



Oceanic renewables will help decarbonize and boost the economy

The Oceanic Renewables Summit, organized by APREN, filled the auditorium of the Museu do Oriente on May 24

Ocean renewables, in particular offshore wind, will play a key role in decarbonisation and will help to leverage the Portuguese economy at the same time.

The theme was under discussion at the [Oceanic Renewables Summit](#), a conference organized by [APREN – The Portuguese Renewable Energies Association](#), which filled the auditorium of the Museu do Oriente on May 24th.

The Minister for the Environment and Climate Action, Duarte Cordeiro, who presided over the opening of the event, underlined that Portugal's objective of installing 10 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind by 2030, according to what was defined by the Government, will represent an investment of between 30 and 40 billion euros.

Duarte Cordeiro guarantees that the concerns of fishermen will be observed, and the development of some projects could be beneficial for biodiversity, namely with marine attractiveness and the creation of artificial habitats, similar to what happens in the North Sea.

“The target of 10 GW of Offshore Wind and Portuguese legislation” was the motto for the first debate of the conference moderated by Bruno Azevedo, Partner at Abreu Advogados.

To achieve the proposed objective, it will be necessary, from the outset, to reduce administrative constraints, as defended by Dorleta Marina, Country Manager of the Simply Blue Group in Portugal and Spain.

From the perspective of Javier García Pérez, Director Offshore Business Europe, projects must be implemented according to the centralized model (one stop shop) in order to facilitate and streamline processes. In the centralized model, the auction assigns access to maritime space, but also to the network. The opinion is shared by Christian Schimpf, Director Offshore Development Europe at RWE, and by Alexandra de Marichalar, Director of Offshore Wind Iberia at TotalEnergies.

For Carlos Martin, CEO at Blue Float Energy, it will be important to adopt the Contracts for Difference (CfD) model until the technologies reach another level of maturity. In this way, tariff stability can be ensured, which is crucial, as emphasized by Sergio Pinar, Head of Energy Markets & Regulation at Ocean Winds.

During the conference, “Global Strategies for Ocean Renewables” were also presented. The European offshore wind strategy to be developed until 2035 was analyzed by the CEO of

WindEurope, Giles Dickson. “We need more standardization and industrialization. Investing in training human resources is equally important”, he stressed.

The CEO of the Spanish Wind Association, Juan Virgilio Márquez, presented the Spanish strategy for offshore wind with a horizon of 2035 and the CEO of GWEC, Ben Backwell, focused on the global challenges ahead in view of the objectives established for this technology.

The intervention on “The role of oceanic renewables in the green hydrogen of the future” was given by Smartenergy CTO, Christian Pho Duc, who addressed the potential of hydrogen produced from offshore wind and other ocean technologies, such as wave energy .

“This can be a good alternative to get around the constraint represented by the scarcity of soil”, which can be used for other uses”, he pointed out.

This was followed by a panel dedicated to “Oceanic Renewables – the Portuguese report”. The situation was reviewed by the General Director of the General Directorate of Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Services, José Carlos Simão, and by the Director of Electric Energy Services of the General Directorate of Energy and Geology, Filipe Pinto.

The report is about to be concluded and the proposed areas for project implementation should be submitted to the Government shortly. The first auction should be launched in 2023. The first competitive procedure foresees the allocation of lots of 500 MW: one in the north, in the Viana do Castelo area; two in the Figueira da Foz area and one south of Sines.

“The models for the Design, financing, construction, operation and maintenance of the offshore network” were analyzed in a panel dedicated to the topic which was moderated by the CEO of APREN, Pedro Amaral Jorge. The FEUP/ INESTEC researcher and professor, João Peças Lopes, presented the possible offshore network architecture options for the identified areas, in order to connect the wind farms to the network, which will involve using submarine cables in alternating current or in high voltage direct current, to which are added solutions to reinforce the transmission network on land that may involve new lines in alternating current or hybrid lines in direct current/alternating current. A solution of a “backbone” in direct current was also presented.

