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Russia's Green Energy Industry Fights Ban on Foreign Companies

Proposed ban on foreign companies building renewable energy infrastructure would be "extremely negative" for Russia's green energy hopes.

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Russia's renewable energy network is relatively underdeveloped and relies on foreign companies to design and construct wind, solar and hydro farms. **Pixabay**

Russia's renewable energy industry is urging the government to drop its plans to block foreign companies building solar and wind power farms.

The Renewable Energy Development Association said the proposals were "excessive" and would be "extremely negative" in a letter sent to the Industry Ministry, Russian newspaper Vedomosti reported.

The group, which represents renewable energy firms in Russia, added that a ban on foreign firms taking a lead role in green energy projects would limit competition and hold back the development of the sector.

The Russian government is currently considering plans to force contracts for the design and construction of renewable energy projects to be awarded only to Russian companies. Analysts previously told The Moscow Times that such a move would inflate prices, as any Russian firm leading a large-scale renewable energy project, such as a new wind farm, would still have to work with foreign contractors.

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Green energy advocates and industry experts added that Russia does not possess enough technical knowledge to design and construct renewable energy infrastructure without expertise from abroad.

Nearly all of Russia's wind and solar power stations are currently designed by foreign companies from China, Italy, Finland and Germany.

A report from independent analysts published this week slammed the Russian government's approach towards mitigating the effects of climate change, saying it was not doing enough to limit the economic damage of rising temperatures and has one of the weakest plans to reduce emissions of most major economies.

While a number of countries are considering plans for carbon-neutral economies, President Vladimir Putin this week told an investment forum that a reliance on zero-carbon energy could send humanity "back to caves." He has also previously criticized wind turbines for ignoring the interests of birds and said people do not want to live near wind and solar farms.

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