

Tender delay puts paid to 2030 Spanish target

Developers scrap plans amid lack of clarity from Madrid, writes Karolin Schaps

Spain's goal to build 3GW of floating offshore wind by 2030 is now unattainable because of a protracted delay to the country's first ever tender.

Some developers, including Ferrovial and Equinor, have already scrapped early-stage projects totalling more than 3GW, as investment conditions remain uncertain due to a lack of clarity on auction terms.

"The window to meet the 2030 target has passed. The government is significantly behind in launching the auctions, which seriously jeopardises our ability to meet these targets," said IberBlue Wind policy director Julio Vera. The Iberian project developer is eyeing three schemes with a combined capacity of 2.5GW off the coasts of Galicia and Andalucia, which Vera said are all ready to participate in the tender.

Spanish Energy Minister Sara Aagesen has promised the much-anticipated auction for later this year, which needs to be preceded by a ministerial order outlining conditions of the tender and an auction schedule. One of the first steps in the process, the royal decree laying the foundation for offshore energy

production in Spain, was approved in September.

Two years ago, the government earmarked 19 offshore zones across 5000 square-kilometres in the Mediterranean, in the Bay of Biscay and around the Canary Islands that will host floating offshore wind farms. It remains unclear which areas will be

included in the first auction. Spain's wind association AEE has called for this to focus on a smaller zone, ideally around Gran Canaria, to speed up development of floating wind farms.

"From an industrial, political and economic perspective it makes sense to use a smaller environment which is easier to control," AEE technical and industrial director Juan de Dios Lopez-Leiva told reNEWS. The first projects could be between 200MW to 250MW in capacity, he added.

The only floating offshore wind turbine in mainland Spanish waters – Saitec's DemoSATH 2MW pilot floater – has performed well under some extreme weather conditions that created

SPAIN'S DEVELOPMENT HOPEFULS

Project, location	MW	Developer
Atlantico 1-4	tbc	Repsol
Geroa, Basque Country	48	Saitec
Gofio, Canary Islands	50	Greenalia
Gran Canaria Este, Canary Islands	144	Ocean Winds
Juan Sebastian Elcano, Galicia	522	IberBlue
La Pinta, Andalucia	990	IberBlue
Lanzarote, Canary Islands	50	Ocean Winds
Medfloat, Catalonia	48	Saitec
Mediterranean 1, Catalonia	tbc	Repsol
Nao Victoria, Andalucia	990	IberBlue
NextFloat demonstration, Mediterranean Sea	16	X1 Wind
Northeast Atlantic, Galicia	48	Saitec
O Boi, Galicia	552	Invenergy
Total:	3.5GW+	

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HIT SINGLE: Saitec's DemoSATH 2MW pilot floater has performed well in extreme weather

Photo:Saitec



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SMALL ZONE FOCUS: AEE technical and industrial director Juan de Dios Lopez-Leiva

Photo: AEE



INNOVATION TRIGGER:
Saitec chief operations
officer David Carrascosa
Photo: Saitec

X1 Wind gearing up for pre-commercial platform deployment in the Med by 2027

Spanish floating wind technology developer X1 Wind is gearing up to start testing an 8.5MW pre-commercial floating turbine platform in the Mediterranean Sea by 2027, its director of strategy, João Neves told reNEWS.

"The engineering, certification, and procurement are almost completed, and the permitting is ongoing. (We are) in the final stages of the environmental impact assessment," he said, adding that manufacturing is expected to start next year.

The company's design includes a tripod-like structure supporting the turbine that it is claimed improves load distribution and ultimately reduces costs, while a single-point mooring (SPM) system allows the structure to align most efficiently with wind direction and requires a smaller footprint on the seabed.

The company is already developing large-scale prototypes of its platform suitable for turbines of 15MW to 21MW to enable the PivotBuoy technology to be applied to projects outside Spain, Neves added.

The Barcelona-based company, which has attracted EDP, Technip Energies and Naturgy as demonstration project partners, is counting on international markets to roll out its technology. "We are currently in contact with over tens of

potential clients worldwide, including in several European countries, as well as in Japan, China and the United

States, although the latter is currently more challenging due to the political situation," Neves said. ■

THREE-PRONGED PLAN:
X1 Wind's PivotBuoy design claims to reduce costs and increase efficiency, and requires a smaller footprint on the seabed
Photo: X1 Wind



21 waves of up to 30 metres, according to chief operations officer David Carrascosa.

"The demonstration project is a trigger for innovation. Upgrades of the unit to 15MW, 16MW and 20MW power ratings is something we keep working on," he told reNEWS.

Saitec is pursuing a trio of commercial schemes, with each containing up to three 16MW turbines. Discussions with OEMs and technology developers are ongoing.

"We are structuring the funding of these projects by combining commercial and corporate power purchase agreements with European funding," Carrascosa said.

Spanish floating wind technology developer X1 Wind has also tested a floating Vestas V29 turbine off the coast of Gran Canaria – in a project named PivotBuoy – that successfully exported electricity via a subsea cable.

Portuguese-French joint venture Ocean Winds is continuing to pursue offshore wind projects in Spain, where it is eyeing two farms with a combined capacity of around 200MW off the Canary Islands.

"We still have the same interest for testing offshore wind in Spain," said a spokeswoman.

Meanwhile, other companies have scrapped early-stage floating projects or pulled out of the Spanish offshore wind market altogether.

"The truth is that we are not involved in any offshore (wind) projects. Although we have done some feasibility studies in different geographical areas, we have not participated in the realisation of any infrastructure of this type,"

a spokeswoman for Spanish infrastructure company Ferrovial said.

The firm had previously shown interest in developing five projects with a combined 2.7GW of capacity.

Equinor, which had participated in early-stage development of two floating wind farms around the Canary Islands – including the 200MW FOWCA project in partnership with Naturgy – last year announced its withdrawal

from the Spanish wind market.

"Equinor will not pursue the FOWCA project. Future offshore wind developments in this area will depend on the licensing activities of the authorities, and interest from the offshore wind industry," said an Equinor spokesman.

Similarly, Orsted exited the Spanish market last year, ending its alliance with Repsol, launched in 2022. ■

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