

WORLD POWER SYSTEMS REVIEW

15 February 2025

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The managing director of ESB Networks has said that a review will be undertaken, in conjunction with other agencies, about the impact of Storm Éowyn.

The results of the review will be published as it will have an impact on the future of the energy provider. Speaking on RTÉ radio's Morning Ireland, Nicholas Tarrant acknowledged that some customers would not have power until next week. It was difficult to predict when power would come back as the scale of the damage from the storm was significant.

Mr. Tarrant said that 768,000 customers were initially without electricity, which was nearly one-third of all connected customers and double the number previously impacted by a storm. Éowyn was the worst storm the country had ever faced, surpassing previous major storms like Storm Darragh and Storm Ophelia (in 2017), he said.

When asked about the lessons learned from this experience, Mr. Tarrant highlighted the challenges of restoring power, the resilience of the electricity network, and the need for continued investment to improve the network's ability to withstand such extreme weather events in the future.

Critical national infrastructure

"We have about 160,000km of overhead lines in this country. And for us now, as we're facing into the future around investment, if you think about the electricity network, as critical national infrastructure is required for housing, for the economy and of course, for climate action. And so continued and expanded investment is going to be crucial."

Mr. Tarrant said the issue of trees was going to have to be examined by ESB Networks in view of the damage caused to power supplies by the many fallen trees across the country. "We still have over 100,000 people who don't have electricity this morning. We are working with huge resources.

"We have approximately 2800 people working on the storm restoration directly. But we are going to keep customers informed over the coming days as to how that restoration effort is going and as the numbers are coming down.

"But the scale of the damage out there is still very, very significant in this really unique storm." Meanwhile the chief executive of Alone, the support organisation for the elderly, has called for members of the community to check in on older neighbours to offer assistance even if they are normally self reliant. Sean Moynihan told RTÉ radio's Morning Ireland that with many older people there was a delicate balance between "home care, health care, housing and staying well" and that delicate balance had been tipped following Storm Éowyn.

EIA

<http://www.eia.gov/>

3 February 2025

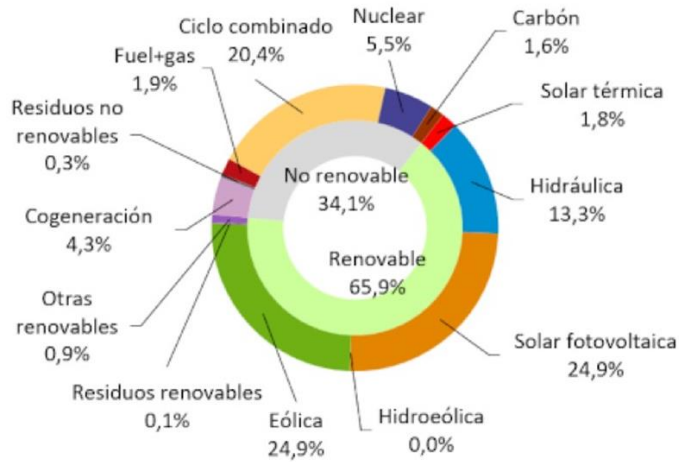
The sun has become the largest energy source in Spain in terms of installed capacity

According to the Spanish system operator Red Eléctrica, in January this year, the installed capacity of solar photovoltaic power in Spain exceeded 32 GW, making solar the largest energy source in the country by installed capacity, with a share of approximately 26.7% (24.9% photovoltaic and 1.8% solar thermal).

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Potencia instalada en España a 31 de enero de 2025

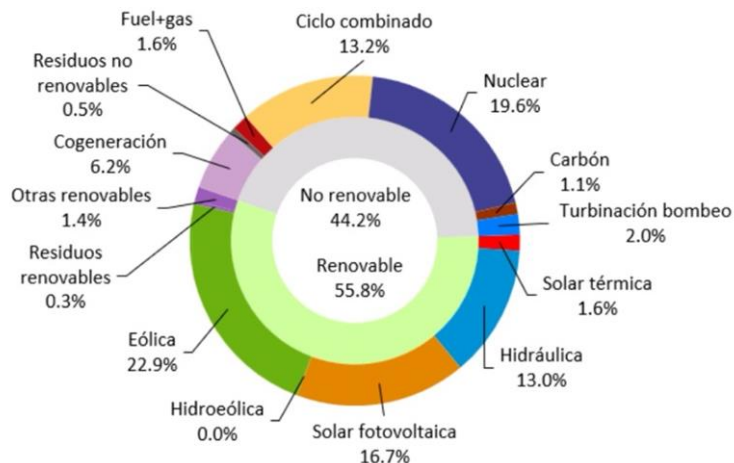


In second place is wind power with a share of 24.9%. The share of renewable energy in the total installed capacity of the Spanish power system as of January 2025 was 65.9%.

