

Demonstration and benchmarking of a floating wind turbine system for power generation in Atlantic deep waters

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Brief Summary :

This dissemination plan is the fourth version of the Dissemination Plan that was produced at the beginning of the project.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2016 is a crucial year for the project because the demonstration will become a reality on shore and in Atlantic waters. After 3 years of design and engineering studies, the demonstration will truly begin – following the construction of the floater, mooring system pre installation, the wind turbine modification. The project is awaited by all the offshore wind market and especially by the media which are looking forward to being informed as often as possible.

This year also follows a transitional period in the project management while dissemination has been kept pending. Gamesa was the former leader of the Dissemination work package but the company left the consortium in 2015. This responsibility has been transferred to Ideol, which assumes now the role of coordinator.

This present document summarizes the dissemination activities planned for the project and especially for this current year of construction/installation/pre-commissioning. This deliverable will be updated next year when Floatgen will be in its next phase.

This document also serves as an overview of the current perception of the project particularly from the media.

2. ACRONYMS

FOWT : Floating Offshore Wind Turbine

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 FLOATGEN IN BRIEF

The objective of the FLOATGEN project is to demonstrate the technical and economic feasibility of FOWT in order to expand the development potential of offshore wind farms into more windy and deeper waters that are not currently commercially viable and demonstrate the potential in decrease of costs for electricity generation. The project will also assess the performance of such combination of wind turbine and floating structure technology to get the knowledge to improve the performance of future up-scaling projects of this technology.

In 2015, GAMESA, which was the wind turbine provider since the beginning of the project, left the consortium following a change of its development strategy.

The floating system will be composed of both a 2 MW wind turbine and the ring-shaped surface-floating platform designed by IDEOL. By beginning of 2017, the floating system will be installed at SEM-REV, Ecole Centrale de Nantes' test site, located 12 nautical miles from the city of Le Croisic on the French Atlantic coast. BOUYGUES Travaux Publics will lead the construction of the floating foundation while UNIVERSITY OF STUTTGART will contribute on coupled loads simulations. RSK GROUP will analyze the environmental impact of the floating system. FRAUNHOFER-IWES will perform a benchmarking analysis between the proposed FLOATGEN system and other comparable floating solutions. ZABALA will contribute with the proper management and internal dissemination of the project.

FLOATGEN is co-financed by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme and is coordinated since 2015 by IDEOL.

3.2 THE CURRENT PERCEPTION OF THE PROJECT

In addition to articles which came out during Year 1 and 2 (and identified in former Dissemination plans), several articles corresponding to Year 3 (2015) are listed in appendice.

After reading them, we can draw the following conclusions:

- Floatgen is an **attractive project and catches interest amongst specialists**: a lot of dedicated articles has been published throughout the year; within the frame of global articles about the floating offshore market and its future prospects, Floatgen is mentioned most of the time. The most specialized journalists also requested additional information and even manifested impatience and insistence especially regarding the timetable ; we can expect that when the construction will start, they will look forward to visiting the site and to obtaining as often as possible information about key project activities (such as installation, towing, anchoring of the system, ...)
- Floatgen also generates **great interest amongst non-specialists journalists**, especially in France because the project will actually be France's first offshore wind turbine.
- More generally, floating offshore wind technologies are being watched with **more and more attention**; several other floating projects have been announced, some dedicated events were successfully organised (side event led by Recharge News during EWEA Offshore 2015, 3rd Marseilles international conference for floating offshore wind turbines...).

3.3 2016, A KEY YEAR FOR DISSEMINATION

The first 3 years of the project were spent on carrying out engineering studies. During these years, dissemination was essentially focused on introducing the project, its main goals and activities.

2016 will see the start of execution works (WP5) of the demonstrator. In this way, this year represents a strong opportunity for proving the project materialization to those who follow

the project from the beginning. This year will also be the occasion for introducing the project to those who didn't hear about it before. Dissemination must therefore pay attention to these two categories of audience by sharing both technical data and educational information about the project and its background (main differences between bottom-fixed and floating offshore wind, why this project is so innovative in the world..., how this project should participate in offshore wind market's evolution...).

