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Supply chain issue number one for US

The US offshore wind sector must now focus on developing the local supply chain to deliver the 30GW by 2030 installed capacity target set by the Biden administration, IPF 2021 will hear.

Conference speakers in Richmond, Virginia, will this week put the spotlight on how the country can build a much-needed support industry and provide vessels to build wind farms as Washington steps up the pace of leasing and permitting.

Participants want to see how the industry's growing momentum can be translated into a trained and ready workforce, said Ruth Perry, business environment advisor for offshore wind at Shell Renewables and Energy Solutions.

One potential problem for the nascent US supply chain is competition from abroad with other nations also seeking to ramp up their own offshore wind industries at the same time, said Tony Appleton, director of offshore wind with Burns & McDonnell.

Chris Pfisterer, VP of energy integration business development at Lloyd's Register, said there is a lot of buzz around the domestic supply chain because it is so new but there are challenges, including with port infrastructure.

Pfisterer, who is scheduled to address a session at 3:30pm Thursday, said a key concern remains the lack of Jones Act-compliant turbine installation vessels.

Bruce Harland, Crowley Maritime VP, meanwhile said the positive vibes have yet to translate into firm work.

There is still hesitancy on the part of developers to commit to longer timeframes for utilization of assets after seeing the time it took Vineyard Wind 1 to get the federal go-ahead.

Before building US-flagged vessels targeting the domestic market, Crowley wants to make sure it can get its money back, which means investments measured in four- to five-year spans instead of those measured in months.

"We're looking for that kind of commitment for $100m service (vessels) to maintain wind farms," said Harland.

However, as the US evolves from fixed to floating wind farms, it will foster significant investment in a similar way to the oil and gas industry 60 years ago. "This is a once in a lifetime industry developing in the US," he declared.

IPF will also hear about a growing belief that a large-scale US offshore wind industry is achievable based on high-level policy backing.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy's accelerated activities have hopefully alleviated some concern among developers about escalating lease pricing, said Ben Roberts, senior VP with Marsh.

Damian Bednarz, managing director at EnBW North America, said the conclusions this month from the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report are "more than sobering, they're alarming".

Offshore wind has an opportunity to be part of the solution while also creating an economic engine for decades, he added.

Shell wants to be lease kingpin in Gulf of Mexico

Shell is looking to become the largest offshore wind lease holder in the Gulf of Mexico, according to Ruth Perry, business environment advisor for offshore wind at Shell Renewables and Energy Solutions. Photo: noaa.gov

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Floating wind farms are the future for America

The US will have to get to grips with floating offshore wind if the nation is to fully realise its marine renewables potential, IPF 2021 will hear. p3

Building on a monumental year in the US

Liz Burdock, chief executive of IPF 2021 host the Business Network for Offshore Wind, celebrates a return to an in-person event at a critical junction for the industry and society. p4

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Today, Josh Irwin, US commercial leader, offshore, Vestas. p5

HIGHLIGHTS

Sweet Virginia

Get into the spirit with the IPF 2021 welcome reception sponsored by Dominion Energy, Commonwealth of Virginia, Siemens Gamesa and Avangrid Renewables, before hitting the Dominion Energy Party to taste some of the local fare.

Tuesday: Exhibition Halls A&B, 5pm-6pm & Kanawah Plaza, 6pm-8pm

From zero to hero

Business Network for Offshore Wind CEO Liz Burdock gives her state of the nation address to open the conference proper in a speech entitled *The Challenges We Face: Getting to Net Zero.*

Wednesday: Grand Ballroom, Level 2, 9am

We're coming to America - Today!

Orsted North America boss David Hardy outlines his vision for building a US offshore wind industry.

Wednesday: Grand Ballroom, Level 2, 9.50am

Interior design

US Department of Interior Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau will be on the spot to give Washington's take on offshore wind.

Wednesday: Grand Ballroom, Level 2, 11am

Scotch and Champagne

Kick back after a long day of debate and networking with the IPF's late-night Scotch and Champagne reception.

