



Bundesverband WindEnergie

"Sustainability is a core concern of the wind industry" - BWE presents extensive background paper on the recycling of wind turbines

<https://www.wind-energie.de/presse/pressemitteilungen/detail/nachhaltigkeit-ist-ein-kernanliegen-der-windbranche-bwe-legt-umfangreiches-hintergrundpapier-zum/>

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The German Wind Energy Association (BWE) deals with the recycling of modern wind turbines in a comprehensive background paper. In addition to an overview of system components and recycling options for various building materials, the association also addresses new developments in the waste disposal industry and addresses the necessary changes to the legal framework.

The Bundesverband Windenergie eV supports the efforts of the industry to ensure an orderly dismantling and a sensible utilization of dismantled plants. In 2021, the first wind turbines will fall out of statutory EEG funding. For many operators, the question then arises whether the existing systems can continue to be operated without government support. If this is not the case, capacities may be dismantled. The waste disposal industry can thus prepare for an increase in the amount of materials to be recycled.

“Given the high visibility of the plants, the wind energy industry has recognized the challenge of recycling and is tackling it proactively at an early stage. In addition to direct discussions with the waste disposal industry, the main focus of our work is on providing information about the material composition of wind turbines and their recycling potential. The background paper now available provides an important basis for further efforts, because sustainability is a core concern of the innovative wind energy industry,” emphasizes Hermann Albers, President of the WindEnergie Association.

In contrast to the conventional energy world, financial provisions have been made for wind turbines in order to secure the dismantling of the turbines. Around 90% of the total weight of a wind turbine easily finds its way into established recycling cycles for steel, metals and concrete. The primary challenge is currently recycling the composite materials within the rotor blades. The first disposal companies have specialized in the recycling of these GRP / CFRP composites using novel process steps. The GRP composites are used in energy recovery as a substitute fuel in the energy-intensive cement industry. The capacity of these recycling plants can be ramped up without any problems as of 2021.

"In order to further harmonize and improve the recycling of wind turbines, adjustments to the legal framework are also necessary. For example, a suitable waste code for GRP / CFRP has so far been missing in the waste directory regulation. Due to the high export quota of our world's leading wind industry, uniform European standards for the dismantling and recycling of wind turbines should also be established. This not only helps the waste disposal companies, but also the manufacturers and suppliers," says Hermann Albers.

[All information on recycling wind turbines in the BWE background paper](#)