4. DISSEMINATION PLAN FOR 2016

4.1 DISSEMINATION GOALS

Dissemination is a core part of the project. It is meant to ensure that all project activities and results are communicated to a variety of audiences and stakeholders in a clear and efficient manner.

In most cases, the main aim of dissemination is to increase the potential impact of the project and its result by ensuring that information is reaching the most relevant stakeholders packaged in a concise and effective way, focusing on the key messages and main results.

For the FLOATGEN project precisely, the main dissemination goals can be summarized as follows:

- **Enhance the highly innovative nature of this European Union-supported project in the offshore wind market and even in the MRE world**
- **Highlight the collaborative dimension and promote everyone's role at each stage in the project development**

All dissemination tools and key messages must follow these two main goals and will be built reflecting them.

4.2 TARGET AUDIENCES

Identification of target audiences and contacts to be made is crucial in making sure that the messages are shaped and delivered in relevant and effective manner. Effort was placed even during the proposal writing stage to ensure that target audience are preliminarily identified and listed.

The list of target audiences was reviewed and updated during year 1. The consortium has come up with this list in a collective manner, ensuring that almost all types of stakeholders have been taken into account. An updating has been done in the list presented below to take into account the changes into the project management.

Any gaps in audiences reached will be taken into account and efforts will be made to remediate the situation, whether at the national or European level.

The following stakeholders have been identified as target audiences. The list gives examples of the specific stakeholders that the project partners have in mind, but it is nevertheless not exhaustive.

Among the target audiences we find :

- Wind industry professionals (manufacturers, developers, consultants)
- Public authorities, especially those responsible for permits and administrative procedures related to offshore wind in France (and in Région Pays de la Loire)
- Financing institutions, investment companies and banks in the relevant countries
- Wind Technology Platform (TPWind)
- Wind Energy associations at national level: FEE or SER in France, BWE in Germany as well as NORWEA in Norway and RenewableUK in UK
- Wind energy associations at the European and international level: European Wind Energy Association (EWEA); Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) and International Energy Agency (IEA) Implementing Agreement (IEA Wind)
- National and Regional Energy Agencies in France and Germany

- The European Commission, officials in various DG's such as DG Research, DG Environment, DG Energy
- The European Parliament, officials working on clean energy topics
- Environmental associations at the European and national level such as EREC, EUREC, EREF
- The general public
- The media
 - MRE-focused media :
 - Rechargenews.com
 - Renew.com
 - Windpower offshore
 - Offshorewindbiz.com
 - Sunwindenergy.com
 - Offshore wind Journal
 - Non-specialist media (especially in France when the demonstrator will be under construction and then in Le Croisic' waters)

Efforts in approaching stakeholders have started and will continue in the coming years.

For example, in 2015, Rechargenews.org has requested Ideol for visiting the construction site in order to write an article devoted to FLOATGEN. This request will be satisfied as soon as the construction will start.

Stakeholders are being approached primarily through the personal contacts and networks that all consortium partners have. Almost all partners are entities working on wind turbines and offshore wind energy and are experts in the field, thus making access to these stakeholders possible.

4.3 KEY MESSAGES

The messages have always to take into account the different target groups identified and their level of knowledge level. But it's necessary to keep a basis of key messages that are suitable to promote the FLOATGEN project and its outcomes, making the case for European added value of R&D cooperation, understandable and relevant to the target audience, and easy to remember.

At the beginning of the project, the key messages were structured around three main points: technology details, economics prospects and environmental impacts. During the second year, the key messages were updated. For this third year, they must be updated once again to correspond to the new project's governance and its new timetable. The highly innovative dimension of the project within the frame of the offshore wind market can also be more promoted.

Floatgen in brief

The FLOATGEN project aims to demonstrate the technical and economic feasibility of floating wind turbine, in order to expand the development potential of offshore wind farms into more windy and deeper waters that are not currently commercially viable and demonstrate potential in decrease of costs for electricity generation. The project will also assess the performance of such combination of wind turbine and floating structure technology to get the knowledge to improve the performance of future up-scaling projects of this technology.

