

# ‘United’ we stand at EWEA 2015

The key message to emerge from EWEA 2015 is one of industrial unity. Not an end to competition, per se, but a call among participants operating in the sector to develop coherent standards.

**M**ORE THAN 8000 delegates from some 50 different nations travelled to the Danish capital of Copenhagen earlier this year to attend EWEA Offshore 2015, Europe’s principal offshore wind event. Alongside the 400-odd exhibitors, the event also hosted the launch of a new industry initiative designed to achieve the key objective for the offshore wind sector – cutting costs. Designed to spark joint and collective actions across the offshore wind value chain, three of the biggest players on the European stage officially launched the initiative – known as United Industry.

This mind-set, say the industry’s leading players, is the route to cutting costs and the crux of a sustainable offshore wind sector. Giving this initiative some context, its launch coincided with the publication of a study from EY which concluded that the European offshore wind industry must cut costs by some 26% in order to reach cost-competitiveness with conventional forms of energy by 2023.

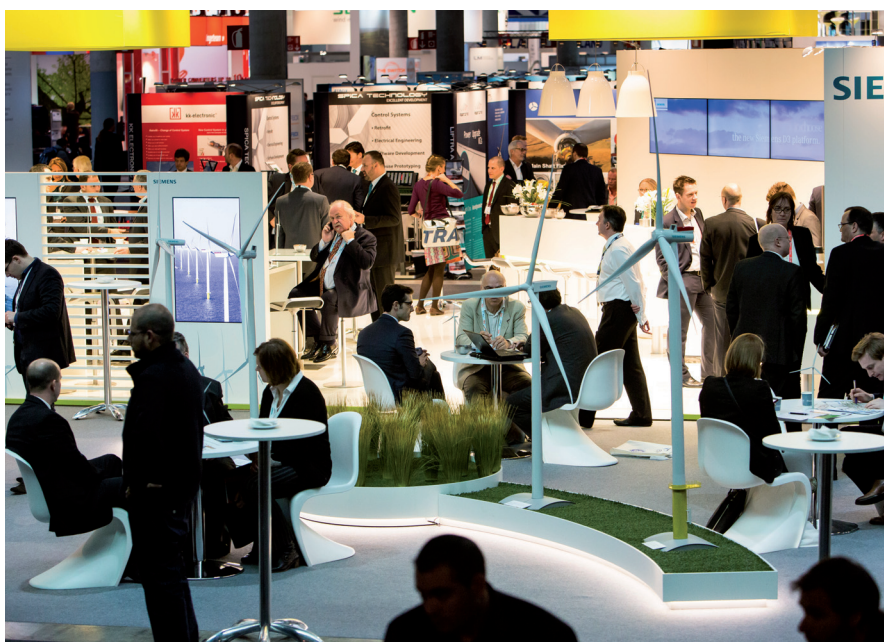
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#### **UK wind report**

Crown Estate publishes wind analysis report which shows met mast data is crucial to offshore wind development. <http://ow.ly/2QGktg>

#### **By the numbers**

2014 was a record-setting year for Canadian wind industry, with 1,871 MW of wind energy capacity installed in five provinces. <http://ow.ly/lcKVT>



EWEA Offshore is billed as the world's largest conference and exhibition dedicated to the sector. Image courtesy of the European Wind Energy Association (EWEA).

In the next five years, says the report, in order to become cost-competitive actions must include the introduction of larger turbines with lower operating costs. This will lead to as much as a 9% reduction in costs. A steady project pipeline allowing continuous production of support structures would cut up to 7% from the costs of offshore wind power and greater competition between industrial actors in several key supply chain areas would also lower costs by as much as 7%.

Titled 'Offshore Wind in Europe', the report also concludes that greater supply chain optimization and logistical integration could potentially achieve a 3% cut in costs. The EY analysis concludes that offshore wind energy is expected to grow to 23.5 GW by 2020, tripling current installed capacity of some 8 GW. Meanwhile, industry efforts to reduce capital and operating costs mean that offshore wind will become competitive by 2023, when compared with other sources of energy. EY contends the Levelised Cost of Energy (LCoE) could reach €90/MWh by 2030 — as long as a continual stream of projects enters the pipeline.

Indeed, EY notes that the industry has already started rolling out larger 6-8 MW turbines and while there are

immediate higher capital expenditure costs, the increased energy capture is reaching the economies of scale needed to lower the cost of energy. Simultaneously, within supply chain logistics and operation and maintenance (O&M), the industry is also working together on long-term projects to optimize processes and plan better for future developments.

And so **Dong Energy, MHI Vestas** and **Siemens Wind Power** took the lead in pledging to undertake joint and individual actions across the whole of the value chain to deliver "major long-term and tangible advancements."

### Committed to a united industry

First conceived in 2014 as the **Seastar Offshore Industrial Alliance**, the initiative is a collaboration between British, Danish, German and Dutch industries to share best practices, identify common barriers to deployment, and drive cost reduction. Working with European and national bodies and authorities, its initial aims include delivering certainty and commitment to enable the development of at least 30 GW of offshore wind connected to the Northern European grid

by 2025, and adopting a common cost reduction monitoring framework as well as developing common standards and appropriate grid development.

Adam Bruce, representing the UK Crown Estate's Offshore Wind Programme Board, serves as the alliance's chair.

"For offshore wind to realise its full and significant potential, we need to continuously reduce the cost of electricity," said Claus Hviid Christensen, vice president in **DONG Energy Wind Power**. "The good news is that we are indeed on the right track, and we are already seeing the industry taking important steps forward with an impressive pace. With a clear political framework for the development of offshore wind power after 2020, I am confident that we will meet our target of making offshore wind fully competitive with alternative energy technologies."

Samuel Leupold (Christensen's colleague), DONG executive vice-president for wind, acknowledges the important contributions coming from technology development and O&M for example, but also highlights another project fundamental — location. "There is no doubt that many sites being built out in the past were not ideal in terms of wind speeds and seabed conditions, and too small in terms of economies of scale," he explained. "In this regard, our industry has to become normal: like all other power-generation technologies, if you build a gas-fired power plant or a hydropower dam in the wrong place, it will not be cost-competitive."

With the installation of turbines at the Borkum Riffgrund 1 Offshore Wind Farm in Germany, DONG Energy recently reached a total installed offshore wind capacity of 3 GW, with the average turbine size at the four most recent wind farms in construction by DONG Energy now reaching 5.6 MW. But, EY's report warns: "By 2020, offshore wind will have an installed capacity of 20-plus gigawatts, and be within near completion of achieving €100/MWh. Failure to meet both of these criteria will not see the offshore wind industry advance into 2030 and beyond."

Indeed, such is the significance of this initiative in securing a sustainable,

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