



Wind Turbine Project Would Be Largest of Its Kind

Swiss company plans to build wind farm to generate renewable energy near Rahovec



By Petrit Collaku

A Swiss company plans to install 15 wind turbines just outside Rahovec in what would be the largest electricity project of its kind in Kosovo.

Upwind International estimates it will invest 60 million euro in its effort.

The company plans to install the turbines in the village of Zatric — a site chosen after years of measurements at different sites in Kosovo.

"This site has been chosen based on our wind measurements, which we carried out here on an existing GSM tower for more than 3 years now," said Christoph Kapp of Upwind's Kosovo office.

Up to 15 turbines will be installed, each with a capacity of 2 to 3 megawatts per hour. Potentially the cluster could generate as much as 45 megawatts per hour. By comparison, the Kosovo Energy Corporation, KEK, generates around 800 megawatts per hour.

The construction of the wind park will start only after the Kosovo's Energy Regulatory Office, ERO, authorises the company to mount the wind turbines.

Upwind has applied on October 30 and ERO is reviewing the company's application.

The ERO's board will meet during February to review the additional documents requested from the company in order to get the preliminary licence.

Afrim Ajvazi, legal and licensing officer at the ERO, said the regulator will check in February on the company's contract with with

KEK, permissions from the Ministry of Environment and if there are any complaints from residents.

The first company that installed three wind turbines in Kosovo was the German Wind Power in 2008 on Goles mountain, about 40km from Prishtina. Shortly thereafter, the company disconnected its turbines from KEK's grid after disagreements with ERO about the tariffs of electricity production.

The Ministry of Economic Development welcomed the investment of the Swiss company, stressing the target that Kosovo has to reach in the generation of renewable energy.

Kosovo is a signatory member of the Athens Treaty, which was proposed by European Union with the aim to create a single stable regulatory framework for the trading of energy across South East Europe.

According to this treaty, coun-



The future site of a wind-power farm in Kosovo.

tries are obliged to generate 25 per cent of their energy from alternative sources by 2020.

Bedri Dragusha, Chief Executive Officer of Kosovo Energy Efficiency within Ministry of Economic Development told Prishtina Insight that only 2 per cent of Kosovo's energy comes from renewable sources.

KEK produces around 20,000 megawatts or around 800 megawatts per hour.

Kosovo's government has plans to build new coal power plant Kosova e Re with capacity of 600 MW.

In meantime, a consortium of non-governmental organisations,

KOSID, rejects the plan claiming that Kosovo doesn't need it since because the country wastes 40 per cent of its energy.

Nezir Sinani from the Institute for Development Policy (INDEP) and representative of KOSID said that Kosovo should invest on renewable energy to reach commitments before the European Commission, in which around 20 per cent of energy should come from alternative sources.

"Kosovo's government should also strengthen the efficiency of electricity program that would significantly improve the decrease of the demand for energy", Sinani said.

Fox's Marble Quarry Licenses Restored

The Independent Commission for Mines and Minerals returns licenses after UK company appeals, giving it 60 days to start work.



By Petrit Collaku

Kosovo's Independent Commission for Mines and Minerals, ICMM, has restored four quarry licenses to the UK's Fox Marble after nearly two months of turmoil.

The ICMM's board made the decision January 22, on the appeal of Fox Marble.

The ICMM pulled Fox Marble's licenses in November, saying the company had failed to make good on promises to start

work.

The company's chief executive, Chris Gilbert, said the company will start to work at its quarries in Peja and Rahovec.

"We are very pleased that the licenses have been restored," said Gilbert, a former music industry executive. "Having successfully shipped the first blocks of marble from the Cervenilla quarry, we are now keen to proceed at our other sites as soon as weather conditions in Kosovo allow."

At the time of the cancellation, Gilbert said that ICMM has broke the law by not warning the company before revoking its licenses and not giving it 60 to 120 days to

respond, according to Article 9 of the Law on Mines and Minerals.

According to ICMM, Fox Marble failed to observe the license conditions, which require that license holders begin their field activities within three months from the moment the licenses were awarded.

Fox Marble had obtained its licenses from the ICMM on October 31, 2011, which are valid until 2035.

Ahmet Tmava, head of the ICMM's board, said that the commission has given Fox Marble 60 days to start the work at the quarries.

Fox Marble became the first Kosovo-based firm listed on the London stock

exchange, on AIM, Alternative Investment Market.

Last August, Fox Marble had successfully raised almost £10 million from investors ahead of its AIM listing.

Its shares plunged after its licenses were suspended.

However, they surged some 18 per cent this week on news of their restoration.



Fox Marble CEO Chris Gilbert.