



PRESS RELEASE

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The European wind energy sector warns that the Spanish Energy Reform will mean deindustrialisation and loss of world leadership for the industry

- EWEA: “This Government is setting the worst kind of example to other countries”, puts the sector at risk and “scares” investors
- AEE: “Spain is sacrificing unfairly one of its more innovative industries, that creates more jobs and has more future all over the world; Spain punishes wind energy and Europe rewards it”
- APPA: “Wind energy reduces significantly the price of electricity and suffers to a great extent the Government’s reform”
- Associations from Germany, UK and France show their solidarity with the situation of the Spanish wind energy industry

Barcelona, March 10th, 2014. The European Wind Energy industry closed ranks today to show its disagreement with the Spanish Government’s energy policy, which has introduced a retroactive support system for wind energy that changes the rules of the game for all existing investments and puts the sector’s future at risk.

In a joint press conference at EWEA 2014, Europe’s biggest wind energy exhibition and conference that opened today at Fira de Barcelona, Thomas Becker, the European Wind Energy Association’s (EWEA) CEO, explained his concerns about the retroactivity of the Energy Reform pushed by the Spanish Government, and that other markets could adopt similar measures, as well as on the impact the reform is having on investors. “This Government is setting the worst kind of example to other countries”, he said. And added that “it is difficult to understand how Spain can put its world leading wind industry in such danger”. He highlighted the irony of the fact that this reform “which puts the wind energy sector in real danger” took place the same year wind energy became number 1 source of electricity –a world first, for which Spain will receive on Wednesday the European Wind Energy Award.



José López-Tafall, the Spanish Wind Energy Association's (AEE) chairman, also emphasized that “Spain punishes wind energy and Europe rewards it; the wind industry is the more damaged by the new regulation”. “Spain sacrifices unfairly one of its more innovative industries, that creates jobs, that has more future all over the world and that is, in fact, image of Spain’s brand. The Energy Reform will mean an enormous loss of competitive edge to the country –which is the fifth country in the world in wind energy patents, according to United Nations–, because of the flight of talent and the loss of technological leadership and R&D”, he said. López-Tafall hopes that Spain supports other European countries in its defense of ambitious energy objectives for 2030 in terms of renewable energy, “because it would allow the sector to benefit from the economic growth and job creation they will bring, and minimize the economic effects of the Reform in the national industry”.

José Miguel Villarig, chairman of APPA –in representation of APPA Wind–, said that “the Government is wrong blaming the tariff deficit on renewable energies and making them suffer the biggest part of its Energy Reform, that wind energy suffers to a great extent, when they are the only indigenous and clean technologies that can reduce Spain’s energy dependence, that is over 75%”.

APPA’s chairman said that “wind energy is a profitable technology for Spanish economy. In fact, during 2013 it generated 4.5 billion euros in savings of electricity prices, which doubles what it received as incentives. This year, this technology has reduced significantly the price of electricity, being the first technology in electricity generation in the country, covering 21% of Spain’s electricity demands in 2013 and 30% this year”.

Other European associations wanted to show their solidarity with the difficult situation that the sector is living in Spain, and so their leaders were present at the press conference: Maria McCafery, CEO of Renewable UK; Henning Dettmer , Managing Director of the German Wind Energy Association; and Sonia Lioret, CEO of the French Wind Energy Association.

For further information on EWEA 2014:

www.ewea.org/annual2014