

Press Conference
Energy Watch Group
Wind study

London, 01/09/2009
Contribution of Mr. Hans-Josef Fell
Member of the German Federal Parliament
Initiator of the Energy Watch Group (EWG)

Ladies and Gentlemen

I'm very pleased about the big response showing interest to the presentation of the EWG wind study by Mr. Rudolf Rechsteiner, MP.

The negative impacts of the conventional energy supply becomes more and more clear. The global warming advances faster than feared a few years ago, and the still mostly ignored problems of the resource shortage starts to become dramatic. The actual natural gas crisis in Europe is only superficial, based on a price war between Gazprom and the Ukraine. Behind this setting one might ask: Could it be that Gazprom is not able to deliver in sufficient quantities, regarding production declines of big gas fields while we have increasing demand, especially in Russia, too?

Could it be that the Russian natural gas export would be restricted even without the Ukrainian crisis, because there is simply not enough natural gas available. What is highly visible is that in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, in Germany and Italy, natural gas production is in decline and so it is in Western Siberia.

Except a few critical scientists, e.g. from Ludwig Bölkow Systemtechnik, nobody predicted the peak of oil and peak of gas in the North Sea, where around the year 2000 both peaks – oil and gas were surpassed. Neither the politicians nor the conventional energy industry did think about this experience at a large scale.

Last year the world looked at the oil price approaching 150 Dollar per barrel with with helpless amazement. Launched by this energy crisis, together with the crisis in the financial sector and the resulting global recession, the oil price lapsed because of dropping demand. The ignorance of the severity of the shortage in the conventional energy supply plunged and plunges Europe and the whole world into increasing problems.

Three years ago I initiated the group of scientists 'Energy Watch Group', because I doubted the official energy prognoses. Meanwhile this group drew worldwide attention with four published reports, because the EWG delivered explanations for the constraints in energy supply, different to official versions. The oil report showed that the worldwide peak of oil was surpassed in the year 2006 and that in the following years the availability of conventional oil will drop about 3 % annually. The Uranium Report foresees a shortage of uranium already in the middle of the upcoming decade. The Coal Report made plausible, why the coal prices significantly increased in the passed years. The recent study about renewable energies shows, that 'renewables' could grow much faster than commonly assumed.

You can summarize the main stream of the energy prognoses, like they are basically presented from the International Energy Agency (IEA) in Paris, as followed: The availability of the conventional energy resources at moderate prices is terribly overestimated and the potentials and the growing speed of the renewable energies is terribly underestimated.

The today's presentation of the study about the development of wind power by Rudolf Rechsteiner, Member of the Swiss Parliament and energy researcher for many years, confirms these facts in an impressive manner. The IEA prognosticated in 2002 the installation of 100 Gig watt wind power for the year 2020. But today more than 110 Gigawatt already are installed.

The permanent overestimation of the availability of conventional energies and the underestimation of the renewable energy possibilities is a deliberate method to hedge ever increasing profits for the conventional energy sector. Especially in times of shortages their profits increase, harming consumers. The disregard of renewable energy possibilities, despite – meanwhile – vast positive experiences, is at the origin of lack of political actions for renewable energies by politicians. The classic example is the recently settled target of 20 % renewable energies until 2020 by the European Union. So far the lived growth paths let expect a significant higher share until 2020, even without increased political support.

Today's presentation of the EWG about wind power development convinces with impressive facts. It confirms that the development of wind power was underestimated in the past years and it also shows that in the upcoming years a significant steeper growth than commonly expected will take place.

Renewable energies are the crucial answer to the actual crisis and price increases of the conventional energy supply and presents at the same time the most efficient solution for climate protection. These energies will achieve large, efficient and competitive contributions to the energy market much faster than expected.