“The energy will have to flow from the North to the South where the big industrial projects will be. It will be important to identify the costs that these solutions involve and to develop studies to test and compare the various options”, he suggests.

Marianne Beck Hassl, Market Manager Offshore Wind Iberia at Ørsted, warns of the need to study the project well before choosing the tools to be used, otherwise high costs will be incurred in correcting errors. “The integrity of the cables, for example, is crucial and can determine the viability of the project”, she stressed, also remembering that coordination will be a keyword in these investments.

REN's COO, João Conceição, recalls that there will not be a standard solution for all cases and that the energy policy guidelines will condition the choice of the option to be implemented.

The “Adaptation of the Portuguese Port Sector and the development of a value chain”, a panel moderated by Susana Serôdio from APREN, coordinator of policies and market intelligence in Portugal, was a moment to highlight the important role of ports, as emphasized the Minister of Infrastructure, João Galamba, in a message recorded on video. “Ports play a key role in the value chain of offshore wind and also constitute an opportunity for a more thriving shipbuilding industry”, he stressed.

The panel included contributions from Eduardo Feio, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the ports of Aveiro and Figueira da Foz; Juan Diego Pérez Freire, director of the port of A Coruña, and commercial manager of the Autoridad Portuaria de Ferrol – San Cibrao. The ports are the best candidates to receive offshore investments in Portugal and the projects will not conflict with other activities, believe those responsible.

The Secretary of State for the Sea, José Maria Costa, set the tone for the debate on “Floating offshore wind, a lever for the Portuguese economy”. It is not just a question of developing a new way of producing clean energy, but of boosting a whole “new industrial and service sector, which includes traditional sectors such as metalworking, but also advanced technological sectors such as the development of electronic components”, highlighted. On the table is also the goal of creating 20,000 direct and indirect jobs, underlined José Maria Costa.

In the debate on this topic, moderated by José Carlos Matos, director of INEGI's wind energy area, it became clear that there is a cluster with great potential for development in very specific areas of the value chain, such as structures for wind power floating, as exemplified by José Partida Solano, responsible for developing the offshore wind business at Repsol. The opinion is shared by João Mendonça Santos from Principle Power. For Angel Fernandez, commercial director of Navantia Seanergies, it is essential that these steps start being taken now because there is no time to lose.

The theme of “Relevant and possible Financing Structures for offshore wind projects”, a panel moderated by Pedro Amaral Jorge, closed the debate cycles of the conference. “We are not going to invent the wheel. CfDs are necessary until the technology matures”, summarized the CEO of Greenvolt, João Manso Neto. The same is defended by José Pinheiro, Country Manager Southern Europe at Ocean Winds, and by José María Llopis (Smartenergy, Country Manager Spain & Wind Europe at Smartenergy. It is equally critical to assess and minimize risks, which can be market, price or even technological, also countered Marianne Beck Hassl from Ørsted

“In this event, we explored the strategic potential of this emerging cluster, which constitutes an opportunity for social and economic development, involving the main specialists in the sector and the entities involved in the process. We are prepared for a second edition that the sector is already demanding”, concludes the CEO of APREN, Pedro Amaral Jorge.

APREN, the most relevant association in the sector in Portugal, participates in the working group created by the Government for the planning and operation of electricity generation centers based on oceanic renewable energy sources. It also integrates the three subgroups responsible for producing recommendations related to the established objectives.

APREN already annually organizes the most important event dedicated to renewable energy – the Portugal Renewable Energy Summit. The next edition is scheduled for November 29 and 30, 2023.

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About APREN:

The Portuguese Renewable Energies Association (APREN – Associação Portuguesa de Energias Renováveis) is a non-profit association, established in October 1988, with the mission of coordinating and representing the common interests of its Members in the promotion of Renewable Energies in the electricity sector.

APREN develops work in association with official bodies and other similar entities, at national and international level, constituting an instrument of participation in energy and environmental policies through the use and enhancement of natural resources for electricity production, namely in the water, wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, biogas and urban solid waste.