



Failure to meet emissions targets should serve as warning Offshore wind group calls for framework to achieve future targets

NOW Ireland, the group representing the interests of Ireland's leading offshore wind operators have called on policy makers to heed the lessons of failure to meet our Kyoto targets and put a framework in place for reaching our renewable energy targets from this point on. The statement comes in the light of a report by the EU indicating that Ireland would fail to achieve its Kyoto target by almost 100%.

Ireland faces even stricter targets in the coming years as a tougher regime comes into power from 2012 onwards. The cost of failure to achieve these targets is a continuing dependence on the purchase of carbon credits as a means of meeting our obligations. The Government has already made allowance for the purchase of over €260 million worth of Carbon credits in the 2007 budget.

NOW Ireland is the acronym for the National Offshore Wind Association of Ireland that has as its slogan "Making renewables Ireland's primary power source". The founding members of NOW Ireland are Airtricity, Oriel Windfarm Limited, Eco Wind Power Limited, Fuinneamh Sceirde Teo and Saorgas Energy Limited. Each of these companies has developed plans for offshore fields in Irish waters and made substantial investment in bringing those plans forward. Between them, these companies have the potential to deliver in excess of 2000MW of power from existing lease areas off Ireland's coastline. This would represent an investment in excess of €4bn

Commenting on the report, Torben Andersen of NOW Ireland said, "today's figures indicate the scale of the challenge that is ahead of us. For every year that we are in breach of our obligations, there will be a cost to the Irish taxpayer through penalties or forced purchase of credits. Without a strategy and a framework laying out how emissions reductions will be achieved, we will continue to fall short of our targets."

"Taking the example of the Governments renewables targets, 15% in 2010 and 33% in 2020, there is no clear vision in place as to how we will make that jump. NOW Ireland believes we need to plan now to achieve that growth. Investment in critical infrastructure will only happen when there is some level of certainty in relation to government policy. At present our members have the potential to deliver over 2000MW of renewable energy from offshore wind. In the absence of a government strategy on offshore wind, that deployment is considerably less likely to happen."

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