

Message from Minister Grzegorz Witkowski
Baltic Energy Industry Forum
Warsaw, 28 February 2018

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a Deputy Minister of Marine Economy and Inland Navigation I am particularly pleased to welcome all participants of the Baltic Energy Industry Forum - an event which has already got clearly marked on the map of the most important conferences on maritime affairs. The fourth edition of the Forum only confirms its strong position on this map, on which I warmly congratulate the initiators and organizers of the Forum.

I am glad that this event is an opportunity for a recognised group of experts on the use of the sea to meet and present their thoughts on such an innovative and complex matter as offshore wind energy. A comprehensive approach to marine economy, taking into account the optimal use of maritime areas and the capabilities of Polish industry, has been and still is the foundation of activities undertaken by the Ministry of Marine Economy and Inland Navigation and by other ministries and government agencies.

The Government supports the development of offshore wind energy because this industry will be one of the flywheels for the reconstruction of the Polish marine economy, based on a solid, fair foundations and strengthening its position for many years to come. Its development is inextricably linked to the shipbuilding master-plan we are implementing, which aims to create an optimal environment for the utilisation of Polish shipyards' potential - also in the field of production for offshore wind energy.

Ladies and Gentleman,

In this context, it is worth quoting the facts. As part of Poland's new development system, we have taken care of the strong position of the shipbuilding industry reconstruction, taking into account the needs of offshore wind power. In the Strategy for Responsible Development - "Plan of Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki", in the part concerning re-industrialisation, these issues were based on the strategic project "Modern products of the shipbuilding industry" and the flagship project "Batory" - especially within the framework of the i-offshore pillar.

As an example, an innovative, modular, multifunctional platform for equipment and systems for the exploitation of marine raw materials and energy resources will be crucial in the offshore project. The project, which is planned to be submitted to the National Centre for Research and Development this year, concerns the development and implementation of a range of multifunctional offshore platforms. The aim of the project for Polish entrepreneurs is to gain a competitive advantage on the global offshore market in several fields of economic activity, such as: design and production of innovative multifunctional, modular platforms for offshore equipment and systems; exploitation of offshore natural gas and oil resources with the use of platforms; and finally, use of these platforms in the construction of offshore wind power plants. It should also be emphasized that the draft spatial development plan of the Polish maritime area in the scale 1:200000, which is currently being developed by the maritime administration, includes, among others, areas with the basic function of "generating renewable energy", which will be designated for the development of offshore wind energy. We need to note that the spatial development plan of Polish maritime areas is also an element of the Strategy for Responsible Development in the scope of "Pro-development institutions and strategic development management". The first version of the draft plan should be presented later this spring.

Ladies and Gentleman,

When it comes to creating an environment favourable for the recovery of the marine economy on a strong basis, the addressees cannot be ignored. Polish shipyards and other entities, including Szczecin ST3 and Gdańsk GSG Towers, because they are what I mean here, together with their research and development facilities and related industries, have experience as well as the possibility to execute contracts related to almost all types of orders - including offshore, oil & gas. From the point of view of guaranteeing the development of offshore wind energy, the possibilities concern both the construction of service entities and, above all, appropriate constructions. For this reason, I am that much more delighted that Polish entities from the Tricity and Szczecin have the possibility of accepting and executing orders, at the same time having full capacity in the area of wind tower production.

It is also worth mentioning that over the last two years it has been necessary to carry out actions aimed at removing numerous, not economically justified conditions limiting the development opportunities for production, e.g. in favour of offshore wind energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to expressly emphasize that the Government supports the development of offshore wind energy. In a short time it will probably be one of the main branches of the Polish marine economy, generating technological development and jobs. The implementation of this idea depends on a common commitment, on the one hand, of the government, which creates a legal and strategic environment, and on the other, of the industry and its facilities. I am sure that this effort will have positive results.

I wish all the participants of the Baltic Energy Industry Forum fruitful discussions!