In 2024, Spain added 6.64 GW of new solar photovoltaic capacity. This is more than in 2023 when the increase was 5.59 GW. The last four years have seen a significant acceleration in the growth of a sector that has long remained underdeveloped in this sunny country.

In 2024, Spain recorded an increase in electricity consumption of 0.8% year-on-year to 247,038 GWh, and when adjusted for working hours and air temperature, the increase in consumption was even 1.4%. At the same time, the share of renewable energy in electricity production in Spain in 2024 reached a record 55.8%, which exceeded the (previous record) figure of 2023 by about six percent. According to current legislation, the share of renewable energy in electricity production should reach 81% by 2030. Last year's results show that Spain is confidently moving towards this goal. According to PV Magazine, in 2024, the country's authorities approved 727 new renewable energy projects with a total capacity of 26.2 GW, of which 22.3 GW are solar energy projects.

Estructura de la generación de enero a diciembre de 2024



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Even though wind turbines generated less in 2024 than in 2023—60,846 gigawatt-hours against 62,670 GWh, wind power became the largest producer of electricity in Spain, its share at the end of last year was 22.9%. The share of nuclear power in production was 19.6%.

Photovoltaic plants generated 44,520 GWh last year, which is the highest figure in history. The share of photovoltaic solar power in electricity production in Spain in 2024 was 16.7%, solar thermal — 1.6%. In total, the share of the sun was 18.3%. Thus, the share of variable renewable energy sources (photovoltaics plus wind) in generation was about 40%. A very high figure, roughly in line with German realities. This fact once again confirms that in large power systems, reliable power supply can be ensured even with a high share of variable renewable energy sources.

Red Eléctrica also reported that in January 2025, the share of solar photovoltaic generation in the total monthly electricity generation was 9.5%. This means that even in the winter months with poor insolation, solar power plants can produce impressive amounts of electricity, covering a decent part of consumption.

Fossil fuel-based generation decreased in 2024. The share of coal in generation fell to a historically low of 1.1%.

Medium
<http://medium.com/>

5 February 2025

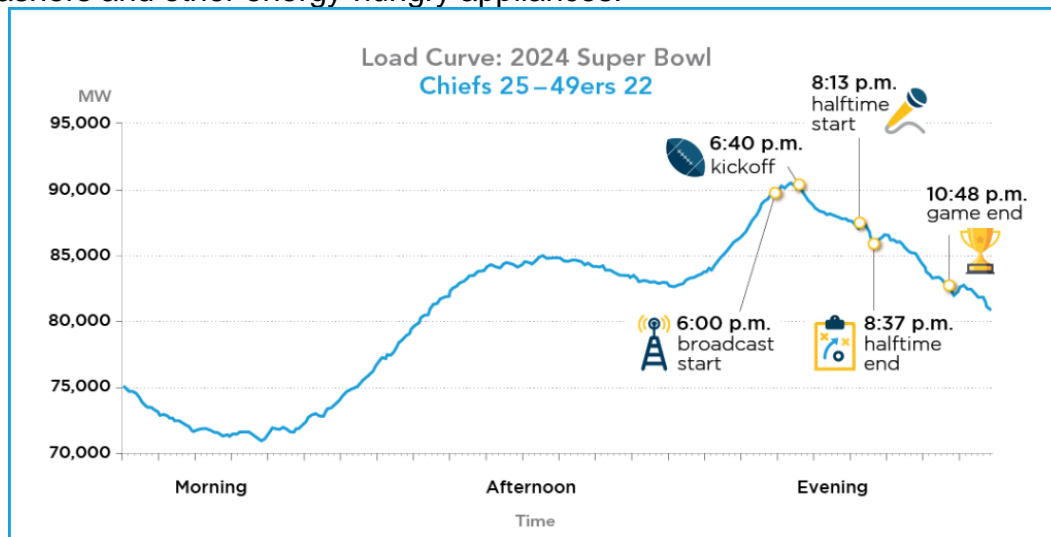
How Grid Operators Prepare for the Big Game

PJM will be tuned in to the Big Game this weekend, but not because the local team is playing. Control room operators will be monitoring electricity demand to ensure a constant flow of power to all of the TVs, slow cookers, refrigerators and other appliances serving 65 million people across 13 states and Washington, D.C.

