

REGION HAMBURG/NORTHERN GERMANY BRITISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE IN GERMANY AND DENMARK HOST RENEWABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE

The British Chambers of Commerce in Germany (BCCG) and British Chamber of Commerce in Denmark (BCCD) held a conference in the Hamburg offices of Osborne Clarke, attracting around 70 experts and executives of leading companies, investors and the regulatory side from the renewable energy sector.

The evening kicked off with welcome speeches - highlighting the importance of the energy industry in Hamburg - by several experts from the industry and government: Jutta Blankau, President of the Urban Development Authority and Environment of the Free Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Dr Rainer M. Giersch, Chairman BCCG in Northern Germany, Dr Mariano Davies, Chairman of BCCDK, Copenhagen, and Dr Christoph Torwegge, Partner of Osborne Clarke, and BCCG Regional Committee Member.

The conference continued with several other guest speakers from the industry, as well as from the regulatory body. For example, Robert Hull, Managing Director of Ofgem E-Serve, suggested that going forward there will be a big focus on the cost of solar and wind-based energy with energy management issues, as opposed to the last decade where the main focus was really on decarbonisation. He also stressed the importance of sector cooperation to ensure that the set targets are met.

Jens Frederik Hansen, CEO of A2SEA, followed Robert Hull and highlighted in his presentation three key points for the future of the renewable energy industry in Europe: safety, sufficient standards and local content.

In his speech, Frank Zimmermann, Global Sales Director of Siemens Wind Power, then encouraged the major energy market participants to consider incorporating new approaches into their business models and to consider renewable energy as the future of energy generation. He pointed out that advanced business models would be key to awakening interest in offshore investment amongst all interested parties from the investment, developer and governmental side. Mr Zimmermann stressed, however, that these business models must remain cost-effective at a production level.

Following this, Dr Bernd-Georg Spies, Head of Renewable Energy at Russell Reynolds Associates, emphasised the extraordinary growth in the renewable energy sector.

He pointed out that there is a significantly increased interest amongst institutional investors in playing a role in the industry, instead of the usual focus on the appointment of relevant executives and regulators.

Joachim Steenstrup, Head of Supply Chain of DONG Energy, asked the audience to consider that managing installation risk and better site selection should be necessary to every renewable energy business. From his perspective, three factors are key to the future of the renewable energy industry: the cost of energy, avoiding supply chain bottlenecks and getting the right degree of local content.

Sven Utermöhlen, Director Offshore Wind at E.ON Climate & Renewables, changed the perspective and paid particular attention to the aircraft industry, which in his opinion has faced the same challenges as the offshore wind industry and solved them over the years through a constant degree of innovation and cost cutting through implementing production- and supply-related technical improvements.

Lastly, Dr Alexander Dlouhy, Head of Energy & Utilities at Osborne Clarke, gave his presentation about legal considerations pertaining to the renewable energy supply chain. In his opinion, particularly cross-border supply chains may create complicated legal risk scenarios. He referred to the example of the energy cable between Germany and Norway via Denmark, obliging investors and interest holders to consider the different regulations in each market and the resulting legal consequences for their project planning. He therefore emphasised that a harmonisation of the regulatory framework would significantly stimulate the market, since such a solid regulatory framework would provide the basis for solid financing of production on such a scale.

Closing the conference, Dr Mariano A. Davies, CEO of BCCG Denmark, expressed his appreciation of the experts' contributions and concluded: "Challenges regarding the energy sector can be only be overcome by international cooperation and collaboration."

Dr Christoph Torwegge
Osborne Clarke and BCCG
Regional Committee Northern Germany



Joachim Steenstrup



Dr Rainer Giersch



Stefan Nicola, Frank Zimmermann, Sven Utermöhlen, Dr Alexander Dlouhy, Jens Frederik Hansen, Dr Bernd Georg Spies, Joachim Steenstrup, Robert Hull



Dr Mariano Davies, Prof. Philip Leigh



Stefan Nicola



Deo Delaney, Søren Springborg



Dr Christoph Torwegge



Senator Jutta Blankau



Dr Alexander Dlouhy



Robert Hull



Audience



Jens Frederik Hansen



Frank Zimmermann



Søren Springborg, Frank Zimmermann



Dr Bernd-Georg Spies