

Preben Maegaard, Executive director

NORDIC FOLKECENTER FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY

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Preben Maegaard, born 1935, is a Danish renewable energy pioneer, author and expert. Since the oil crisis in 1974 he has worked locally, nationally and internationally at the organisational, political and technological level for the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

From 1979 to 1984 he was chairman of the Danish Renewable Energy Association, OVE, www.orgve.dk and since 1991 vice-president of EUROSOLAR, the European Renewable Energy Association www.eurosolar.org and in 2006 appointed senior vice-president. Since 1994 he is member of the jury of The European Solar Prize. When the World Wind Energy Association (WWEA), was founded in 2001 he became its first president www.wwindea.org, a position he held till 2005. In 2001 he became a chairperson of the Committee of the World Council for Renewable Energy, (WCRE) www.wcre.org. Since 1999 he has been a board member of the European Renewable Energies Federation (EREF) www.eref-europe.org, and since 2003, of the European Federation of Ecosites www.ecosites.net. In May 2006 the World Wind Energy Institute, WWEI, was initiated in Kingston, Canada, involving seven institutes from China, Brazil, Cuba, Canada, Russia, Egypt and Denmark. Preben Maegaard was appointed the first president of the WWEI, see www.wwei.info or www.wwei.nu.

Since 1984 he has been director of the Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy, www.folkecenter.net and www.folkecenter.dk. In this capacity he has been responsible for the technological innovation of windmills, including design, construction and implementation of sizes from 20 to 525 kW, farm biogas digesters from 50 to 1.000 m³ as well as integrated energy systems including hydrogen and biofuels for transport. The technological development and implementation activities took place in cooperation with DS Trade and Industry, www.ds-net.dk. The Folkecenter has under his leadership provided transfer of renewable energy technology to many countries, and set up numerous pilot projects worldwide. For references see www.folkecenter.net /Tech-transfer. As part of these activities dozens of dedicated trainees from all continents have been involved and obtained valuable hand-on experiences that paved the way for dedicated and leading positions in their professional career.

He has served on several Danish national governmental committees and councils for the development and implementation of renewable energy including; as member of the

- Renewable Energy Steering Group (1981-1991), the National Board of Technology;
- National Renewable Energy Council in Denmark (1991-1996),
- National Committee Biomass for Energy (1985-1989), the
- National Committee for Solar Energy (1995-2002), the
- National Committee for Wave Power (1997-2002)
- National Committee for Hydrogen from Renewable for Transport Purposes (1998-2002)

In 2002 a new liberal government suspended the national renewable energy development and implementation activities and programs in which Preben Maegaard had positions. Danish State support that the Folkecenter had received since 1983 was suspended as well.

In 1996 and the following years he became a member of the board of EUROSUN, an intergroup set up by the European Parliament. In 1999 he was Renewable Energy Adviser to the President of Mali, Alpha Konare, leading to the establishment of the Mali Folkecenter, www.malifolkecenter.org. In 1995 he became Member of Senate, UTER, Technical University, Havana. Since 1992 he has been co-ordinator of the European Solar Prize in Denmark and member of the European Solar Prize Jury.

For over three decades, Preben Maegaard has been a conference director, organizer, speaker and/or participant of numerous national and international seminars, workshops and conferences, chairman of the World Wind Energy Conferences, WWEC2003 in Cape Town, WWEC2004 in Beijing and WWEC2005 in Melbourne, see www.wwindea.org and www.wwec2005.com as well as author and/or co-author of numerous reports, books, articles and periodicals in Danish, English, German and Japanese within the field of renewable energy and sustainable development and has received a number of awards. For further details, see web sites and publications.