After weather and historical usage comparisons, human behavior is the biggest factor in forecasting customers' needs. PJM considers people's routines during certain seasons, holidays, days of the week and times of the day.

The Super Bowl has its own distinctive pattern, and it's not what you might guess.

Demand is greatest not when all of the big-screen televisions are broadcasting the game, but in the periods before the game, during halftime and after the last play. That's when electricity is powering ovens, microwaves, refrigerators, hot-water heaters, dishwashers and other energy-hungry appliances.



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Game day starts off like any other Sunday in February, with electricity use climbing as people wake up, turn on lights, make coffee and get ready for the day. It flattens out around lunchtime, coinciding with last-minute trips to the store or travel to parties. Around 3 p.m., energy usage starts heating up along, with the food being prepared for the main event and pregame festivities. Kickoff, scheduled for 6:30 p.m., marks a drop in electricity use as folks settle in to watch the game. At the end of the first half, there's a bump as people get off the couch, open the fridge for a drink, reheat the wings and replenish their plates.

As halftime performer Kendrick Lamar takes the stage Sunday around 8:30 p.m., the demand curve will drop again for another 15 or 20 minutes, as it did last year when Usher performed at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas.

After another momentary flurry of activity in homes and bars across the country when the halftime show ends, the demand for electricity will continue to decrease until the last bump at the end of the game. If the game is close, like it was last year when the 49ers and Chiefs were tied 19–19 with 3 seconds to go in the fourth quarter, electricity demand will remain low until the very end. If it's a blowout, people will start tuning out and plugging in for other activities.

In the Philadelphia region in 2018, when the Eagles bested the Patriots for the team's first Super Bowl victory, the demand stayed high while fans celebrated.

Incidentally, the last time the Super Bowl was played in New Orleans, the Superdome lost power for half an hour in the second half after a piece of relay equipment failed. Entergy has said it's ready this year, and the Superdome has been tested with events like Taylor Swift's Eras Tour that use as much electricity as the Super Bowl, 12 MW. (Louisiana is not in the PJM service territory.)

Insidelines PJM

<http://insidelines.pjm.com/>

6 February 2025

Strike: Kaduna Residents Lament Hardship Over Power Outage

Residents of Kaduna State are facing severe hardship following a three-day strike by staff of the Kaduna Electricity Distribution Company (KEDCO) over mass layoffs. The National Union of Electricity Employees (NUEE) declared a three-day strike against the sacking of its members by the electricity distribution company.

The union claimed that 900 staff members were disengaged and insisted that the company's management must withdraw the termination letters. However, KEDCO's management confirmed the dismissal of 450 staff across four states in their franchise region made up of Kaduna, Kebbi, Zamfara and Sokoto.

The strike, which began on Monday, was also in protest of other grievances, including non-payment of outstanding pensions to retirees, inadequate provision of necessary work tools, lack of promotions and non-implementation of the 2024 national minimum wage.

A union official, who spoke to the Daily Trust correspondent on condition of anonymity, said they were not opposed to the layoffs but demanded that workers' entitlements be fully paid. Daily Trust observed that the strike has severely affected innocent customers, particularly artisans, traders, phone-charging vendors and housewives.

The blackout also led to a water shortage in parts of Kaduna metropolis and surrounding areas on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Musa Sani, a solar panel dealer in Kaduna, said business is booming as people who can afford it are now demanding solar power solutions. "We are experiencing high demand for solar panels within just two days. People who can afford it are making demands, so it's brisk business for us," he said. A provisions seller along Charanchi Road in Tudun Wada,

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Kaduna, Maikaita Bello Dallaje, said they had to remove most of their soft drinks, including yogurt and frozen drinks, from the fridge.

Another resident of Millennium City Estate, who simply identified himself as Mustapha, said he now relies on his generator to pump water from his borehole, which has been challenging. “Residents are moving from house to house in search of water because the water board isn’t supplying us, and boreholes remain the only alternative,” he said.

Meanwhile, in a statement, the Management of Kaduna Electric said the company acknowledged public concerns. “Kaduna Electric’s management has initiated a comprehensive transformation exercise to ensure the company’s long-term sustainability. Contrary to claims by labour unions that 900 staff members were affected, the company confirms that “services no longer required” letters were issued to 450 employees. “This decision was made in response to significant operational and financial challenges that have hindered the company’s ability to meet its market and operational obligations.

