

Encouragement for Smaller Wind Ventures

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Wind power is taking off in China, and as officials look to the road ahead, many see the rise of small- and medium-sized wind projects.

By staff reporter Li Qiyan

The Chinese government is considering adjusting its strategy for wind power development to emphasize small-and medium-sized projects, according to the country's energy regulator.

Zhao Xiaoping, deputy director of the National Energy Bureau, said at a recent conference that China will increase the attention given to smaller-scale wind ventures in the future. He noted that wind resources, proximity to a power grid and market conditions should be taken into account when building wind farms.

China has approved a batch of large-scale wind power projects with capacity of more than 10 million kilowatts in Gansu Province, Jiangsu Province and Inner Mongolia. In the coming year, the country will further accelerate the development of wind power and strengthen its supervision mechanism, said Zhao.

China has witnessed a rapid expansion of wind power in the past several years. The country's wind energy capacity reached 6.05 million kilowatts in 2007 – making it the world's fifth largest producer – compared with 2.59 million kilowatts in 2006 and 1.26 million kilowatts in 2005.

Twenty provinces and cities across China had built wind farms by the end of 2007, said Zhang Guobao, director of the National Energy Bureau. Most were large-scale projects.

An expert from China Electricity Council told Caijing that “the installation capacity of wind power is expected to break 10 million

kilowatts by the end of 2008.” According to the national development strategy of renewable energy, China is set to realize 30 million kilowatts of wind power installation capacity by 2020.

However, Zhao Xiaoping said that problems such as inadequate grid construction, distorted power prices and un-standardized technology have restrained the growth of wind power in China. He called on the government to draft policies and rules to support and regulate wind power, while speeding up the construction of the power grid and furthering studies on the pricing system.

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