



European Small Hydropower Association

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Press release

Small hydropower maintains its position as one of the most reliable and cost efficient renewable energy source

ESHA launches a new, complete [hydro database](#) on energy, market & policy data covering EU-27

Brussels, 15 February 2011. Small hydropower (SHP) generates over 46 TWh of electricity per year in the EU-27 with an estimation of 54.7 TWh in 2020. This shows an annual growth of 1.75 % in SHP production from 2010 to 2020.

Today, small hydro alone is enough to power over 13 million households in Europe. It contributes to annual avoidance of CO₂ by 29 million tons, which translates into annual avoided CO₂ cost of about 766 million euros.

With Europe's rising energy dependency, urgent need to cut greenhouse gases and fight against climate change and environmental degradation from fossil fuel use, hydropower can indeed make a significant contribution to future energy needs in Europe and to EU's goal to make the transition to a low-carbon economy by 2050.

Moreover, the importance of small hydro is currently increasing due to its ability to play a major role in future load dependent grid operation. Small hydro also enables the use of local energy sources, which increases local security of energy supply meaning shorter transport distances with reduced energy transmission losses. Such decentralisation fosters community development by providing income sources and creating jobs locally. Additional good opportunity for the boost of local economy comes from upgrading and repowering the thousands of abandoned sites in the EU - this doesn't only increase the electricity production but also improves the environmental conditions of the sites.

Despite these opportunities and advantages, the small hydropower sector faces obstacles for its development. Costly, complicated and non-transparent licensing procedures together with non-harmonised implementation of the Water Framework

Directive and local resistance remain the biggest barriers for the sector. Please visit [the Stream Map website](#) to see a full review of current developments in the member states.

ESHA has compiled a complete, central [HYDI database](#) covering energy, market and policy data on hydropower sector in the EU-27. The database is launched today and is freely accessible for the public. In addition to key figures the database covers information ranging from data on the number of plants to investment and economic variables. It also includes information on policy and legislative frameworks.

Note to the editor

ESHA launches the database within a Stream Map project, co-financed by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme of the European Commission. A CD-ROM covering annual hydro statistics will soon also be available with request from ESHA.

ESHA, the European Small Hydropower Association, is an umbrella organization for the promotion of small hydropower in Europe. ESHA is a founding member of EREC (European Renewable Energy Council) and a member of EUFORES (European Forum for Renewable Energy Sources) and ARE (Alliance for Rural Electrification).

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