“The restructuring, though difficult, is a necessary step to align the company with current market realities and create a more efficient workforce. “The Management emphasized that this right-sizing initiative alongside capital investment are crucial for implementing impactful measures to improve. Kaduna Electric expressed regret over the prolonged power outage caused by the industrial action, which lasted over 24 hours to some of our customers across our franchise.

“The company remains committed to resolving labour disputes amicably and restoring normal operations as quickly as possible. “The Kaduna Electric reassured its customers of its dedication to providing reliable power supply and apologized for the inconvenience caused by the outage.”

Daily Trust

<http://dailytrust.com/>

7 February 2025

DOT suspends Biden’s \$5B electric vehicle charging network effort

The Trump administration has suspended the \$5 billion National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure formula program, informing state transportation directors in a Thursday memo that “no new obligations may occur” until guidance is updated.

NEVI was included in the bipartisan infrastructure law passed by Congress in 2021 and represents one of the Biden administration’s most robust efforts to expand electric vehicle adoption. The program required states to develop EV charging infrastructure plans in order to access funds, but the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA, now says it has suspended approval of those plans.

Most of the NEVI funds have already been awarded to state transportation departments, according to Ryan Gallentine, managing director at national business association Advanced Energy United. Nonetheless, the FHWA’s announcement “creates great uncertainty for the billions of dollars states and private companies are investing,” he said in an email.

“The new leadership of the Department of Transportation has decided to review the policies underlying the implementation of the NEVI Formula Program,” according to a memo from Emily Biondi, associate administrator of FHWA’s Office of Planning, Environment and Realty. “Accordingly, the current NEVI Formula Program Guidance dated June 11, 2024, and all prior versions of this guidance are rescinded.”

The memo also clarifies that “until new guidance is issued, reimbursement of existing obligations will be allowed in order to not disrupt current financial commitments.” And Politico reported that the FHWA on Thursday also removed some web pages regarding the \$2.5 billion Charging and Fueling Infrastructure grant program. The Trump administration has

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been vocal in its opposition to utilizing public funding to support EV adoption. But some observers say it will take more than a memo to end the popular infrastructure program.

“Most of the unawarded money is sitting in state Department of Transportation bank accounts ready to be spent,” Gallentine said. “States are under no obligation to stop these projects based solely on this announcement. We call on state DOTs and program administrators to continue executing this program until new guidance is finalized.” “I don’t believe FHWA has the authority to pause or rescind any aspect of NEVI,” Parn chief analyst Loren McDonald told Electrek. “I assume lawsuits from states will start soon, and this will go to court and Congress.”

President Biden set a goal for half of all new passenger vehicle sales in the United States to be electric by 2030. EVs accounted for almost 9% of U.S. light-duty vehicle sales in the third quarter of 2024, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. More than three dozen states have already announced NEVI awards totaling more than \$3.2 billion, said Charge Ahead Partnership spokesman Ryan McKinnon, citing data from EVAdoption. “In many states, the NEVI program helped jumpstart investment in high-speed EV charging stations,” he said in an email.

NEVI didn’t solve all of the EV charging industry’s problems but “the program was a step in the right direction,” McKinnon said. “We hope the FHWA takes this opportunity to ensure state NEVI plans are encouraging private investment in EV charging while also being confident that that federal funds are not being wasted,” he said.

Utility Dive

<http://www.utilitydive.com/>

7 February 2025

RTOs could fast-track dispatchable generation under House, Senate bills

Dispatchable power plants could gain priority in interconnection queues under legislation introduced in the House and Senate on Thursday. “This legislation would give grid operators the authority to identify and expedite the consideration of essential projects that will protect our grid’s reliability and provide the power needed to meet America’s growing demand,” Rep. Troy Balderson, R-Ohio, the bill’s House sponsor, said in a press release. Balderson introduced the same legislation in the previous Congress where it died in committee.

Sens. John Hoeven, R-N.D., and Todd Young, R-IN, introduced a companion bill in the Senate. Starting about a decade ago, there was a surge in wind and solar projects, and more recently storage projects, seeking to interconnect to the grid, according to the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. In 2023, solar interconnection requests totaled 1.1 TW, storage requests totaled 1 TW, wind requests totaled 366 GW and gas-fired requests totaled 79 GW, according to the lab’s most recent report on the U.S. interconnection queue. Generating projects that started operating in 2023 faced a 5-year median time between entering the interconnection process and coming online, the lab said.

