

Press Release

Offshore wind energy in Germany: Figures 2015

Record achieved due to catch-up effects

Offshore wind turbines with a total capacity of 2,282.4 megawatts went on grid 2015. This demonstrates the capability of the German offshore wind industry and meets the expectations expressed at the beginning of 2015. This will however initially remain a unique record, as it is based on the catch-up effects of grid connection. The industry considers reliable, continuous expansion as a basis for more climate protection and value creation more important in the long term than any one-off records. To achieve such continuity it is necessary that the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG) 2016 and the Offshore Grid Development Plan (O-NEP) 2025 are properly coordinated.

Berlin, 18 January 2016 – 546 offshore wind turbines, with a total capacity of 2,282.4 megawatts went on grid in Germany last year. This brings the total number of turbines connected to the grid by 31 December 2015 up to 792, with a combined capacity of 3,294.9 megawatts. A further 41 wind turbines with 246 megawatts of power were fully erected in the past year, but are not yet feeding in to the grid. 122 foundations were built offshore in 2015, for wind turbines to be installed in 2016. These figures have been published by Deutsche WindGuard in its *Status of Offshore Wind Energy Development in Germany*, commissioned by the Working Group for Offshore Wind Energy (AGOW), the German Wind Energy Association (BWE), the German Offshore Wind Energy Foundation (SOW), VDMA Power Systems and the German Wind Energy Agency (WAB).

According to the working group AG Energiebilanzen, offshore wind turbines produced over 8 terawatt hours of electricity in 2015. This is enough to cover the power consumption of over 2 million households or around 1.4 percent of the gross electricity generation in Germany.

Continuous expansion: the basis for technological leadership and export

The offshore wind industry considers the unusually high level of expansion over the past year to be an exceptional phenomenon. This is due to problems and delays with the completion of offshore grid connections since 2013 that could only be resolved last year. The industry forecasts additional capacity of around 700 megawatts in 2016. The foundations for a sustainable domestic market will be laid in the new Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG) 2016. The unanimous opinion of the industry is that “The key points set by the German Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) for the EEG 2016 establish an intermediate

expansion target of 11,000 megawatts in 2025. This would mean an annual expansion of bare 700 megawatts, but it will take a continuous annual expansion volume of at least 900 megawatts from 2021 onwards to create a basis which would make it possible to reduce the cost of offshore wind energy, secure value creation and industrial production in Germany, and make a long term, effective contribution to security of supply”.

Proper design of the tendering process and acceleration of grid expansion

Crucial for the design of the future tendering system will be what the transition and start phases up to the mid 2020s look like, during which the tendering process will be introduced. They must be sensitively designed conform with industry needs in terms of volume, frequency and duration. It is also necessary to set a transitional period of at least four years and have more than one call for tenders during this period.

Something that is also problematical when creating a tendering design for offshore wind energy is the threatened withdrawal of planning permission without adequate compensation. This would question the legal certainty for developed projects and severely limit planning security also for future investments.

In order to avoid grave fluctuations in the expansion of offshore wind energy with stoppage phases and record years like 2015, the Offshore Grid Development Plan (O-NEP) 2025 must also take the offshore wind energy expansion into consideration sufficiently and in good time. The first draft by the transmission system operators for O-NEP 2025 must at least be adjusted to the key points of the EEG 2016, and should for grid capacity take into account the expansion targets, including adequate safety buffers. This is necessary in order to ensure the continuity of expansion.

Reliable expansion targets for all renewable energies

The offshore wind industry stands shoulder to shoulder with the onshore wind industry in rejecting the BMWi's formula, whereby the expansion volume of onshore wind energy would be used as a volatile correction factor for the expansion of renewable energy. Onshore wind energy would be capped according to the formula, when other technologies, like offshore wind energy, meet their targets. The formula has strongly unsettled the renewables sector. “All technologies are dependent on long term planning and reliable targets”, emphasise the five industry associations.

Implementation of international agreements

The results of the Paris climate conference (COP 21), which represent a logical extension of the climate protection agreements reached at the G20 meeting in Elmau, must be integrated into future national targets. The setting of the binding 2-degree target (and the ambitious possible reduction to only 1.5 degrees) requires further consistent and ambitious expansion of renewable energy in Germany. The offshore industry can make an important contribution here. The federal government could make this possible with the announced amendment of the EEG 2016.

The 2015 figures at a glance:

New builds in 2015	Offshore wind turbines with grid feed-in	2,282.4 MW (2014: 492.2 MW)	546 turbines
Accumulated total on 31.12.2015	Offshore wind turbines with grid feed-in	3,294.9 MW (2014: 1,012.5 MW)	792 turbines
	Installed offshore wind turbines without grid feed-in	246 MW (2014: 1,345.2 MW)	41 turbines
	Foundations without offshore wind turbines		122 foundations

About the annual figures in “Status of Offshore Wind Energy Development in Germany”

The Deutsche WindGuard analysis has collected data for the expansion of offshore wind energy separate from onshore wind energy since 2012. Their clients are VDMA Power Systems, the German Wind Energy Association (BWE), the German Offshore Wind Energy Foundation (SOW), the Wind Energy Agency (WAB), and the Working Group for Offshore Wind Energy (AGOW). The 2015 figures for onshore wind energy will be published on 27 January 2016.

About Arbeitsgemeinschaft Offshore-Windenergie e.V.

The Working Group for Offshore Wind Energy e.V. (AGOW) currently has 14 member enterprises involved in building and operating offshore wind farms. AGOW thus represents all the companies that build or operate wind farms in the German North and Baltic Seas, and those who have taken the relevant decisions.

About Bundesverband Windenergie e.V. (BWE)

As a member of the German Renewable Energy federation (BEE), the German Wind Energy Association (BWE), with over 20,000 members, represents the whole industry. Together, the suppliers and manufacturers anchored in the German engineering sector, project developers, specialist lawyers, the financial sector and enterprises from the logistics and construction, service/maintenance, and storage technology sectors, electricity traders, grid operators and utility companies ensure that the BWE is the first point of contact for government, business, science and media for all questions concerning wind energy.

About Stiftung OFFSHORE-WINDENERGIE / German Offshore Wind Energy Foundation

The non-profit German industry foundation for the use and research of offshore wind energy was founded in 2005 on the initiative of the industry and moderated by the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear safety (BMU). The foundation's aim is to consolidate the role of offshore wind energy in Germany and Europe's future energy mix, and to promote its expansion in the interests of environment and climate protection.

About VDMA Power Systems

VDMA Power Systems is an association belonging to the German Engineering Federation (VDMA e.V.). This association represents the interests of the manufacturers of wind turbines, hydro power plants, thermal turbines and power plants, and engine systems at home and abroad. For all of these, VDMA Power Systems serves as the information and communication platform for industry topics such as energy policy, legislation, market studies, trade fairs, standardisation, and press and PR work.

About WAB e.V.

WAB e.V. (Wind Energy Agency) is the leading wind energy enterprise network in the north-western region and nationwide contact for the offshore wind industry in Germany. The association's membership includes over 350 businesses and institutes from all segments of the wind industry, maritime industry and research facilities.

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