

**UK energy****UK aims to draw third of electricity supplies from offshore wind**

Target set for 2030 but carbon emissions goals come under fire



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David Sheppard and Leslie Hook in London 5 MINUTES AGO

The UK has announced a new target to source a third of its electricity from offshore wind by 2030, but faces criticism for not setting more ambitious goals to reduce carbon emissions.

The target is the result of a deal with companies in the sector that forms part of the government's industrial strategy. The agreement is the first sector deal for renewable energy, and follows a period of rapid growth of wind power, which accounted for 17 per cent of the country's [electricity generation](#) last year.

The plan envisages generating 30 gigawatts from offshore wind by 2030, implying a doubling of the rate of new capacity additions to 2GW annually.

Claire Perry, energy and clean growth minister, said the deal would bring a "surge" of new offshore wind power while bringing investment to coastal communities and the possibility of up to 27,000 jobs in the sector.

Under the deal, the industry will invest £250m in a new fund dedicated to bolstering the UK supply chain, and has committed to use 60 per cent local content for offshore wind projects.

While it was broadly welcomed by an industry looking to ramp up investment in what is already the world's largest offshore wind market, critics said it would not be enough to achieve UK climate targets or to fill a supply gap left by the recent collapse of three planned nuclear projects.

In January, Hitachi became the second Japanese company to pull out of building a new nuclear power plant in the UK, with the cancellation of the [Wylfa project](#) in north Wales and Oldbury in Gloucestershire. The decision means 9.2GW, or more than 40 per cent of forecast new nuclear capacity, has been shelved.

That has raised questions over the UK's energy strategy and calls for renewables like offshore wind to take up an even bigger role in the UK's energy mix. Despite the UK's growth in renewable

energy, the country is not on track to meet its legally binding target for the 2023-2027 period, according to the Committee on Climate Change, an independent government advisory body.

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Rebecca Newsom, head of politics for environment group Greenpeace UK, said the sector deal represented a “huge missed opportunity” and that the government appeared to have been overtaken by events, with the wind targets “no longer reflecting the new reality” in the wake of the nuclear pullouts.

However, wind developers said the deal was a “landmark” and would bring about a “step change” in pace of construction in the sector. “It creates a huge amount of confidence in the marketplace, particularly in the supply chain,” said Keith Anderson, chief executive of ScottishPower, a renewable energy company that is part of Iberdrola of Spain.

Matthew Wright, who leads the UK business of Denmark’s Orsted, the world’s largest offshore wind developer, said, however, that the industry hoped plans for 30GW of wind generation were just a medium-term target.

“It is actually something we see as an interim step toward something like 50GW by 2050, where we would be providing about half of the UK’s electricity,” he said.

The offshore wind sector has been boosted by a sharp fall in costs in recent years, where it is now seen as broadly competitive with alternative power sources.

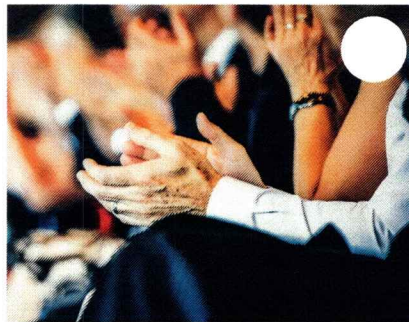
Gunnar Groebler, chief executive of Swedish power company Vattenfall and the new chair of the European Wind Association, said that as the renewable energy sector moved away from subsidies, policy measures that provided long-term clarity for companies were the most important factor for the industry.

“The sector deal provides visibility and security about what the government intends to do,” Mr Groebler said.

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