Grid operators have responded to the backlog by reforming their interconnection processes, including by setting more stringent financial requirements to discourage speculative projects that have little chance of being built. Most recently, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is reviewing a proposal by the PJM Interconnection that would give 50 generating projects that meet reliability-oriented criteria a one-time, fast-track interconnection review. Under the legislation introduced Thursday — the GRID Power Act — FERC would have 60 days to review proposals from regional transmission organizations and independent system operators for specific projects that would be pushed to the head of interconnection queues.

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The RTOs and ISOs would have to show the proposed projects would bolster grid reliability and resilience, according to the legislation. The bill defines dispatchable power as “an electric energy generation resource capable of providing known and forecastable electric supply in time intervals necessary to ensure grid reliability.” The bill requires FERC to start a rulemaking process to implement the legislation within 90 days after the bill becomes law, and complete the rulemaking within 180 days.

The Electric Power Supply Association, a trade group for independent power producers, supports the bill. “Grid operators should be given significant flexibility to address current or future reliability concerns, including the creation of an accelerated interconnection for resources identified as critical to maintaining reliability,” Todd Snitchler, EPSA president and CEO, said in a press release.

Other supporters of the legislation include the American Exploration & Production Council, a group for oil and gas companies, the Ohio Oil and Gas Association, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Manufacturers’ Association.

Utility Dive

<http://www.utilitydive.com/>

11 February 2025

Huge spending on renewable energy not increasing its use globally — OPEC Secretary General

The world has already spent almost \$10 trillion to transition to green energy over the last 20-25 years but renewable energy makes up just 2-3% of global energy use today, OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais said at the India Energy Week conference.

According to the OPEC chief, the debate about fossil fuels versus green energy is being framed the wrong way. “Why should the two be framed always as if they are in competition with each other or one is going to be posing an existential threat to the other?” Al Ghais argued. “The world has spent almost 10 trillion US dollars in so-called transitioning over the last 20, 25 years. Almost \$9.5 or \$10 trillion if I’m not mistaken. And where are we today? Renewables still only form about 3 or 4%,” he noted.

Neither OPEC in general nor he personally are against the use of renewable energy sources, Al Ghais stressed. “In fact, our countries are some of the leaders in embracing renewable energies. But we are all about taking a balanced approach,” he continued. “Oil is paramount to providing energy security to the world. Energy security drives global economic prosperity and growth. Without oil, the world will stop,” the OPEC Secretary General added.

TASS

<http://tass.com/>

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Nationwide power outage in Sri Lanka caused by rogue monkey in electrical grid

A countrywide power outage that left many stuck without cool air during a sweltering hot day in Sri Lanka has been blamed on a rogue monkey who climbed into a power station south of the capital Colombo.

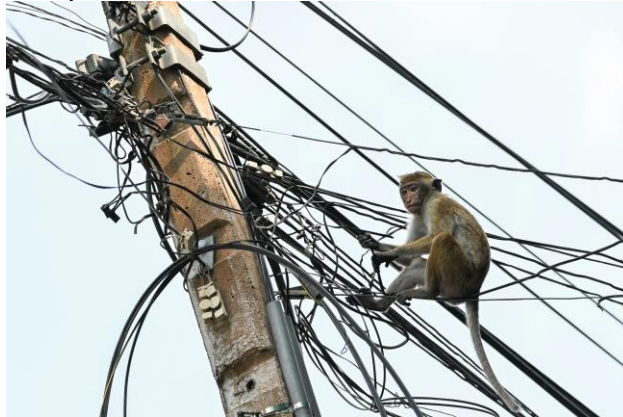
The blackout hit around midday Sunday right as temperatures peaked for the day around 86 degrees Fahrenheit. It left the entire nation, home to approximately 22 million people, without any power and compromised key facilities including hospitals and water purification plants. “A monkey came into contact with our grid transformer, causing an imbalance in the power system,” the energy minister, Kumara Jayakody, explained to reporters.

Areas without generators were still dark as night fell. The Ceylon Electricity Board, home to the grid that was bamboozled by just one monkey, issued an apology but didn’t

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touch on how exactly one small animal could cause such a catastrophe. Sri Lanka has long struggled with energy security, with experts consistently warning that its power grid is outdated and prone to disruptions.



