

DOE Wind Needs a Robust DistGen Program

The Problem:

Small and medium wind turbines for distributed applications are an American dominated industry with tremendous job creation potential. But, it is getting insufficient attention and assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy Wind and Water Program. The US-DOE spends approximately 150 times as much on RD&D for solar, mostly for distributed generation applications, than it does on distributed wind systems.



Foreign competition is increasing, particularly from China, and American manufacturers are at severe risk of losing market share because they do not get the support garnered by other, less domestic, clean energy technologies:

- 40% of our nation's electricity is consumed in the residential sector
- 95% of the small wind systems (up to 100 kW) installed in the U.S. in 2009 were manufactured in the U.S.
- 3 of the top 5 small wind companies in the world are American
- DOE will spend ~\$80M on wind RD&D in FY10, but only ~ 2% of this will be for small and medium wind. DOE will spend ~\$250M on solar RD&D
- DOE Wind has no permanent staff assigned to distributed wind

Recommended Remedy:

DWEA believes DOE Wind should be allocating at least 15 -20% of its annual budget to distributed wind ("DistGen") RD&D. DOE Wind can become an effective partner for the U.S. industry through initiatives such as:

- Outreach and education for streamlined permitting
- Medium-scale turbine development
- Small-scale turbine component and installation development
- Advanced manufacturing (e.g., PvMat and SunShot)
- Military applications and support
- Foreign assistance applications
- Standards and certification support
- Distributed wind component to Wind Powering America

Expected Results:

A robust and effective DOE Wind "DistGen" program would contribute to rebuilding the manufacturing base in America and help create thousands of new jobs over the next decade. It would also increase the competitiveness of American companies in the rapidly growing and increasing competitive world market.

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