

**Message from EREF's President , Dr. Nikos Vassilakos, on the occasion of the publishing of the new EREF Price Report 2009**

It is my pleasure and great satisfaction to present the fifth EREF Price Report for renewable electricity in the European Union. It provides politicians, investors, renewable industry, administration, media and the public with a sound compilation of robust data on Renewable Electricity Prices.

The overwhelming majority of EU Member States sets on feed-in systems to support renewables, including former hard-line quota and certificate-oriented countries, such as the United Kingdom.

Our report comes again at a crucial time: the European Union has this year set the binding target to reach 20 % of its overall energy consumption by 2020 from renewable energy sources. All Member States have to formulate and submit, by June 2010, solid and detailed National Renewable Energy Action Plans, to enable them to reach their own binding targets. Policies must be designed and integrated swiftly to even go beyond this challenge, in order to change the entire energy system in Europe towards "100% renewable" as soon as possible.

In Europe, independent power producers from renewables are achieving substantial growth, but only in countries where access to the energy market is opening up, under equitable and transparent terms, and where support mechanisms are set to ensure security of investment and a fair level-playing field.

The current economic crisis makes overall investment difficult; which is also hurting the renewable energy sector. Pressure from this crisis on the renewable industry is leading to increased cost/price competition, with beneficial overall effect for the market. However, this intense competition comes at considerable cost pressures for the industry itself and it may lead to a situation where research on new technology and improvements may stall, something which will be negative for future development. Yet again, there are currently signals that the renewable technology industry is holding up better than anticipated at the beginning of the year. With increasing job figures, it is again becoming one of the prime motors in Europe.

Current market fluctuation and increase of deployment with consequential learning-curve effect calls on Member States to have robust review mechanisms established to regularly adapt their support mechanisms without endangering stability, open growth and progress for all renewable technologies, not just wind energy.

EREF calls on the Member States to increase their efforts and to ensure that most of the work towards renewable energy supply is done "at home", with strong encouragement for individual and independent, local and regional production and supply. No Member State can afford waiting for giga -projects at sea and in deserts outside the Union. Smart energy and advanced renewable technologies, paired with strong energy savings and efficiency, supported by a new construction approach for all sectors of buildings, have to be the dominant force. It is about sustainability in energy, but it is also about green industry and qualified jobs.

Dr. Nikos Vassilakos