



EMBARGO
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Renewables exceed EU targets

Brussels, 29th September 2010. At the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC), the united voice of the whole renewable energy sector, the industry outlined that the renewable energy White Paper targets for 2010 had already been exceeded and that even the 2020 target is expected to be surpassed.

"All forecasts on the expansion of renewable energy have consistently been surpassed. What was thought of in the 1990s as ambitious targets for 2010 were already achieved or even exceeded in 2009", said the President of the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC), Arthouros Zervos at the celebration of EREC's 10th anniversary.

According to latest figures, photovoltaic for example, reached a cumulative installed capacity of 16 GW in the European Union in 2009. This is more than five times higher than the target foreseen for 2010 in the 1997 European White Paper. Geothermal heat has, at the same time, already exceeded three times the installed capacity projected in the White Paper, while wind energy exceeded its target of 40 GW by more than 80 per cent. Wind energy's cumulative installed capacity accounted for 75 GW last year.

"Building upon this success story, and giving the dedication of the renewable energy industry the full credit it deserves, even in economically challenging times, we are convinced that Europe will not only meet the binding target for 2020 of at least 20%, but clearly surpass it", stated Christine Lins, Secretary General of EREC.

This optimism is supported by the 21 National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) currently available. Due to the new renewable energy directive, EU countries have to submit to the European Commission a national action plan outlining how they intend to reach their renewable energy target. At least 13 Member States already expect to exceed their binding 2020 target.

"Given the progress in recent years and the forecasts on the expansion of renewables by Member States themselves, it is surprising that the Commission assumes that there will be a significant drop in renewables investments after 2020", said Arthouros Zervos referring to the European Commission's recently released 2009 update of its energy scenarios "EU energy trends to 2030". *"Though the new Reference Scenario projects that Europe meets its 20% renewable energy target by 2020, it foresees stagnation towards 2030".* According to the Commission renewable energy would account for only 22.8% by 2030.

Christine Lins pointed out that, though such stagnation in renewable energy growth after 2020 is somewhat unrealistic, *"in view of the large renewable energy investments that are already planned in the years ahead, it is soon necessary to start discussing a stable renewable energy policy framework beyond 2020."*

EREC, the European Renewable Energy Council, is the umbrella organisation of the major European renewable energy industry, trade and research associations active in the field of photovoltaics, small hydropower, solar thermal, bioenergy, ocean, geothermal, wind energy and solar thermal electricity. It represents an industry with an annual turnover of more than €70 billion and more than 550.000 employees.