“The national power grid is in such a weakened state that frequent island-wide power outages may be expected if there is a disturbance in one of our lines,” an unnamed senior engineer was quoted as saying by the Daily Mirror. In 2022, the nation had rolling blackouts during the depth of an economic crisis coupled with fuel shortages that forced authorities to ration electricity for up to 13 hours daily. Sri Lankans weren’t perturbed, though, and took to social media to poke fun at their nation’s flimsy power grid. “One monkey = total chaos. Time to rethink infrastructure?” one user wrote. “Only in Sri Lanka can a monkey knock out the entire nation’s electricity,” another joked. The monkey’s fate is unclear.

NYP

<http://nypost.com/>

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US power use to reach record highs in 2025 and 2026, EIA says

U.S. power consumption will rise to record highs in 2025 and 2026, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said in its Short-Term Energy Outlook on Tuesday. With growing demand from data centers dedicated to artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency and with homes and businesses using more electricity for heat and transportation, EIA projected power demand will rise to 4,179 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) in 2025 and 4,239 billion kWh in 2026, up from a record 4,082 billion kWh in 2024. EIA forecast 2025 power sales will rise to 1,524 billion kWh for residential consumers, 1,458 billion kWh for commercial customers and 1,054 billion kWh for industrial customers.

Those forecasts compare to all-time highs of 1,509 billion kWh for residential consumers in 2022, 1,421 billion kWh in 2024 for commercial customers and 1,064 billion kWh in 2000 for industrial customers. EIA said natural gas' share of power generation would slide from 43% in 2024 to 40% in 2025 and 39% in 2026. Coal's share will ease from 16% in 2024 and 2025 to 15% in 2026, as renewable output rises.

The percentage of renewable generation will rise from 23% in 2024 to 25% in 2025 and 27% in 2026, while nuclear power's share will hold at the 2024 level of 19% in 2025 and 2026, according to the outlook. EIA projected gas sales in 2025 would rise to 13.1 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd) for residential consumers and 9.7 bcf for commercial customers, but fall to 23.1 bcf for industrial customers and 35.7 bcf for power generation. That compares with all-time highs of 14.3 bcf in 1996 for residential consumers, 9.6 bcf in 2019 for commercial customers, 23.8 bcf in 1973 for industrial customers and 36.9 bcf in 2024 for power generation.

Reuters

<http://www.reuters.com/>

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Pacific Blue reveals ageing Codrington Wind Farm decommissioning plans

One of Australia's first commercial wind farms has been earmarked for decommissioning after its owners ruled out replacing aging turbines due to cost. The Codrington Wind Farm opened near Port Fairy in south-west Victoria in July 2001, marking a new frontier in renewable energy in Australia. The site was deemed "close to perfect" due to its strong prevailing winds off the Southern Ocean when Premier Steve Bracks opened what was at the time Australia's largest wind farm.

Nearly 24 years later the site's operator Pacific Blue has unveiled plans to cease operations by 2027 and decommission the wind farm, including removing its 14 turbines. A Pacific Blue spokesperson said it was not pursuing re-powering the farm as it was not financially viable. The ABC understands the site's grid connection would require significant and expensive upgrades, while the spacing required between larger modern turbines meant the site would only be able to host four.

The older turbines at Codrington are much smaller than their newer counterparts, with a blade tip height of 81 metres compared to more than 100 metres in modern turbines. The company said it met with landowners and local representatives to outline its early decommissioning plans in 2024 and it would engage with the broader community and other stakeholders later this year.

Permit conditions required the company to complete the decommissioning within 12 months of the wind farm ceasing operations, the spokesperson said. The company said it would explore "recycling options for as much of the site's infrastructure as possible". The site is among the first of a generation of older wind farms that are approaching the end of working life. Pacific Blue also operates Challicum Hills, near Ararat in the state's west, which was established in 2003, and Yambuk wind farm in south-west Victoria which opened in 2005. These sites will remain operational. The Clean Energy Council has been speaking with Pacific Blue regarding the decommissioning process.

The council's policy director Nick Aberle said the site was not large enough for up-to-date wind turbines, which were larger and could generate six times more energy than the turbines at Codrington. "It's not necessarily worth anyone's while to go through what is a very thorough and complex assessment process to get approval to build or re-power a wind farm," he said. "Companies don't tend to do that if it's a handful of turbines."

Renewable Energy Alliance national director Andrew Bray said there were a number of factors that fed into the decision of whether to re-power a site. This included the type of grid connection, the location of the site, and landowner agreement. "In a way, we're looking at a bit of a time capsule here because we're looking at projects that were built 25 years ago when technology was very different," he said.

