

Governor Martin O'Malley Announces Offshore Wind Energy Partnership

ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 8, 2010) –Governor Martin O'Malley announced today the State's formal partnership in the newly formed Atlantic Offshore Wind Consortium. The group, comprised of States along the Atlantic coastline and the United States Department of the Interior (DOI), will work to coordinate regionally prominent issues surrounding the development of off-shore wind along the Atlantic outer continental shelf.

"Offshore wind energy offers vast potential to create jobs for our workers and to help stabilize utility costs for our families while increasing grid stability," remarked Governor Martin O'Malley. "As we continue to make strides towards our Renewable Portfolio Standard of 20% clean energy on the grid by 2022, offshore wind remains one of the most critical components to achieving this goal."

Maryland has accelerated its national position for the development of offshore wind energy and recently became the 6th state to initiate the Mineral Management Services / State Task force.

"I am very pleased to be joining with the governors of Atlantic coastal states to promote the safe and environmentally responsible development of the exceptional wind energy resources off our coasts," US Department of the Interior Secretary Salazar said. "Appropriate development of Outer Continental Shelf wind power will enhance regional and national energy security and create American jobs through the development of energy markets and investments in renewable energy technologies."

The Department of Energy has estimated that achieving 20% of our national energy from wind energy by 2030 will require 54 gigawatts of offshore wind, making the Atlantic Offshore Wind Energy Consortium's task of coordinating the participating State's offshore wind issues essential to bolstering offshore wind development efforts. Deployment of the resource at this scale in the years ahead has the potential to create a robust industry that supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and spurs billions of dollars of investment.

"Offshore wind has the potential to supply more renewable energy than any other resource in the region, possibly the entire East Coast," noted MEA Director Malcolm Woolf. "Maryland is committed to partnering with other States along the Atlantic Coastline in an effort to streamline and expedite the process of harnessing our wind energy resources in a cost-effective and ecologically-sound way."

To seize these emerging opportunities, Maryland has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. DOI, in partnership with the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. This partnership serves as the first step toward a goal of broader collaboration and coordinated effort among the Atlantic states and other relevant Federal Agencies that are critical to the development of the offshore wind industry.

The US Energy Department estimates that Maryland has "outstanding" wind resources, rivaling or exceeding that of Midwestern land based wind resources. To evaluate the potential of these resources for commercial development, MEA's offshore wind initiative will include outreach to potential offshore wind developers, a technical evaluation of the wind resources off of Maryland's Atlantic coast and Outer Continental Shelf, and strong engagement with the local community.

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