

Industry agrees on measures necessary for delivering renewables targets

By 2020 the European Union must source 20% of its total energy (including heat, power and transport) from renewable sources. This target was set out in the Renewable Energy Directive in 2009.

The European Commission is taking an active role in steering Member States onto the right path. It requires them to submit action plans by June this year, detailing exactly how they will meet their share of this 20% target.

The Commission also wants to hear what industry thinks. It has funded a project inviting pan-technology renewable trade associations (such as the REAⁱ) to submit “shadow” action plans, against which it can judge Government submissions.

The Renewable Energy Association, together with contributions from a steering committeeⁱⁱ, prepared a blueprint on which it invited comment. The survey resultsⁱⁱⁱ show support for the 100+ measures proposed in the industry “shadow” action plan.

The document will now be completed in March and sent to the European co-ordinators, EREC^{iv}, copied to the Department of Energy and Climate Change and put on the REA website.

The first task required of Member States under the Directive, was to say how much of their target would be met domestically, and how much through trading with other countries. These “progress reports” had to be in with the Commission last December.

“There seems to have been a mood change across the Union,” said Gaynor Hartnell, Chief Executive of the REA. “Where once countries seemed to focus their energies on wriggling out of their obligations, now they are more bullish. Several countries’ forecast documents show a surplus^v.”

Our Government has stated the UK is on track to meet the 2020 target domestically, provided energy consumption remains low. No longer is there talk of achieving the last few percentage points from actions taken outside the UK. This is as it should be. With our fantastic renewable resource we should be looking to export, if anything.

However, we are not kidding ourselves that reaching the 15% will be easy. Barriers must be removed and the planning regime improved, grid access made swifter and incentive policies for power, heat and transport must instil investor confidence.”

ENDS

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Notes to editors

ⁱ The Renewable Energy Association (REA) is the industrial body for the UK's renewables industry. Its 600 members cover all renewable energy types and all scales from the energy majors to emerging companies in new energy technologies.

ⁱⁱ Members of the steering group are Action Renewables, British Wind Energy Association, Energy Networks Association, Energy Saving Trust, Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership, Micropower Council, REA, Scottish Renewables Forum, UK Business Council for Sustainable Energy and the Zero Carbon Hub. Corresponding members of the steering group include the National Country Land and Business Association and the National Farmers Union. It should not be inferred that all members of the steering group endorse all recommendations.

ⁱⁱⁱ Companies had until 5th Feb to complete the survey. 87 took part. Contributions were also made at a workshop on the 3 December)

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^v Bulgaria believes it will meet 18.7% of its total energy needs from renewables (against an official target of 16%), Germany should be 0.7% in surplus (its target being 18%), Greece expects an additional 2% (over their 18% target), Spain a 2.7% surplus (over their 20% target), Poland 0.48% a surplus (15% target), Sweden 1.2% surplus (49% target).