

[Unofficial translation]

## Wind energy purchases lead to a flurry of new projects

*“Industry is getting ready, expects Hydro-Quebec to decide to purchase 1,000 MW generated by wind energy”*

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Windy Gaspé is expecting Hydro-Quebec to reveal its intentions regarding the 1,000 megawatts (MW) of electric power generated by wind turbines which it expects to purchase over the next 10 years. But several industrial companies are not waiting and are already active in the area.

“Everyone is getting in position so they can get a piece of the Hydro pie”, explains Élisabeth Ménard, CEO of TechnoCentre éolien de Gaspésie-les Îles.

This is the case with Gaspé companies Groupe Ohméga, Fabrication Delta de Saint-Siméon and Montreal companies Hellmax Énergie and Lefebvre et Frères, a mechanical and metalwork shop, which began installation of their technology window in Rivière-au-Renard in February.

These four companies which make up the *Groupement éolien québécois* have just installed the foundations for the first of the three wind turbines which will give their designers great openings and will also allow the testing of the technology of the French firm Jeumont, a division of Framatome and partner in the project. When all the wind turbines are set up, this park will produce close to 2.25 MW, a very small portion of the 1,000 MW promised by Hydro.

“Hydro-Quebec is still working out the technical details for the application of this power. But the Gaspé and the people of the Gaspé will be ready”, said Évangéliste Bourdages, President of Groupe Ohméga.

Last December André Caillé, CEO of Hydro-Quebec, said that a first tender call for the purchase of the first 200 MW of wind energy would be launched in April 2003. The other 800 MW will be subject to eight other tender calls of 100 MW each, and will be reserved for businesses which agree to set up wind energy production facilities and wind energy components in Quebec.

In order to maximize the benefits to the regions in which the wind turbines will be set up – essentially the Gaspé – the government has just ordered that wind energy promoters will have to invest up to 60% of the total cost of their projects in the relevant region. Quebec is thereby hoping to force them to set up wind energy production and assembly facilities in the regions.

### **Heading for the Gaspé**

Several Quebec companies decided this year to take the plunge and set up business in the Gaspé, thereby benefiting from tax incentives provided by the government.

This is the case of the Lévis company Éocycle Technologies, which set up a research centre in the Gaspé, in the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles. “If all goes well, a plant to manufacture alternators that are lighter, more efficient and cheaper than current alternators should open in 2008”, Mario Basque, CEO of Éocycle confided to AFFAIRES. This project should lead to the creation of approximately 100 jobs in the Gaspé.

“In the coming months, a group of four small wind energy producers and two manufacturers of generators from Quebec will begin building a plant to manufacture small wind turbines in the Gaspé”, Ms. Ménard said. And finally, a plant for wind energy towers should be built and will be in addition to the existing plant in Saint-Siméon.

All these initiatives can count on the results of research financed over the next three years by TechnoCentre. “We have a \$3M budget which could be used for work on composite materials, diesel/wind energy coupling controllers or the development of generators”, Ms. Ménard added.

### **Others are getting ready**

Other businesses, on the other hand, have yet to get started. But they are still looking for the best sites. This is the case of Boralex Éole, a joint venture set up by the Société générale de financement du Québec and Boralex, which will soon undertake a wind measurement campaign in the Gaspé.

The Montreal company Innergex has been looking for three years. It has already invested over \$2M just to reserve sites. “It is true that we have purchased options on several properties”, acknowledged Normand Bouchard, Vice-President of Innergex. His company intends to set up about fifty wind turbines soon in Saint-Georges-de-Malhaie, a village near Percé.

Another Montreal firm, 3Ci, has shown interest in the wind energy potential of Miller and Copper Mounts in Murdochville. It will therefore invest several million dollars to install about ten wind turbines which will produce close to 108 MW of electric power.

Also, the Spanish firm Guasco and the Swiss conglomerate ABB will, it is said, be in a good position when the time comes to invest. In Davos, last January, officers of ABB confirmed their interest in the peninsula.