Power lines

Title

Moving to an energy system with a high share of renewable energy in Europe presents a range of challenges. Wind, solar and marine energy sources are variable, so local resources may not always be able to meet peak electricity demand. Storing electricity is difficult and expensive, with few technological alternatives available. ‘Pumped storage’ involves pumping water uphill at times of low demand and releasing it when demand peaks: this is a proven technology, but creating the necessary lakes presents ecological risks through habitat loss.

The lowest cost and most ecologically acceptable solution is greater interconnection between power markets: the more interconnected regions and nations become, the more they will be able to import electricity when local renewables supplies dry up.

BirdLife Europe supports the development of electricity transmission and distribution networks in Europe to accommodate the expansion of renewable energy. We work with grid operators to ensure new and existing power lines do not create risks of collision and electrocution for birds. BirdLife has joined the Renewables Grid Initiative to help ensure swift yet sustainable development of the EU electricity network.

We call on policy-makers in the EU and Member States to ensure grid development plans take account of environmental impacts, and that new power lines are sensitively routed to avoid unnecessary impacts.

Related topic

- Mitigating Climate Change - our Programme

Energy and Climate Change section

- Renewable Energy
- Wind Power
- Power lines
- Bioenergy
- Back to Energy and Climate Change

Publications and briefings

- Grid operators and environmental organisations team up to promote sustainable modernisation of electricity grids
- Birds and powerlines – solutions to stop electrocution and collisions

More on this issue

- Budapest Conference calls for action to make electric powerlines safe for birds

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