

PRESS RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 11:00 CET ON 25 MARCH 2020

GWEC: Over 60GW of wind energy capacity installed in 2019, the second-biggest year in history

GWEC calls on governments to ensure regulation is fit for purpose and “look beyond LCOE”, in order to accelerate growth of wind energy and meet climate targets

- GWEC has published the 15th edition of its flagship Global Wind Report, which finds that 60.4 GW of wind energy capacity was installed globally in 2019, a 19 per cent increase from installations in 2018 and the second-best year for wind historically.
- Total capacity for wind energy globally is now over 651 GW, an increase of 17 per cent compared to 2018.
- China and US remain the world's largest onshore wind markets, together accounting for more than 60 per cent of new capacity in 2019.
- Offshore wind is playing an increasingly important role in driving global wind installations, with the sector installing a record 6.1 GW in 2019, accounting for a record share of 10 per cent of new installations.
- The report identifies two major tools to further accelerate wind energy growth: shifting the focus from LCOE to building energy markets that support the long-term sustainability of the wind and renewable industries; and using emerging technological solutions such as hybridisation and green hydrogen to open new opportunities for the sector.
- 2020 was expected to be a record year for wind energy, with GWEC forecasting 76 GW of new capacity. However, the full impact of COVID-19 on wind energy installations is still unknown. GWEC will revise its 2020-2024 forecast in the light of the potential impacts of COVID-19 on the global economy and energy markets, and will publish an updated market outlook in Q2 2020.

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Brussels, 25 March 2020 – The Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) has published the 15th edition of the Global Wind Report, the wind industry's flagship publication which provides a comprehensive, global view of the sector through the latest market data, country profiles, trends and analysis. According to the report, 2019 was the second biggest year for wind power historically, with installations of 60.4 GW of new capacity worldwide and year-on-year growth of 19 per cent.

The main driver of this growth was market-based mechanisms, with auctioned wind capacity in 2019 surpassing 40 GW worldwide, accounting for two-thirds of total new capacity and doubling auctioned capacity compared to 2018.

The majority of wind energy installations in 2019 were located in established markets, with the top 5 markets (China, US, UK, India and Spain) accounting for 70 per cent of new capacity. In terms of cumulative installations, China, US, Germany, India and Spain remain the top markets, collectively making up 73 per cent of the total 651 GW of wind power capacity across the world.

Ben Backwell, CEO at GWEC said: "The wind energy sector is continuing to see consistent growth, after having unequivocally established itself as a cost-competitive energy source worldwide. Established market players such as China and the US accounted for nearly 60 per cent of new installations, however, we see emerging markets in regions such as South East Asia, Latin America and Africa playing an increasingly important role in the years to come, while offshore wind is also becoming a significant growth driver.

"Nevertheless, we are still not where we need to be when it comes to the global energy transition and meeting our climate goals. If we are to have any chance at reaching our Paris Agreement objectives and remaining on a 1.5°C pathway, we need to be installing at least 100 GW of wind energy annually over the next decade, and this needs to rise to 200 GW annually post-2030 and beyond. To do this, we need to look past competitive LCOE alone, and ensure that regulation and market design is fit for purpose to support an accelerated rate of wind power installations. This will mean stronger measures to push incumbent fossil fuels off the grid and a shake-up of administrative structures and regulation to ensure we can go out and build", he added.

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Feng Zhao, Strategy Director at GWEC said: “The wind energy industry is growing thanks to new innovations in business models and technology. In 2019, we continued to see more and more countries transitioning away from Feed-in-Tariffs to market-based mechanisms, as well as continued growth in the corporate PPA market. Additionally, new technology developments such as hybridisation and green hydrogen are increasingly being implemented in both mature and emerging markets to increase the share of wind and other renewables in their energy systems. If policymakers and industry stakeholders embrace these new opportunities, we can accelerate the global energy transition to never-before-seen levels”.