Technology details

The floating system will be composed of both a 2 MW wind turbine and a ring-shaped surface-floating platform designed by IDEOL. By beginning of 2017, the floating system will be installed at SEM-REV, Ecole Centrale de Nantes' test site, located 12 nautical miles from the city of Le Croisic on the French Atlantic coast. BOUYGUES Travaux Publics will lead the

construction of the floating foundation while UNIVERSITY OF STUTTGART will contribute on coupled loads simulations. RSK GROUP will analyse the environmental impact of the floating system and FRAUNHOFER-IWES will perform a benchmarking analysis between the proposed FLOATGEN system and other FLOATGEN is co-financed by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological innovation comparable floating solutions.

Innovative project

FLOATGEN will also result in the installation of the **5th floating offshore demonstrator** in the world, at a time when the offshore wind market is getting more and more interested in this technology. It will be the first fully European floating wind turbine and the first offshore wind turbine in France. This European project is of course a way to promote an innovative project which can widen the range of possibilities for offshore wind in the whole world.

Economics prospects

The economic impacts of the project will be evaluated in order to determine the potential for replication of the solutions in other contexts. The project will establish criteria and experimental knowledge which will define a roadmap and demonstrate the reduction of the Cost of Energy of offshore wind energy until values are comparable with bottom-fixed offshore wind energy. In addition, the replicability in other deep offshore location will be assured by the benchmarking analysis to be carried out.

Environmental impact

During the project, the consortium will define and validate appropriate methods and processes to install, operate and access deep floating wind turbine systems, such as towing processes, installation and on-site commissioning methods. The environmental impacts of such deep floating power systems as well as the operation and maintenance performance and costs will also be assessed. This will be done by looking at the constraints of accessibility of floating structures, by creating new protocols of operation and maintenance according to weather conditions, and ensuring workers' safety conditions.

4.4 MAIN DISSEMINATION CHANNELS

3 key channels will be basically used:

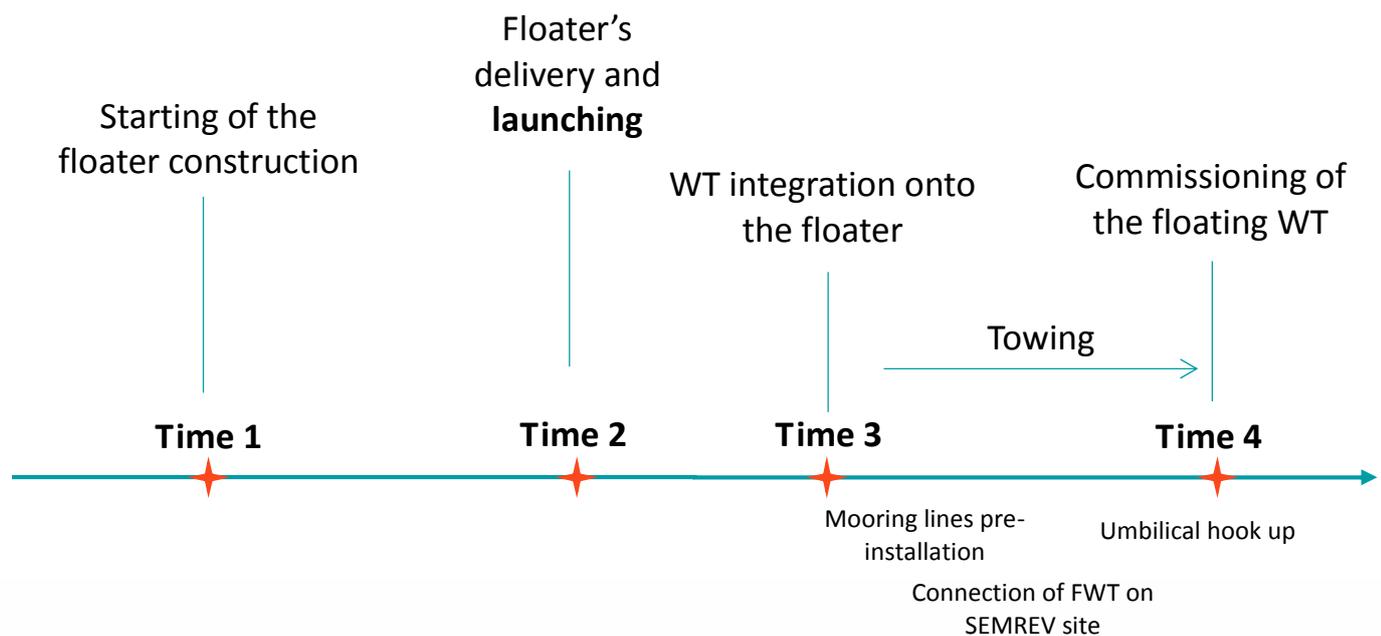
- **Media** is one of the most efficient tool to help make the project known
- **Events** is an important way to gather key stakeholders around the project while showing its materialization through the demonstrator
- A **strong web strategy** is an easy way to capture and maintain audience attention as well as providing updated news