Wednesday: Corner Rapid Bar Marriott Hotel, 9.30pm

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Shell wants to be kingpin in Gulf of Mexico

Shell is looking to become the largest offshore wind lease holder in the Gulf of Mexico, an executive told reNEWS.

The oil and gas giant is actively pursuing acreage off the US south coast, said Ruth Perry, business environment advisor for offshore wind at Shell Renewables and Energy Solutions.

The company, which was recently awarded 1.6GW of capacity off New Jersey as part of the Atlantic Shores partnership, is also eying floating potential in California.

The company sees itself playing a lead role in offshore wind as it has in global oil and gas, she added.

"For Shell, we see this as one of our top energy transition portfolios," said Perry, who is due to give remarks as part of a panel discussing the integration of science and policy scheduled for 1pm Wednesday.

During the panel she will discuss the how the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, a 2021-30 initiative designed to reverse ocean health decline, relates to the domestic and global offshore wind industry.

She will also focus on research and data collection in light of concerns among stakeholders, such as fishermen, in areas that have yet to experience energy infrastructure development.

"Stakeholders and ocean users can work together on science, policy and management in a collaborative way that benefits the nation," she said ahead of IPF 2021.

New team to target floating wind market

Subsea equipment provider DeepWater Buoyancy has signed a memorandum of understanding with Tekmar Group focused on the emerging floating offshore wind market.

The companies aim to add value via geotechnical assessment and engineering analysis, cable and mooring system design, cable protection and stabilization solutions, cable buoyancy and mooring line buoyancy.

The partnership also aims to strengthen Tekmar's presence and manufacturing capability in the US fixed offshore wind market and provides DeepWater with greater access to the European market.

"The partnership supports Tekmar Group's ambition for the global floating wind market and the US fixed offshore wind market," said Tekmar group sales director Gary Howland.

Unveiling for US offshore workforce training and development program

Florida-based Crowley Maritime and the Massachusetts Maritime Academy are aiming to help fill the gap in the US offshore wind workforce with a first-of-its-kind training and development program, the companies will announce at IPF 2021

Targeted specifically at the New England region, the Global Wind Organization-certified program will include sea safety and survival training.

The academy will coordinate with Relyon Nutec, a provider of specialized instruction for the energy and industrial sectors, to deliver the courses.

Crowley Maritime is in addition exploring the limitations around feeder-based logistics in the offshore wind sector.

Vice president Bruce Harland, who is due to speak about the topic during an IPF panel 2:30pm Wednesday, said the work comes under the National Offshore Wind Research and Development Consortium, which will be discussed during conference.

Crowley Maritime has been studying tie-up solutions and has advanced a concept for a floating feeder service that uses existing US tugs and barges.

■ Belgian service provider Manora Logistics has established its first office in the US, in Charlottesville, Virginia, the company will announce at IPF 2021.

"Manora is excited to leverage this expertise to help develop the US offshore wind market, de-risk transport operations, ensure projects are delivered per determined quality requirements and prevent cost overruns," it said

■ Temporary power generation equipment supplier Aggreko is looking to expand its footprint in the US, the company said at IPF. "Aggreko looks forward to partnering with current customers and forging relationships with new market leaders."

Floating wind farms are the future for America

The US will have to get to grips with floating offshore wind if the nation is to fully realise its marine renewables potential, IPF 2021 will hear.

Several sessions are planned at this week's conference to address aspects of the nascent industry, including on mooring solutions.

Developers will have to adopt floating wind technology when the limited area suitable for fixed-bottom arrays is exhausted, said EnBW North America CEO Lars Gonschorek.

Over the next decade or so, he predicted floating technology will become the industry standard.

EnBW's proposed 1GW Castle Wind Offshore project in the Morro Bay call area off California, where it is partnered with Trident Winds, is anticipated to be a floating wind farm.

"We're very, very confident about this technology," Gonschorek said ahead of the IPF conference, which he is to attend. "Floating technology is going to be the future of offshore wind."