The Asia Pacific region was the global leader for new onshore wind installations in 2019, installing 28.1GW of new capacity, more than half of the total new global capacity. Despite a slump in Germany’s wind market, Europe still saw a 30 per cent year-on-year growth for its onshore wind market, driven by strong growth in Spain, Sweden and Greece. Emerging markets for wind in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and South East Asia also showed moderate growth in 2019, with combined installations of 4.5 GW.

Looking to offshore wind, 2019 was a record year for the sector with an impressive 6.1 GW installed and now accounting for 10 per cent of total wind installations globally. This growth was led by China, which remains in the number-one position for new offshore capacity with 2.3 GW installed in 2019. In terms of cumulative offshore wind capacity, the UK remains in the top spot with 9.7 GW, accounting for nearly one-third of the 29.1 GW of total global capacity.

The report forecasts that this growth will continue, with over 355 GW of wind energy capacity added over the next five years. This would mean that we would see 71 GW of wind energy added each year to the end of 2024, with offshore wind expanding its share of total wind energy installations to 20 per cent by that time.

This forecast will undoubtedly be impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, due to disruptions to global supply chains and project execution in 2020. However, it is too soon to predict the extent of the virus’s impact on the wider global economy and energy markets. GWEC Market Intelligence is monitoring the situation closely, and will publish an updated Market Outlook for 2020-2024 in Q2 2020.

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APPENDIX

Regional Highlights:

Asia Pacific

- The Asia Pacific region installed 30.6 GW of new wind energy capacity in 2019, with the onshore sector accounting for 28.1 GW and the offshore wind market contributing 2.5 GW.
- Total installed wind capacity in Asia-Pacific is now 290.6 GW, representing 44 per cent of total global installations.
- Leading countries in the region for wind installations in 2019 were China (26.2 GW) and India (2.4 GW).
- South East Asia is forecast to play an increasingly important role in driving wind power growth in the region, if the right market frameworks and ambition are in place.
- Markets to watch in the region include Vietnam and Thailand.

Americas

- North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean installed 13.4 GW of wind energy capacity in 2019, an increase of 13 per cent from 2018 installations.
- Total installed wind capacity in North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean is now over 148 GW, thereby tripling the wind power capacity in the region over the past 10 years.
- Regulatory and political instability in key Latin American markets for wind power along with the US-China trade war will be major challenges for further accelerating wind power growth in the Americas.
- Markets to watch in the region include Colombia and Chile.

Africa & Middle East

- Africa and the Middle East installed 944 MW of wind energy capacity in 2019, a decrease of 2.6 per cent compared to installations in 2018.
- Total installed wind capacity in Africa and the Middle East is now over 6 GW.

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- Wind energy capacity is expected to surge by nearly 10.9 GW over next five years, driven by installations in South Africa (3.5 GW), Egypt (1.8 GW), Morocco (1.2 GW), and Saudi Arabia (1.2 GW).
- Key markets to watch in the region will be South Africa, Egypt, Morocco and Kenya.

Offshore

- Europe remained the largest market for offshore wind, accounting for 59 per cent of new installations in 2019, while the Asia-Pacific region accounted for the remaining 41 per cent.
- China remains the overall leader in new installations for offshore wind, adding more than 2.3 GW capacity in 2019, with the UK and Germany were in second and third place, installing 1.8 GW and 1.1 GW respectively.
- Offshore wind accounted for approximately 10 per cent of new wind power installations in 2019, an increase from 5 per cent in 2015.
- GWEC expects over 50GW of new offshore wind capacity to be installed from 2020-2024
- Markets to watch for offshore wind include the US, China, and Japan.

Notes to editors

- The full Global Wind Report is available for download here: <https://gwec.net/global-wind-report-2019/>
- GWEC will host a webinar about the key findings of the report on 1 April 2020 at 11:00-12:30 CEST – register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bFi6F7M4OCSfEc7qnHwAhA

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About GWEC

GWEC is a member-based organization that represents the entire wind energy sector. The members of GWEC represent over 1,500 companies, organizations and institutions in more than 80 countries, including manufacturers, developers, component suppliers, research institutes, national wind and renewables associations, electricity providers, finance and insurance companies. See more: <https://gwec.net/>

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