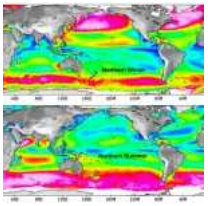
Ocean Wind Power Maps Reveal Possible Wind Energy Sources



Efforts to harness the energy potential of Earth's ocean winds could soon gain an important new tool: global satellite maps from NASA. Scientists have been creating maps using nearly a decade of data from NASA's QuikSCAT satellite that reveal ocean areas where winds could produce energy.

The new maps have many potential uses including planning the location of offshore wind farms to convert wind energy into electric energy. The research, published this week in Geophysical Research Letters, was funded by NASA's Earth Science Division, which works to advance the frontiers of scientific discovery about Earth, its climate and its future.

"Wind energy is environmentally friendly. After the initial energy investment to build and install wind turbines, you don't burn fossil fuels that emit carbon," said study lead author Tim Liu, a senior research scientist and QuikSCAT science team leader at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif. "Like solar power, wind energy is green energy."

QuikSCAT, launched in 1999, tracks the speed, direction and power of winds near the ocean surface. Data from QuikSCAT, collected continuously by a specialized microwave radar instrument named SeaWinds, also are used to predict storms and enhance the accuracy of weather forecasts.

Wind energy has the potential to provide 10 to 15 percent of future world energy requirements, according to Paul Dimotakis, chief technologist at JPL. If ocean areas with high winds were tapped for wind energy, they could potentially generate 500 to 800 watts of energy per square meter, according to Liu's research. Dimotakis notes that while this is slightly less than solar energy (which generates about one kilowatt, or 1,000 watts, of energy per square meter), wind power can be converted to electricity more efficiently than solar energy and at a lower cost per watt of electricity produced.

According to Liu, new technology has made floating wind farms in the open ocean possible. A number of wind farms are already in operation worldwide. Ocean wind farms have less environmental impact than onshore wind farms, whose noise tends to disturb sensitive wildlife in their immediate area. Also, winds are generally stronger over the ocean than on land because there is less friction over water to slow the winds down — there are no hills or mountains to block the wind's path.

Ideally, offshore wind farms should be located in areas where winds blow continuously at high speeds. The new research identifies such areas and offers explanations for the physical mechanisms that produce the high winds.

An example of one such high-wind mechanism is located off the coast of Northern California near Cape Mendocino. The protruding land mass of the cape deflects northerly winds along the California coast, creating a local wind jet that blows year-round. Similar jets are formed from westerly winds blowing around Tasmania, New Zealand and Tierra del Fuego in South America, among other locations. Areas with large-scale, high wind power potential also can be found in regions of the mid-latitudes of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, where winter storms normally track.

The new QuikSCAT maps, which add to previous generations of QuikSCAT wind atlases, also will be beneficial to the shipping industry by highlighting areas of the ocean where high winds could be hazardous to ships, allowing them to steer clear of these areas.

Scientists use the QuikSCAT data to examine how ocean winds affect weather and climate, by driving ocean currents, mixing ocean waters and affecting the carbon, heat and water interaction between the ocean and the atmosphere. JPL manages QuikSCAT for NASA. For more information about QuikSCAT, visit: http://winds.jpl.nasa.gov .

For more information about NASA and agency programs, visit: http://www.nasa.gov .

Source: American Geophysical Union

Tags: energy, global, map, NASA, wind

Der Beitrag wurde am Donnerstag, den 10. Juli 2008 um 09:35 Uhr veröffentlicht und wurde unter Erneuerbare Energien abgelegt. du kannst die Kommentare zu diesen Eintrag durch den RSS 2.0 Feed verfolgen. du kannst einen Kommentar schreiben, oder einen Trackback auf deiner Seite einrichten.

Einen Kommentar schreiben

du mußt angemeldet sein, um kommentieren zu können.

AKTUELLE NEWS
Groundbreaking work will help Africa's biodiversity combat climate change
Ocean Wind Power Maps Reveal Possible Wind Energy Sources
3. Internationale Konferenz zur Speicherung Erneuerbarer Energien
Atomkraft? Ja bitte, aber nur als Übergang
Nahrungsmittel vor Klimaschutz?
Letter from Tällberg: Turn Back, O Man
A magical agreement?
Your Energy Poverty, My Energy Poverty
Welternährungskrise erfordert Agrarwende
Bundestagsfraktionen unterstützen Internationale Agentur für Erneuerbare Energien (IRENA)
THEMEN

- CleanEnergy Project
- Editorials und Briefe
- Erneuerbare Energien
- Innovation und Technik
- Klimawandel
- Lese- und Filmtipps
- Märkte und Wirtschaft
- Partner
- Politik und Umwelt
- Veranstaltungen
- Wissenschaft

Suchen
RSS2
RSS 0.92
Atom
RDF
CleanEnergy-Project Subscription:
E-Mail
Anmelden

action Anpassung bird carbon Climate CO2 coal Deutschland Energie energy erneuerbar Erneuerbare Energien future global James Hansen Klimamodelle Klimaschutz moratorium Photovoltaik Solar Solarenergie solution Temperatur US Zukunft

Blogroll

BBC Green Room
Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und Reaktorsicherheit
Business of Green
Climate Shorts
co2online
e360
Energie-und-Strom.de
Energieblog
Energy Filter
Energy Net
Environmental Capital
Frischer Wind - das Blog zur Energiewende
GlobalCom
Greenbang.com
Handelsblatt Klimablog
Heisse Zeiten
Klima-wandel

Klimaschutz-Blog
Klimawandel Global
National GEOGRAPHIC Deutschland
Null Grad Plus
Ökosex
Planet Erde
Plenty Magazine
PrimaKlima-weltweit e.V.
SolveClimate
The Climate Crisis Coalition
The Climate Project
Umwelt-Wiki
Utopia.de

Archiv

Juli 2008 (7)
Juni 2008 (50)
Mai 2008 (49)
April 2008 (52)
März 2008 (26)
Februar 2008 (9)
Januar 2008 (16)
Dezember 2007 (3)

Juli 2008

M	D	M	D	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

« Jun