Recent Publications

El Bassam, N.; Maegaard, P. (2004) Integrated Renewable Energy for Rural Communities, ELSEVIER; Amsterdam and London. (see presentation below)

Maegaard, P. (2004) Die Kraft der Sonne in den Dienst der Menschheit stellen. In Hermann Scheer. Praktische Visionen, Ponte Press; Bochum

Maegaard, P. (2004) Laudatio for Dr. Hermann Scheer, The WORLD WIND ENERGY AWARD, WWEC2004; Beijing

Maegaard, P. (2003) Wind Energy for the Future, Keynote paper prepared for the 13th Islamic Academy of Science, IAS, Conference; Kuching, Malaysia

Maegaard, P.; Kruse, J. (2001) Energien fra Thy. Fra de lokale til det globale, Nordvestjysk Folkecenter for Vedvarende Energi; Hurup Thy

Beuse, E.; Boldt, J.; Maegaard, P.; Meyer, N.I.; Windeleff, J.; Ostergaard, I. (2000) Vedvarende energi i Danmark. En krønike om 25 opvækstår 1975 – 2000, OVE's Forlag; Aarhus

Awards

1978, Solar Prize, Danish Organisation for Renewable Energy, OVE www.orgve.dk

1985, Plum Environmental Prize, Plum Fonden

- 1987, Environmental Prize, Association of Danish Engineers www.ida.dk
- 1992, Wind Energy Prize, Denmark's Wind Mill Owners Association www.dkvind.dk
- 1997, European Solar Prize, EUROSOLAR www.eurosolar.org
- 2002, The GAIA Prize, Gaia Trust www.gaia.org
- 2002, MERKUR Pioneer Prize, MERKUR cooperative Bank, www.merkurbank.dk
- 2005, Nuclear-Free Future Solutions Award, www.nuclear-free.com

[Preben Maegaard, Denmark](#)

2005 Nuclear-Free Future Solutions Award

The jury had the following reason for giving the Nuclear Free Award for Preben Maegaard:

Preben Maegaard is a pioneer in the field of renewable energy. His involvement dates back to the 1970s, when, in the aftermath of the first great oil shortage, it became apparent that the industrialized world, addicted to finite energy fuels, would one day suffer the crisis of withdrawal. In 1991 Preben became vice-president of EUROSOLAR, and in 2001, president of the World Wind Energy Association. Since 1983 he has been the director of the Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy, an independent, nonprofit research and training institute working to increase the utilization of renewable resource technologies in Denmark and beyond. In Preben's home region – where windmills provide a steady windfall source of income for local farmers and cooperatives – renewable energy has supplied 100% of the power needs since 1992. Maegaard's ultimate goal: 100% renewable energy usage around the globe. Preben Maegaard realizes that the natural potential of available renewable energies on any given day dwarfs the total worldwide output of atomic energy derived since 27 June 1954 when the first commercial nuclear power plant went online at Obninsk. Overhead, some 149,597,870 safe kilometers away, the great nuclear reactor in the sky donates daily more than 15,000 times the amount of energy we require. But to harness renewable fuels will take a flip of mindset as massive as the Polish astronomer Copernicus provoked by observing that the earth revolves around the sun, and not vice versa. There simply exists too much power grid gridlock among the powers that be. Preben points out, »The cost of renewable energy is generally higher than the production cost of conventional energy sources because the overwhelming share of the external costs associated with electricity from conventional energy sources is not reflected in the price; instead, these costs are borne by the general public and by future generations.« He adds, »The challenge for our generation is to develop the necessary technologies and human skills to bring this abundance of clean energy into the service of humankind.« One of Preben's central concerns is the unacceptable fact that a third of the world's population has no access to modern energy. Half the people around the globe have never even made a single phone call. A successful spin-off of his Folkecenter in Denmark is the Mali Folkecenter in Bamako. Rural solar and wind off-grid energy solutions ensure development, while at the same time empowering people by transforming prospects. »Therefore,« the man with the white mane tells us, »access to renewable energy should be treated as a fundamental right for everybody.«

--Craig Reishus

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See also:

www.wei.info or www.wei.nu

www.eurosolar.org

www.WCRE.org

www.wwindea.org

Photo's