Mooring and anchoring systems are key and can account for about 20% of a floating project's capex, according to the IPF agenda item for a panel about mooring solutions scheduled for 1 p.m. Wednesday.

The objective is to discuss ways of reducing overall installation and material costs for mooring on arrays with 10 or more turbines.

One of the panelists is James Soliah, subsea manager with US anchor, mooring and subsea energy company Delmar Systems.

He told reNEWS he plans to focus on mooring design, maintenance planning and risk assessment in his remarks.

Soliah will discuss emerging offshore mooring technology such as shared foundations and line damping devices.

There is huge potential for running software modelling concurrently with physical turbines to help with inspection and maintenance plans, enabling the prediction of fatigue failures and the end of a turbine's life, he added.

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editorial@reNEWS.biz
reNEWS.biz

Digital taste of the day job offshore

Siemens Gamesa is developing an offshore wind virtual reality simulation program with the aim of saving money on training and helping build a stable of technicians.

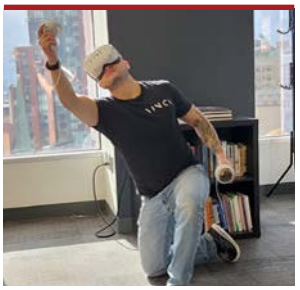
The turbine manufacturer's head of Americas training and service Cynthia Brown told reNEWS virtual reality can provide much-needed training for a new workforce.

In addition to helping with the company's own training needs, she said she is hoping the technology can generate interest among potential future workers who are now in elementary, middle and high school.

Brown is speaking at IPF 2021 on Wednesday during a session entitled *How Virtual Reality is Shaking up Training, Workforce Development, and Diversity & Inclusion.*

She said the discussions will give attendees a unique opportunity to experience what the inside of a nacelle looks and feels like. The panel is scheduled to explore how Siemens Gamesa and Vinci VR — which were awarded a $124,670 grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to create the first Global Wind Organization-certified virtual reality training tools — are creating technologies that "enable realistic, low cost, and world class training for any community, including disadvantaged ones", according to the agenda.

Attendees will also learn how virtual reality can integrate into GWO courses and bring wind turbines into any classroom in the US.



VIRTUAL LESSONS: a trainee tightening a virtual bolt during turbine installation training Photo: Vinci VR

Building on a monumental year in the US

Liz Burdock *(left)*, chief executive of IPF 2021 host the Business Network for Offshore Wind, celebrates a return to an in-person event at a critical junction for the industry and society

It is with great pleasure that I welcome back everyone to an in-person International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum, North America's premier offshore wind event. The Business Network for Offshore Wind has worked diligently with local authorities to ensure we are healthy together at IPF as we reconnect to grow this incredible sector.

We are at a critical junction in our industry and within our society. This past year has been the most monumental year in the US offshore wind sector but industry-wide challenges threaten to delay progress while societal demands for clean energy grow more urgent.

We should celebrate the successes but understand that we must accelerate development to meet our own goals and fulfill the hopes laid on our industry.

Earlier this month, the United Nations issued a historic and sobering report on the effects of climate change concluding we are locked into rising temperatures over the next few decades.

If we are to limit these effects, the world must take dramatic action today to transition to a renewable energy future.

We will soon find already ambitious state and federal offshore wind procurement goals growing larger as governments race to achieve decarbonization goals.

It will take coordination and collaboration to scale our industry up to meet this challenge. Several of our premier plenary sessions will revolve around the question of acceleration, such as *The Challenges We Face: Getting to Net Zero* and *Reaching 100% — How Much Offshore Wind is Needed for Public and Corporate Goals?*

Attendees will hear directly from Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Director Amanda Lefton on how the agency will fulfill its goal of installing 30GW of offshore wind power by 2030. They will also hear from Virginia Senator Mark Warner about how officials in Washington DC are moving to address development roadblocks.

