

Bringing Offshore Wind Power to the People

International POWER Cluster project with participation of Offshore Center Danmark continues

No doubt, offshore wind energy must and will play a major role in realizing EU and national governments' ambitious targets to cut CO₂ emissions and considerably increase the share of renewable energy until 2020. However, the European offshore wind energy sector is facing both consenting procedural, financial, supply chain and infrastructural challenges if it is to fully profit from this enormous window of opportunities.

The POWER Cluster project is an ambitious co-operation between six European countries in the North Sea Region focusing on the crucial challenges of the offshore wind energy sector:

- Social acceptance: Communicating the benefits of offshore wind energy to the public
- Business: Creating a business platform to foster offshore wind energy development in the North Sea region
- Skills: Adapting and preparing the North Sea region manpower to the needs of offshore wind energy
- Cluster Development: Developing an offshore wind power cluster in the North Sea region

“One of the central activities in the POWER Cluster project is to support the commercial advantages of an international co-operation. Among other things, Offshore Center Danmark is continuously arranging Business-2-Business meetings among producers, suppliers and cooperative partners within offshore wind in order to establish new ways of co-operating and in this way develop the commercial side of the offshore wind industry”, explains Morten Holmager, project co-ordinator at Offshore Center Danmark.

The next Business-2-Business event takes place in Esbjerg, Denmark November 17, 2009 and interested companies have the possibility of signing up and meeting national and international co-operative partners within business areas, which the participating companies themselves have a role in defining.

Furthermore, Offshore Center Danmark and the other members of the POWER Cluster project work on remedying the lack of qualified manpower – a general problem for all six member countries.

“Offshore wind farms are established or planned in many areas of the North Sea, and the lack of manpower is a challenge for the entire industry. Through our international network the range of initiatives is increased, and it is therefore very

relevant to work specifically with this area in an international co-operation”, says Morten Holmager.

Finally, one of the focus areas in the POWER Cluster project is to work for a greater understanding and acknowledgment of wind power with the public.

“The issue of social acceptance has to be recognised as a crucial challenge for further successful expansion of offshore wind energy in Europe”, states Thomas Jensen, EU advisor at South Denmark European Office, who alongside Offshore Center Danmark and Aalborg University are the Danish partners in the POWER Cluster project investigating offshore wind energy in the North Sea region.

“To support the development of offshore wind energy, it is important not only to convince key stakeholders in politics and business, but also to win the hearts and minds of the general public. Innovative communication tools are needed to assure public comprehension and awareness of offshore wind energy”, says Thomas Jensen.

Through jointly developed communication strategies the project will promote benefits, opportunities and challenges of offshore wind energy to the public and relevant stakeholders. For instance the project has developed a concept for a

The POWER cluster project

POWER Cluster is a partnership, aiming to boost the development of offshore wind energy in the six European countries in the North Sea region, that participate in the project.

POWER Cluster, the Northern European competence network for offshore wind energy, runs from 2008 to 2011 with a budget of 5 million Euros, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). POWER Cluster is a regional policy project of the European Union within the framework of the Objective 3 Programmes.

Objectives of POWER Cluster Project:

- To stimulate transnational co-operation in the EU and its neighbouring countries regarding offshore wind energy
- To develop an offshore wind in POWER Cluster in the North Sea region.

More info at www.power-cluster.net

touring boat exhibition about offshore wind energy targeting citizens, pupils, tourists, and local politicians:

“Everything is settled for the touring boat exhibition to kick off in Bremerhaven late June. In 2009 the exhibition boat will only visit German North Sea harbours, but I hope we will manage to get the exhibition to at least one Danish harbour as well during the project period – maybe to Esbjerg in summer 2010” says Thomas Jensen.

The project will also facilitate networking between offshore wind test sites and information centres and an informal network for exchange of experience between offshore wind communities in the North Sea region.