renewable energies. It will also allow the industry to show what it has to offer to the world.

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