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### **Northeast, Mid-Atlantic governors, policymakers to pursue united stand to push for offshore wind**

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Governors and senior policymakers from the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic plan to pursue a united-we-stand approach to build an offshore wind industry, as they powwow next week on clean energy issues.

The meeting , October 5-6 in New Brunswick, New Jersey, comes as the regions' leaders strike out for ways to create a homegrown wind industry rather than rely on Midwestern imports.

"They plan to talk very candidly about what they can do together to advance offshore wind," said Mark Sinclair, executive director of Clean Energy States Alliance, which is organizing the event, called the Governors' Clean Energy Innovation Forum, hosted by New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine.

Several of the states' leaders have made clear they oppose plans being floated for a national grid that feeds land-based wind power into the Northeast. Instead the states want to cultivate their vast offshore wind potential. However, despite nearly a decade of effort, offshore wind turbines have yet to spin anywhere in North America.

The meeting comes on the heels of a separate effort to create a unified front for offshore wind through a public/private group now forming. The US Offshore Wind Collaborative, initiated by Massachusetts, is being created to give voice to offshore wind, a sector where developers have largely acted on their own to defend their technology, or have found themselves submerged in organizations with broader renewable energy mandates.

The offshore wind collaborative plans to announce its board of directors in the fall, according to Fara Courtney, the collaborative's director. Although the entity is new, it's been mulled for nearly a decade in Massachusetts, concurrent with efforts by Cape Wind to secure permits.

In 2004, the quasi-public Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the Department of Energy and General Electric came together to study the experiences of Cape Wind, a 130-turbine Nantucket Sound project that has nearly finished securing its regulatory approvals. The group also examined the progress of European wind developers.

The MTC decided to revive talks early this year in light of the renewed push in the US for offshore wind development. Several groups have since signed on to help steer the organization, among them the American Wind Energy Association, the Great Lakes Wind Collaborative, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Union of Concerned Scientist.

In addition, several private developers have spoken out publicly in favor of the collaborative, among them Cape Wind and Blue H.

Blue H, based in the Netherlands, recently moved forward with its plans to build a 420-MW deepwater project off the Massachusetts coast, 23 miles from Martha's Vineyard and 45 miles from New Bedford. The project applied for a permit September 15 from the Army Corps of Engineers to install one turbine for testing purposes.

Blue H intends to build the units on floating platforms, with the entire project constructed on land and then towed out to its destination, an approach that minimizes seabed disturbance, according to Dackerman. The platform is semi-submerged 66 feet below sea level and held under the water by chains that connect the floating body of the platform to a counterweight located on the sea floor.

Blue H launched a similar prototype off the coast of southern Italy in December 2007, and is now building a 90-MW floating wind farm to provide power to 75,000 Italian customers.

Pending Army Corps approval, Blue H plans to analyze engineering and environmental data from the Massachusetts demonstration project for one year. The company hopes to have all permit approvals in place for the project by 2013. The Army Corps is accepting comment on the demonstration project through October 15. — Lisa Wood