ABC

<http://www.abc.net.au/>

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China to switch from FITs to market-oriented renewables pricing

China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the National Energy Administration (NEA) have issued a directive to accelerate market-based pricing for renewable energy, including wind and solar power. The reform will overhaul how energy from these sources is priced and traded, with significant implications for developers and investors.

Starting June 1, 2025, all electricity from renewable energy projects must be sold through market transactions, replacing the current feed-in tariff system with market-driven

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pricing. Projects can either submit bids for pricing and output or accept the prevailing market rate. For projects commissioned before June 2025, the transition will follow a price-difference settlement mechanism, aligning grid connection pricing with current policy. New projects starting after the deadline will have power purchase agreements adjusted dynamically based on local renewable energy targets, with pricing set through competitive bidding.

The NDRC and NEA held a press conference outlining the policy's three key components:

- Full market pricing: Renewable energy will be sold primarily through market transactions, with prices set by supply and demand.
- Sustainable price settlement mechanism: A system will ensure long-term pricing stability for renewable energy projects.
- Differentiated treatment for existing and new projects: Existing projects will retain pricing under current policies, while new projects will shift to market-based rates.

China's renewable energy pricing has evolved through multiple phases.

Between 2014 and 2017, PV projects operated under fixed-price tariffs and regional subsidies, ensuring stable returns and attracting investment. Mounting subsidy costs led to a shift in 2018 toward competitive bidding, where winning bidders secured subsidies at significantly lower rates, intensifying market competition and pushing developers to cut costs.

By 2020, falling solar costs allowed some renewable projects to achieve "grid parity," aligning with coal-fired power prices. This led to nationwide pricing standardization and incentives for trading in the spot electricity market. However, fluctuating revenues prompted further government intervention, including green certificate trading, to support struggling projects.

The latest reform marks the biggest shift in renewable energy pricing since 2018. Industry analysts say that while the policy aligns with broader market-based reforms, its scale has surpassed expectations. A key concern is uncertainty over how provincial governments will implement the market mechanism. Post-June 2025 pricing remains unpredictable, though analysts expect prices to decline. This uncertainty may trigger a surge in project installations before the deadline, but the market's likely trajectory after that point is still unclear.

Pv-magazine

<http://www.pv-magazine.com/>

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Norway to open protected rivers to hydropower plants

The Norwegian parliament has voted to open up protected rivers to hydropower plants, prompting fury from conservation groups who fear for the fate of fish and other wildlife.

The bill allows power plants bigger than 1MW to be built in protected waterways if the societal benefit is "significant" and the environmental consequences "acceptable". It was voted through on Thursday as part of measures to improve flood and landslide protection. Une Bastholm, a Green member of parliament, described the proposal as "a historic attack on Norwegian nature" when it was unveiled last week. Environment campaigners say they believe the proposal will lead to an "endless stream" of new battles over river development. They criticised the government, who they said rushed it through without proper public consultation or environmental impact assessments. Norwegian firm lobbying to open Rosebank oilfield halves green investments

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Truls Gulowsen, head of the Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature, said: “We will fight for every single protected watercourse, for every river, every waterfall and every lake. We will not give up what we have won through more than a hundred years of watercourse struggle because of an ill-considered and irresponsible hasty decision.” Norway, a Nordic country known for its dramatic fjords and pristine nature, has protected nearly 400 waterways with plans that keep them from being dammed by large power plants. Its rivers and the species in them have separately come under threat from intensive farming and the climate crisis.

Campaigners protested outside the Norwegian parliament on Tuesday and presented a petition opposing hydropower development in protected waterways that they said gathered 25,000 signatures. Supporters of the proposal claim critics have “hyped up” the dangers to nature. The criteria for approval remains unchanged and companies seeking to build hydropower dams would still face strict assessments before being granted a permit. The proposal was voted through on Thursday by the Conservative party, the Progress party, the Labour party and the Centre party. The Christian Democrats withdrew their support, citing uncertainty over the wording. Pål Mugaas, a spokesperson for Norske Lakseelver (Norwegian Salmon Rivers), said: “It’s a sad day for the wild salmon and all the other species in what was supposed to be permanently protected rivers.”

Disputes over renewable energy have rocked Norwegian politics in recent months. The government collapsed at the end of January in a row over adopting the EU’s latest clean energy package. The Norwegian electricity grid is among the cleanest on the planet – a result of its hydropower dams – and the country is a net power exporter that has long enjoyed cheap bills.