We have not been idle. Years of steady progress in state capitals and boardrooms laid the groundwork for the flurry of activity we have seen in just the past eight months. The federal government set a new pace with its 30GW goal and the steps it has already taken to achieve it such as advancing the permitting process, funding vital research and investing in port infrastructure.

We saw construction of the first turbines in federal waters, final permitting approval of the first commercial-scale wind farm, and the keel-laying of a Jones Act-compliant wind installation vessel in Texas.

The US does not operate in a vacuum, however, and governments around the globe are turning to offshore wind to solve their renewable energy demands. Surging global demand could impede local development if the US fails to sufficiently develop its own supply chain.

IPF attendees will be actively working to solve the problem. The relationships born and built at IPF will lead to new business ventures and partnerships that will grow the US supply chain.

For once, we have a steady tailwind and the next year is full of promise. Members of Congress are right now debating Bills that will directly impact our industry and the federal government continues to search for ways to assist the sector.

We must capture the momentum and accelerate our development because every day our goals grow larger. Take this time at IPF to recommit to grow, evolve and accelerate our industry forward — together. ■

THE INTERVIEW reNEWS

Setting the scene at IPF 2021, senior industry figures talk to reNEWS about vital issues shaping the sector. Today it's the turn of Josh Irwin *(left)*, US commercial leader, offshore, Vestas

Q What are the key talking points for Vestas during IPF 2021?

A Last year, we brought our offshore business, previously held in a joint venture, entirely back under the Vestas roof. Immediately that allowed us to bring the full resources of Vestas, the global leader in wind with more than 30,000 people, to bear on our offshore ambitions. Simultaneously we unveiled the V236-15MW turbine, the largest available on the market. That technology is based both on our highly reliable EnVentus onshore platform and on our proven offshore machines operating today. The market has reacted very favorably both to the new structure and the new product. Both of these milestones are well timed to support 30GW by 2030 in the US and we expect to play a major role in achieving those numbers.

Q Do you feel that the permitting backlog in the US has been sufficiently dealt with now to clear enough projects in time to reach the end-decade goal of 30GW?

A BOEM is clearly taking significant steps to address the permitting backlog, and we are pleased to see the agency commence review of multiple projects in the Northeast. Of course, permitting is only one step in the process and we are still years away from installing the first utility-scale projects in the US. Reaching the 30GW goal will take a concerted effort, not just from BOEM but from state agencies, port authorities, labor groups and others. It will require our industry to work together with Congress to ensure we have the support necessary to build American vessels, train our incoming workforce and improve the grid. There are many pieces to this puzzle but overall we are very optimistic about achieving 30GW.

Q What can policymakers do to support development in the short to medium term? Permitting aside what are the other major challenges for the US in the coming years?

A We see the following challenges and areas for policymaker support: 1) developing a robust global and local supply chain, 2) redevelopment of ports and harbors to accommodate the most efficient marshalling and construction of projects, especially as turbines continue to grow larger, 3) addressing our aging grid, 4) building a skilled workforce to support the rapid expansion of the industry from the supply chain through to project execution and service, and 5) maintaining a stable and predictable regulatory structure.

Q What can the industry do to overcome these challenges? Is your company doing anything specific to address them?

A Overcoming these challenges means first and foremost collaboration between local communities, federal and state agencies, and key stakeholders. And, of course, a Congressional infrastructure package must address the situation with the grid and support expansion of the ports and harbors that are the linchpin of the rapid build-out the industry seeks. As for our own efforts, Vestas is leveraging both our global and local supply chains to support the US market. We have strong local partnerships, including over 1000 suppliers in the US, that participate in our onshore wind business, some of whom also have a role to play offshore. Workforce development is another strong focus. We seek to ensure that the promise of offshore wind is widely shared among different constituencies in the US. Vestas works with wind energy education programs, training facilities and industry partners to develop training capabilities. Developing a skilled workforce capable of safely performing work at sea takes time. It is important to identify and educate workers now to meet surging demand in the rest of the decade and beyond.

Photo: Vestas

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