

“Windy” Energy

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The St. Petersburg Administration and RusHydro Company signed a cooperation agreement for energy conservation project implementation, and the development of hydropower and renewable energy projects. In particular, RusHydro is considering wind farm construction not far from Kronstadt. This alternative source of power will be included in the city’s overall energy system.

According to Igor Bryzgunov, the President of Russian Association of Wind Power Industry, the potential of the North West and St. Petersburg is high enough to develop a variety of wind power projects.

Nowadays only about 1% of Russia’s energy is generated from Renewable Energy Sources - including wind, solar, and small hydropower. This figure should reach 4,5% by 2020.

Legally, renewable energy today is on par with conventional, i.e. they are also fully legitimate players on the market. Besides, the law recently reaffirmed the validity of Renewable Energy projects for grid connection.

A Long History

The idea of constructing a wind farm near Kronstadt was born 15 years ago. The project was developed by Lenhydroproekt Institute. According to Victor Elistratov, Ph.D., a Polytechnic University Professor, the project was later redesigned in conjunction with JSC "VNIIG". The plan was for a wind power station to be constructed between the dam and the Kotlin island. The installed capacity of the project was to be 3MW - 4 MW.

However, all the wind farm construction works were put on freeze due to lack of funding and interest. "If RusHydro allocates the necessary funds for the project’s completion and wind farm construction, then we will resume our work", - said Doctor Elistratov. He thinks that a new project should be created as all the past preliminary works have become irrelevant. "A 30 MW wind farm should be constructed here. Considering that 1 MW wind turbines are already in production nowadays, then 10 wind turbines could be installed in the coastal part of the island, occupying a 1000m² area ", said the professor.

According to Bryzgunov, the construction of a 50MW - 70 MW wind farm will cost €80 million - €85 million. "The payback period of such a project depends primarily on its wind strength" - commented Victor Elistratov. Bryzgunov, in turn, is convinced that the cost of wind energy is close to conventional energy cost, and in most cases is even much lower. Wind energy is now waiting for the adoption of two more by-laws, under which renewable sources will be supported either through the capacity market, or a premium feed in-tariff. "Soon these acts will be adopted, and wind energy projects would become feasible and economically viable," the expert believes.

By the Way

A Baltic factory commissioned by Rosenergoatom constructed a floating head unit for the world's first floating nuclear power plant, which will be used in energy-deficient regions, including remote

northern areas, as well as exploring the range of natural resources. A floating power unit is the invention of Russian specialists. The cost of the project is approximately 10 billion rubles. The plant is scheduled to be commissioned in 2012.

Opinion

Semen Gordyshevsky, Chairman of the St. Petersburg Ecological Union:

- State ecological expertise should approve a draft of wind farm construction project. I think many parameters should be taken into account, including migratory birds, in whose way the wind turbines may stand. In my opinion, renewable energy should be developed. Today, emissions from burning oil and natural gas have the greatest impact on the environment, and the utilization of "green" technologies is the only way to a secure energy future.

Igor Bryzgunov, president of the Russian Association of Wind Power Industry:

- We welcome and will gladly help the development of wind power projects funded by "RusHydro" company, a major player on the renewable energy market. No other manufacturer in Russia makes more powerful wind turbines. However, with the market developing, many companies are discussing the possibility of establishing their own wind turbine production. In my opinion, there is no antagonism between the market players of conventional energy and renewable energy market.

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