

US, China & Spain lead world wind power market in 2007

Brussels, 6 Feb 2008. The Global Wind Energy Council today confirmed its earlier estimate that over 20,000 MW of wind power was installed in 2007, led by the US, China and Spain, bringing world-wide installed capacity to 94,112 MW. This is an increase of 31% compared with the 2006 market, and represents an overall increase in global installed capacity of about 27%.

"The growth rates we are experiencing in wind energy continue to exceed our most optimistic expectations," said GWEC Secretary General Steve Sawyer. "Globally, wind energy has become a mainstream energy source and an important player in the world's energy markets, and it now contributes to the energy mix in more than 70 countries across the globe.

The US reported a record 5,244 MW installed in 2007, more than double the 2006 figure, accounting for about 30% of the country's new power-producing capacity in 2007. Overall US wind power generating capacity grew 45% in 2007, with total installed capacity now standing at 16.8 GW. It can be expected that the US will overtake Germany as the leader on wind energy by the end of 2009.

"This is the third consecutive year of record-setting growth, establishing wind power as one of the largest sources of new electricity supply for the country," said AWEA Executive Director Randall Swisher. "This remarkable and accelerating growth is driven by strong demand, favorable economics, and a period of welcome relief from the on-again, off-again, boom-and-bust, cycle of the federal production tax credit (PTC) for wind power."

China added 3,449 MW of wind energy capacity in added during this year, representing market growth of 156% over 2006, and now ranks fifth in installed wind energy capacity with over 6,000 MW at the end of 2007. Based on current growth rates, the Chinese Renewable Energy Industry Association (CREIA) forecasts a capacity of around 50,000 MW by 2015.

"The growing wind power market in China has also encouraged domestic production of wind turbines, and we now have more than 40 domestic companies involved in manufacturing. In 2007, domestic products accounted for 56% of the annual market, compared to 41% in 2006," said Li Junfeng, Secretary General of the Chinese Renewable Energy Industry Association.

"This percentage is expected to increase substantially in the future. Total domestic manufacturing capacity is now about 5,000 MW, and is expected to reach 10-12 GW by 2010," predicts GWEC President Prof. Arthouros Zervos.

The big surprise in the European market was Spain with 3,515 MW of new capacity installed in 2007, earning it second place globally after the US. Total installed wind energy capacity now stands at over 15 GW in Spain.

The capacity of new wind turbines brought on line across Europe last year was 8,662 MW. Total wind power capacity installed by the end of 2007 reached 57,135 MW and will avoid about 90 million tonnes of CO₂ annually and produce 119 TWh in an average wind year. "It is positive that wind energy is now increasing more than any other power technology in Europe, making up 40% of total new power installations," according to Christian Kjaer, EWEA Chief Executive.

While Europe remains the leading market for wind energy, new installations represented just 43% of the global total, down from nearly 75% in 2004. For the first time in decades, more than 50% of the annual wind market was outside Europe, and this trend is likely to continue into the future.

While Europe, North America and Asia continue to see the most important additions to their wind energy capacity, the Middle East/North Africa region increased its wind power installations by 42%, reaching 534 MW at the end of 2007. New capacity was added in Egypt, Morocco, Iran and Tunisia.

The top five countries in terms of installed capacity are Germany (22.3 GW), the US (16.8 GW), Spain (15.1 GW), India (8 GW) and China (6.1 GW). In terms of economic value, the global wind market in 2007 was worth about 25bn EUR or 36bn US\$ in new generating equipment.