Merethe Dotterud Leiren, a political scientist at the Cicero Centre for International Climate Research, said: “This situation makes it politically harder to defend investments in renewables.” Norway’s clean energy conflicts have so far centred on wind turbines. The refusal to dismantle a wind farm that was found to have violated the rights of indigenous Sámi reindeer herders in 2021 has attracted the support of climate campaigners around the world, including Swedish activist Greta Thunberg.

Leiren said: “In general, Norwegians are more positive to hydropower than windpower. However, there are basically no places left to build large hydroelectric power plants without building in protected nature.” Fornybar Norge, the Norwegian renewable energy lobby group, said in a statement last week that it supported the proposal to loosen river protections. It said: “This will, among other things, be relevant for projects that have a significant flood-reducing effect. At the same time, it is good that the decision is not a free pass for the construction of new facilities in protected watercourses.” The Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE) has previously said there is little power to be gained from exploiting rivers without significant interventions into nature. Kjetil Lund, the NVE director, told Norwegian broadcaster NRK on Tuesday: “There is barely any great potential for development in protected waterways, unless you want to exploit the most beautiful, most valuable nature we have.”

The Guardian
<http://www.theguardian.com/>

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New EV Charging Station Schemes Thwart Trump’s Nevi Squeeze

The \$5 billion National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program, aimed at establishing a nationwide network of public EV fast charging stations, has been halted by President Trump. The program, funded under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, had already allocated significant resources, with 39 states issuing solicitations and eight states

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opening NEVI-funded stations, totaling 61 ports. Over 2,500 additional ports were in the pipeline. The freeze disrupts state and private investments but does not entirely halt EV charging infrastructure development.

Private initiatives like the IONNA joint venture, involving automakers such as BMW, General Motors, and Toyota, are advancing EV charging solutions. IONNA plans to deploy 1,000 charging bays by the end of 2024, with a long-term goal of 30,000 bays over five years. Their “Rechargery” model offers a lounge-style experience, seamless reservations, and AI-assisted payment systems, aiming to enhance the EV charging experience.

Green banks and utilities are also supporting EV infrastructure. The New York Green Bank recently financed Revel’s installation of 267 charging ports, while Illinois utility ComEd launched a \$100 million rebate program for home and commercial EV chargers. Ford is extending its free home charger and installation offer through March 2025 to boost EV adoption. In the rental housing market, startups are offering turnkey EV charging solutions to address landlord and tenant challenges. Fleet electrification efforts continue, with CLEAResult introducing the “ChooseEV” tool to help utilities and fleet owners transition to EVs. Despite the NEVI freeze, multiple stakeholders are driving the expansion of EV charging infrastructure across the U.S.

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14 February 2025

Iberdrola starts onshore construction on 2GW Eastern Green Link 1 project

Iberdrola has announced the start of onshore construction on the 2GW Eastern Green Link 1 (EGL1) subsea electricity superhighway project between Scotland and England. Eastern Green Link 1 is a joint venture (JV) between Iberdrola’s subsidiary, ScottishPower Energy Networks (SP Energy Networks), and National Grid Electricity Transmission. The transmission project entails an investment of £2.5bn. The 190km long Eastern Green Link 1 involves a 525kV bipolar voltage-sourced converter (VSC) and a high-voltage direct current (HVDC) subsea transmission cable from Torness in East Lothian, Scotland to Hawthorn Pit in County Durham, England.

Once completed, the east-coast subsea link is expected to transport clean electricity to two million households. The subsea electricity superhighway project is slated to be operational by 2029. UK Energy Minister Michael Shanks said: “This new electric superhighway will help us on our way by transporting more renewable energy under the North Sea to power millions of homes and businesses, while supporting skilled jobs in our industrial heartlands and saving billpayers hundreds of millions of pounds.”

Eastern Green Link 1 was approved by Ofgem last year. Offshore works at the project are scheduled to begin in the summer. As part of the development, two converter stations will be built at both landfall points to convert alternating current (AC) into direct current (DC), enabling efficient long-distance power transmission. Specialised vessels will lay and bury the cable along the seabed before connecting it to the national grid.

SP Energy Networks CEO Nicola Connelly said: “Eastern Green Link 1 will play a transformative role in delivering the modern electricity network needed for the future. “At the same time, it will deliver economic growth, jobs and a supply chain boost right across the UK but importantly also for the communities hosting this vital infrastructure.” In December 2023, National Grid Electricity Transmission and SP Energy Networks selected Prysmian to supply nearly 400km of power cables for the project.

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