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HELLENIC WIND ENERGY ASSOCIATION

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PRESS RELEASE

More wind energy is the answer to high electricity prices

WindEurope and HWEA ELETAEN at the conference for renewables, Athens, Greece

Together with photovoltaics, wind farms are the cheapest source of electricity. The more wind in the energy system, the lighter the burden of electricity costs on households and industry.

This was the main message put forward by the European wind energy association, WindEurope, and the Hellenic Wind Energy Association ELETAEN at a conference organised by the news-site energypress.gr

The conference was opened by **WindEurope CEO Giles Dickson**.

Giles Dickson, WindEurope: The latest developments in energy costs show that we need to see a greater uptake of renewables

In his opening remarks, Mr. Dickson stressed that the latest developments in energy costs showed that we needed to see a greater uptake of renewables. The jump in electricity prices is due to the very high price of fossil fuels and especially natural gas. In contrast, wind farms and photovoltaics generate the cheapest electricity and are not exposed to global fluctuations in fuel prices or geopolitical tensions.

Aside from a **faster growth of renewables**, we also need to **protect consumers from high prices** in the short term by reducing electricity taxes and mobilising other public resources, as many countries do already. As it stands, many European governments have imposed much higher taxes on electricity per unit of final energy consumption than on gas. There needs to be a level playing field here if we want to incentivise people to switch to electric heating and transport.

There is also a need to properly incorporate the provisions of **Clean Energy Package** legislation, liberalising energy markets and integrating **flexible demand response**.

Above all, the strategic goal should be to strengthen **Europe's energy independence**. Greece can contribute significantly to this, with the full development of its wind potential, especially offshore. That is why we need to see a clear framework, binding targets, and an ambitious programme of international electrical interconnections.

On **permitting procedures**, Mr. Dickson referred to the obligations set out by EU legislation allowing them to be simplified. WindEurope, together with HWEA ELETAEN, look forward to

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working with the Greek Government to effectively implement the second phase of simplifying the permitting process and establishing clearer and more transparent rules for spatial planning as well as the relationship of wind energy with biodiversity, without extensive horizontal exclusions.

Panagiotis Ladakakos, HWEA: More wind farms is the answer to high prices

The President of HWEA ELETAEN **Mr. Panagiotis Ladakakos** highlighted the economic benefits of wind farms for the consumer.

Wind farms currently operating in Greece save the equivalent in CO₂ emissions of 3.5 million cars per year. At current prices, this means savings of more than €400m a year for the national economy. Their production corresponds to the consumption of 2.3 million households. And we can strengthen these benefits with greater uptake of wind. If we did not have wind farms, the energy crisis would be even more pronounced for households and businesses.

The new wind farms in Greece produce electricity that is 3-4 times cheaper than the current cost of electricity production from natural gas and 2-3 cheaper than lignite. A greater uptake of renewable energy will ensure cheap electricity at stable prices.

Mr. Ladakakos stressed that **the energy transition is the solution to high prices**. What we need is to strengthen social protection and make it clear to investors that they need to accelerate the shift to renewables.

Panagiotis Papastamatiou, HWEA: Apart from producing cheap electricity, wind energy is an environmentally friendly activity

The General Director of HWEA ELETAEN **Mr. Panagiotis Papastamatiou** referred to the **very high acceptance rate enjoyed by renewables in Greece**, emerging from a nationwide poll presented at the conference. The polling for this was carried out before the recent increase in fossil fuel prices.

Specifically, 98% of citizens in Greece recognise climate change as the biggest problem and directly link it to the increase in natural disasters (92%). At the same time, they believe that we need to see investments in solar (78.4%) and wind energy (60%) if we want to tackle the consequences of climate change. Given the recent spike in electricity prices, we can assume that this support for renewables may have increased further.

Renewables – especially wind energy – are environmentally friendly activities. It does not pollute; it is not noisy, and it does not cause infrasound affecting the health or reproductivity of animals. It does not affect beekeeping and animal husbandry. It is generally compatible with other economic activities such as tourism. It generates much more local growth and employment than gas stations. Wind turbine materials are recycled at a rate of 90% - a figure which is expected to increase. Wind energy has a very positive environmental and energy life cycle balance. It is one of the best weapons in the fight against climate change and contributes to the protection of biodiversity and forests.



By contrast, **the impact of wind power is spatially and temporally limited. It is also completely predictable and predetermined.** With a wind farm, apart from the fact that you will have fixed energy costs, you know exactly what to expect during the next decades.

The key to maximising benefits and minimising impacts are the right settings, compliance with the law and clear rules that must be respected by all.