With the demonstrator's erection, dissemination must naturally move up to a new dimension. In this respect, each of these channels will be intensively developed following as precisely as possible the construction/installation timetable (see 4.5 Dissemination times). But in order to be even more effective and to widen our audience, several bias may be defined :

- Creating a **"saga" effect** during the construction/installation phase is a good way to maintain the attention throughout the year as well as controlling the media rhythm. How ? By making available tools online with real-time information (on a website, on social networks) as well as associating as often as possible key information relays (media, public authorities, professionals...) to the most symbolic steps of this phase
- **Adapting the key messages to knowledge level's differences** while keeping a common basis around innovation values. How ? by organizing different events for those different audiences as well as providing differents levels of messages (Amongst specialist; Floatgen will the fifth floating demonstrator in waters ; amongst non-specialist and especially in France, Floatgen will be France's first offshore wind turbine – and a floating one)
- **Taking advantage of both the project's collaborative dimension and its local/regional support** around Le Croisic. How ? by associating regional economic networks to reach a very broad audience in France while relying on partners to amplify the messages within the offshore wind world

4.4.1 DISSEMINATION TIMES

4 key dissemination times have been identified during the demonstrator erection phase. Several “secondary” dissemination times will give us the opportunity to maintain the attention.



4.4.2 MEDIA

First of all, the partners of the project are well positioned actors in their own activity sector. As such, their media experience is relevant and is used since the beginning of the project by FLOATGEN in its own disseminating benefit.

4.4.2.1 PRESS KIT

To begin with, a general press kit will be written. This kind of tool is required considering the fact that press is an essential target audience and one of our key relay. This press kit will be available to download on the website and handed to journalists when necessary.

4.4.2.2 PRESS RELEASES

Several press releases have been disseminated since the beginning.

During 2016 and in addition to those press releases reflecting the project life (mains milestones, consortium change...), the construction/installation phase will require **specific and periodic (monthly) press news** providing precise information concerning the construction progress. Over the next years, this kind of specific press news will be replaced by usual press releases.

4.4.2.3 PRESS TRAVELS

The major players in the offshore wind sector must be identified. This list of journalists could include for example :

- Darius Snieckus (Recharge News)
- Jan Dodd (Wind Power Monthly)
- Lisa Louis (Renews)
- Dave Weston (Wind Power Offshore)
- Anne-Claire Poirier (Green Unifers, a french specialised website)
- Dick Hill (offshorewind.biz)
- Peter Barker (Maritime Journal)

A press travel must be organized with those journalists to give them evidences of the construction. The choice of the date will be defined in agreement with the partners.

4.4.2.4 PRESS REVIEWS

In order to follow precisely what is said in the media, a regular press review (periodicity to be defined depending on the frequency of publications), prepared by the coordinator, will be set up and shared with all involved partners. This press review will include French and English spoken articles.

4.4.2.5 SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Publications in scientific newspapers is also a mean of communication to increase the visibility as well as disseminate the outcome from the project. The coordinator is responsible for identifying journals and share out the tasks between the partners.

Typical journals for scientific publications can include for example:

- Journal of Wind Engineering and Industrial Aerodynamics
- Journal of Energy and Power Engineering
- Wind energy
- Ocean Engineering
- Marine Structures
- Energy Procedia

4.4.3 EVENTS

The construction/installation phase suits very well to the organization of events on-site.

This kind of events allow for generating a regular press coverage as well as keeping the project's target audiences informed as regularly as possible. We can nevertheless differentiate between events which will correspond to a major step of the construction phase and specific events linked to a pre-defined group of audience.

The main tools which will be produced and disseminated during these events are developed in the devoted deliverable 8.6 Communication material.

