

# KENNEBEC JOURNAL

## OFF TO EUROPE

*by Susan M. Cover  
Staff Writer*

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AUGUSTA -- Businesses with a focus on renewable wind and ocean energy have until the end of this month to sign up for a trade mission to Spain and Germany led by Gov. John Baldacci.

The Maine International Trade Center is organizing the mission, Sept. 19-26. Businesses do not have to be members of the center to participate, said Janine Bisailon-Cary, president of the center.

Bisailon-Cary said parts manufacturers, project managers, shipping experts, installers and companies that can service off-shore wind structures should consider coming along on the trip. "This is not going to be a typical trade mission," she said. "This is going to be a lot more targeted in terms of renewable energy and targeted in terms of wind."

This will be the seventh mission led by Baldacci, who has traveled to Canada, Japan, South Korea and other countries on trade missions.

This trip is driven by opportunity for the state and businesses to take advantage of energy advancements, said David Farmer, Baldacci's deputy chief of staff. "Energy is at the forefront of public policy in Maine now," Farmer said. "We are aggressively pursuing alternative energy and resources."

Specifically, the trip includes visits to Madrid; Spain; and Bremen, Germany, according to the center. The mission includes one-on-one meetings and larger networking events, Bisailon-Cary said. It will also give Baldacci and the trade center an opportunity to market what Maine has to offer to companies looking to do business in the United States, Bisailon-Cary said. "Companies with a major presence in Europe are looking at the U.S. now that federal and state programs are in place," she said.

The cost for those taking the trip is \$7,000 a person, which includes airfare, hotel and other costs. She said there are partial grants available for manufacturers with fewer than 500 employees. "I think the timing is really right," she said. "This is the governor's priority."