

# Is Ontario blowing its chance to be an offshore wind winner?

***By Gideon Forman, Executive Director, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)***

Why is Ontario intent on squandering its “first mover” advantage in the renewable energy field?

Huge steps on developing offshore wind are being made globally and by our neighbours to the south and yet in Ontario we are, at best, stuck in neutral.

Why are the Americans aggressively committing to new offshore projects on the east coast of the US and their side of the Great Lakes? It is because offshore wind provides big renewable energy dividends.

Ontario’s far offshore wind generation resource has all the benefits of onshore wind and more.

The location of turbines over water produces an entirely different dynamic that arguably enhances daytime wind volumes and electricity production. It provides another non-polluting tool to deal with peak energy demand in the daytime.

Ontario showed leadership in energy and health policy by eliminating coal, and we can show the same vision by supporting far offshore wind.

Research and studies are good, defensible and supportable, but a far offshore pilot project represents the ultimate test.

A model checklist of an optimal energy opportunity would likely share the same attributes as far offshore wind in the Ontario Great Lakes:

- A project not dependent on combustion or carbon production and does not leave a legacy of difficult to manage, long lasting and hazardous waste.
- No emissions.
- A project located so far out on the water as to be invisible from shore.
- A project anchored on bedrock and not disturbing the lake floor.
- A project arguably providing sport fish habitat.
- A project convenient to connect to the main transmission backbone of Ontario’s electricity grid.

We need to think beyond Ontario’s current short-term electricity surplus and be prepared for the future. Imagine the consequences of a power shortage in next few years as our economy ramps ups again.

Imagine the contribution of 500 megawatts of non-polluting power to the grid—enough power for 350,000 homes.

The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) believes properly positioned offshore wind turbines will over time effectively stabilize electricity rates, create jobs, reduce pollution, and provide us with a local source of clean, renewable energy.

We can't help but wonder why Ontario is back in Court to stymie the growth of this sector.

Imagine Ontario getting back its industrial mojo and demonstrating our ingenuity and skills while employing people in an industry for the future.

It's time Ontario started developing far offshore wind in a serious way, beginning with a properly-sited demonstration project in eastern Lake Ontario.

***Gideon Forman, Executive Director, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)***

**T. 416-306-2273**

**Gideon@cape.ca**