4.4.3.1 ORGANISATION OF EVENTS DURING THE CONSTRUCTION/INSTALLATION PHASE

Several events can be forecasted throughout this phase, following the main steps of FLOATGEN's construction and installation : starting of the floater's construction, floater afloat and assembly of the WT, commissioning and production of the first kw/h... Among them, two mains events will be prepared in priority :

- the **baptism of the floater** (which is a tradition in the marine world). This event could meet **its launch** at the same time and could gather all the partners and a large list of key stakeholders of the offshore wind world. This event could also be opened to the general

public in order to widen the audience and to make this Project known beyond the sole offshore wind market

- the **commissioning** is of course the second major event ; this event to be held offshore is both symbolic (as a step within the Project life) and crucial for all the teams who worked hard for it.

Their shapes will be defined when their precise schedule will be known as well as their location. These events will systematically associate all the partners and the media.

4.4.3.2 ORGANISATION OF SPECIFIC EVENTS

Considering the fact that the target audiences are quite many and varied, specific events can be conceived by the partners themselves in order to correspond to their audiences' level of knowledge and interest. Tours of the building site for a limited number of people can for example be set up by one or several partners. These events can be organized by one or several partners on his/their own but have to be brought to the attention of all the partners before.

Images & video

A special attention will be paid to images especially during the demonstrator's erection phase. Several photo reports will be ordered. A video will also be prepared with all the images that will be filmed during this phase. As defined previously during Year 2, this activity will focus on producing a 3-minute video that will be used as key dissemination material. This video will include, among other materials, shootings of the wind turbine-platform assembly and erection at the port site. Partners will contribute with its own shooting materials and animations in order to produce a high quality video at minimum cost.

4.4.3.3 ATTENDANCE AT INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Several awareness raising events were initially planned. However, after amendment 1, a revised action planned was designed and all efforts and resources will be focused in organizing a public event by the end of the project.

Once the demonstrator is erected and commissioned, the project will be presented during an international fair (EWEA offshore 2017 for example or other selected offshore fair). This “side-event” (precise shape and list of attendees to be defined in due course) will make use of a partner’s stand and infrastructure to show the video, in order to reduce as much as possible project expenses. A dedicated roll up will be produced and printed brochures will be handed to the interested attendees (*see deliverable 8.6 Communication material*).

Posters and project presentations have also to be prepared for the **main scientific offshore wind events**, such as EERA DeepWind conference (held in Trondheim) or the International conference on Ocean, Offshore and Arctic Engineering (OMAЕ, held in South Korea) or FOWT’17 (Floating offshore wind turbine international conference in Marseilles) for example. FLOATGEN outcomes have indeed to be represented and highlighted in such significant events.

Finally, each partner may handed printed brochures or at least be able to talk about FLOATGEN whenever its own company/organization exhibits in an international event. Brochures will therefore be delivered to all the partners. In short, each partner is FLOATGEN’s ambassador.

4.4.4 WEB STRATEGY

4.4.4.1 WEBSITE

From Year 1, floatgen.eu is the official website of the project and has to stay a point of reference for the project. Its role is to provide information on the project (its goals, its partners, its milestones) and to give the main outcomes. All partners have to promote it on their homepages as well as in all their communication activities. The information on the website, especially the news and events section, is updated as often as possible with content that aims to relate to the project and provide additional traffic to the website. All the partners are nevertheless allowed to indicate on their own website their degree of involvement in the project and how they contribute, but on the condition that they add an hyperlink to the official website.

4.4.4.2 SOCIAL NETWORKS

Creating a special account for the project requires too much time and needs a real strategy to get a sufficient number of followers. But all partners have to promote the project on their own accounts (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook at least) by using the dedicated hashtag : #Floatgen. This hashtag has precisely to be used during the main events and when an image is included (it will also enable us to know and to archive these images).

A Floatgen YouTube channel can also be created to gather all videos that will be produced.

4.4.4.3 OTHER ACTIONS ONLINE

An advertising banner, when integrated in an e-mail signature or on a website homepage, is an easy way to announce an event or even to focus on a subject. Banners will therefore be produced in order to generate traffic on the website as well as providing information of the project's progress.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTNERS

5.1 CONDUCTING DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

The definition of the roles and responsibilities for each type of partner is important in order to allow for the smooth flow of communication related information within the consortium, as well a streamlined set of information to external partners. Partners should consider the fact that there are two types of dissemination activities that will be taking place in the context of the FLOATGEN project.

