



To the Media

Stuttgart, 31 October, 2019

Renewables Cover Nearly 43 Percent of Electricity Consumption

ZSW and BDEW on gross electricity consumption in the first three quarters of 2019

Lack of progress in wind power expansion and too few new photovoltaic systems could put 65-percent target out of reach

Renewable energies collectively covered 42.9 percent of gross electricity consumption in Germany during the first three quarters of 2019. An increase of nearly five percentage points over the same period last year (38.1 percent), this is a new record. Notably, renewables' share climbed as high as 52 percent during an unusually windy March. The Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research Baden-Württemberg (ZSW) and the German Association of Energy and Water Management (BDEW) arrived at these figures in an initial assessment. If wind and solar energy yields in the fourth quarter are in line with the last few years' average, renewables' share could amount to a good 42 percent in 2019.

"It is very gratifying to see renewables growing so strongly and the use of conventional energy sources steadily declining. However, the record figures stand in sharp contrast to the dramatic situation in the expansion of wind energy. We are sliding into a real recession for a lack of land and increasingly prohibitive distance regulations. If politicians don't ease off the brakes on the expansion of wind farms, we are going to fall well short of the 65 percent target," says Stefan Kapferer, Chairman of BDEW's General Executive Management Board.

"Achieving that 65 percent target will require more than just wind power; we also need photovoltaics as a second pillar," says Prof. Dr. Frithjof Staiß, Managing Director of ZSW. "If the photovoltaic expansion doesn't start picking up speed soon, we are only going to make it halfway to the recently set goal of doubling the installed capacity to 98 gigawatts in eleven years. This is why we also need effective measures to drive the expansion of solar power."

Renewables eclipse coal

Solar, wind and other renewable sources generated around 183 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in the first three quarters of 2019

Zentrum für Sonnenenergie- und Wasserstoff-Forschung Baden-Württemberg (ZSW)

Location: Meitnerstr. 1,
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(Q1-3 2018: 166.5 billion kWh). Renewables accounted for nearly 50 percent more energy production than lignite and bituminous coal, which contributed 125 billion kWh (Q1-3 2018: 171.1 billion kWh) to the total. During this period last year, renewables and coal accounted for close to the same share. By contrast, natural gas-fired electricity production rose by more than 11 percentage points to 66 billion kWh, which is mainly attributable to the higher price of CO₂ (Q1-3 2018: 59.4 billion kWh).

Onshore wind power remained the leading source of renewable energy in the period under review with nearly 72 billion kWh (Q1-3 2018: 61.4 billion kWh). Photovoltaics came in second with around 41 billion kWh (Q1-3 2018: 39.2 billion kWh). The amount of electricity generated from biomass remained unchanged at just over 33 billion kWh (Q1-3 2018: 33.4 billion kWh). Offshore wind posted the steepest growth, rising 31 percent and contributing nearly 17 billion kWh to electrical power generation in the first three quarters of the year (Q1-3 2018: 12.9 billion kWh). Another prolonged dry period left the hydropower share low at around 16 billion kWh (Q1-3 2018: 14.8 billion kWh).

About ZSW

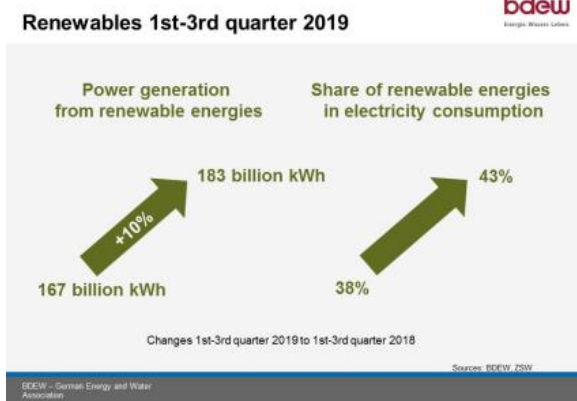
The Zentrum für Sonnenenergie- und Wasserstoff-Forschung Baden-Württemberg (Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research Baden-Württemberg, ZSW) is one of the leading institutes for applied research in the areas of photovoltaics, renewable fuels, battery technology, fuel cells and energy system analysis. There are currently around 260 scientists, engineers and technicians employed at ZSW's three locations in Stuttgart, Ulm and Widderstall. In addition, there are 90 research and student assistants.

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The share of renewables in the power grid has increased.

Graphic: BDEW. Data source: BDEW/ZSW

Images are available from Solar Consulting or at <https://energie.themendesk.net/zsw/>.