As described in WP8, the first type is the **internal dissemination activities**, where partners are to share research results among each other, utilizing channels such as emailing and discussions. The second type is **external dissemination activities**, where partners present the project and the results in scientific and technological forums, workshops, fairs and

conferences. Ideol, as the new WP8 leader, is responsible for the management of all dissemination and awareness raising activities of the project.

Ideol ensures the updates of the website, the publication of news and events, as well as all relevant reports online and actively collects and disseminates awareness-raising and communication related information among the project partners.

All partners bear the responsibility to provide relevant and up-to-date input whenever prompted by the WP8 leader. They are responsible for reporting on all their awareness raising and dissemination activities they undertake. They are also responsible in finding relevant events and conferences in their respective countries and abroad, participating in these type of events, and discussing FLOATGEN in relevant events and conferences, seeking opportunities for presentation and ensuring that the project is represented at the European, national as well as local level. They are also responsible for providing relevant feedback when prompted on material that the WP8 leader produces, such as this report.

5.2 PROCEDURES FOR THE VALIDATION OF DISSEMINATION MATERIAL

The procedures for the publication of communication material within the framework of the FLOATGEN project were established at first by M3 of the project, after a decision during the kick-off meeting to do so. This is done in order to ensure the quality and timeliness of the material issued by the project. These procedures represent an exception to the general dissemination rule as governed by article II.30 of the GA and article 8.3.1 of the CA. The procedure has been updated (reflecting consortium changes) and approved by all the present partners during Year 2.

The exception applies to dissemination and communication material such as press releases general project presentations, project leaflets, website text, general project presentation posters and banners, hand-outs for project events, contributions to social media discussions and similar material that does not reveal in-depth project information but ensures general information about FLOATGEN is provided.

The exception also applies to scientific project presentations that consortium partners wish to make at conferences and events to ensure the respective partner can meet deadlines for submission of material to the organizers. The exception shall not apply to scientific publications, publishable deliverables, official project reports and similar material that goes into detailed description of aspects of FLOATGEN.

The rationale for the exception is the need for a faster procedure for the approval of certain dissemination items to optimize the project's reactivity to outside dissemination opportunities. The approval procedure is described in detail in the ***"Procedures of validation of dissemination material (version 2014)"***.

6. APPENDICES

The following selection of articles published in Year 3 is not exhaustive.

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FRANCE 

Analysis: France aims to be expert in floating technology

31 July 2015 by Jan Dodd [Be the first to comment](#)

FRANCE: Although France is yet to install its first offshore turbine, the government has identified four zones for floating wind energy pilot projects and is hoping these will help turn the country into a leader of this nascent technology.



Floatgen first... Installation is expected next year of a Floatgen demonstrator using Ideol's "damping pool" floater

France's first offshore wind turbines, on fixed foundations, will not start turning until 2018 at the earliest. However, the country is pushing ahead with plans for floating wind projects, hoping to become a world leader in this emerging — and promising — market.

Apart from the desire to create local jobs, the main driver is simply that France has little space for fixed-foundation turbines.

The seabed falls away quickly off the coast, especially in the wind-rich Mediterranean, where the industry has identified potential for 3GW of floating capacity. The west coast could yield another 3GW.

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To kick-start the industry, French energy and environment minister Segolene Royal is expected to launch a call this summer for pilot projects of wind turbines operating on floating foundations.

Regional authorities have identified four potential zones, one off the Atlantic coast of Brittany and three in the Mediterranean (see table, below).



The winners will be revealed in mid-2016, with installation expected in 2018-19. Each will receive a share of the government's €150 million funding and a tariff, the rate of which has not yet been announced.

MEDITERRANEAN SEA PRIME LOCATION FOR PILOT SITES

Provisional zones for floating pilot farms

Region	Location	Distance offshore (km)	Area covered (sq km)
Brittany, west coast	Ile de Groix	22	17
Languedoc-Roussillon, south	Leucate	14	150
Languedoc-Roussillon, south	Gruissan	15	65
Languedoc-Roussillon, south	Fos-sur-Mer	12	117

The aim of the pilot projects is to allow validation of the technological choices and their economic feasibility before proceeding to commercial rollout.

France will probably be fielding at least four home-grown contenders, alongside foreign entrants such as US-based Principle Power's WindFloat and Glosten Associates' PelaStar and, possibly, Norwegian company Statoil's Hywind.

While WindFloat and Hywind prototypes are already being tested offshore, none of the French designs have yet set foot in the water.

Floatgen

First off the French starting blocks should be the Floatgen demonstrator, featuring Ideol's ring-shaped "damping pool" floater, which is slated for installation at the Le Croisic test site off the west coast at St-Nazaire, in early 2016.

The anchors will be installed and Bouygues will construct the platform this year. Gamesa is still officially tipped to supply the 2MW turbine, but since establishing the Adwen offshore joint venture with Areva, the Spanish firm now says it is "considering every option", without giving further details.

Ideol's compact, concrete floater - only 55 metres across for even the biggest turbines - is the cheapest on the market, claims Bruno Geschier, the company's chief sales and marketing officer.

It is compatible with all existing standard offshore turbines, can be built at almost any port and, with a draught of 7-8 metres, can be assembled at the quayside and towed to the site by widely available tugs.

Maintenance costs are also low, in part, because the concrete floater generally only needs annual visual inspections, Geschier explains.

Ideol has already signed a commercial contract with Japan's Hitachi Zosen (Hitz) to design, engineer and construct floating turbines for the Japanese market. The firm has started tank tests on two demonstration floaters, one steel and one concrete, and is aiming for offshore installation in 2017.

Wind Power Monthly – July 2015


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TERRE ENERGIE

Imprimer ARTICLE

La mer, Eldorado du renouvelable ?

07.09.2015, par Clea Chakraverty



Le projet Floatgen ouvre la voie de l'éolien en mers profondes avec la première éolienne flottante testée au large des côtes françaises.

Imprimer © IDEOL Partager

This article comes from the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) periodic newspaper. CNRS is a public-funded institution that covers all scientific disciplines, from the humanities and social sciences to biological sciences, nuclear and particle physics, information... 07/09/2015



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France Launches Offshore Renewables Tech Test Site



SEM-REV, French offshore test site for marine renewable energy, was officially opened on August 25 in Croisic.

SEM-REV is equipped at sea and on land for the testing of full scale (floating) offshore wind and wave power prototypes under operational conditions.

The multi-technology test site, operated jointly by the CNRS and Centrale Nantes, is equipped with an electric cable with a capacity of 8 MW,

connecting it to the French network.

An important step for SEM-REV was the installation of a subsea connection system this summer. This will enable a safe connection of various power generation devices within a day, starting this September. The SEM-REV site will be able to simultaneously accommodate up to three marine energy demonstrators.

Offshorewind.biz - 28/08/2015

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IN DEPTH: Get ready for the next wave of floating wind

Construction of a flagship unit based on its semi-submersible "damping pool" foundation, being developed under the European Commission-funded FloatGen scheme, starts this winter in St Nazaire, France, and an engineering deal is in place with Japanese industrial conglomerate Hitachi Zosen for both concrete and steel versions slated to be in the water by 2017.

"Our concept is not the product of an inventor's pride or some long industrial heritage, it is about building a foundation that meets market needs," says Bruno Geschier, Ideol's chief marketing officer. "[We are] somewhat different from other players in that we are arguably the only [floating wind turbine] company today that is earning money through sizeable commercial contracts; we are not dependent on subsidies."

Ideol's shallow-draught, open-centre concept is set to make its debut at a test site off Le Croisic, in the French Atlantic next year, topped with a soon-to-be-announced multi-megawatt turbine, next summer. But it has also been chosen as the foundation for a major European joint industry project developing designs for 10MW turbines aiming to be optimised and qualified by early 2017.

"The challenges facing the sector now have little to do with those challenges we had two or three years ago, where the majority of the most seasoned turbine designers and developers were saying 'never' to floating wind," adds Geschier. "Those same companies are seeing it very differently now. The largest German developers are coming to us now for discussions about deploying in waters we would class as 'shallow'."

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