

A MILESTONE CLOSER TO THE PORTUGUESE FIRST OFFSHORE WIND AUCTION

The Portuguese Ministry of Economy advisory committee has approved the plan for allocating maritime areas to wind energy production drafted by the Directorate-General for Natural Resources, Safety, and Maritime Services.

CONTACTS

JOÃO MACEDO VITORINO

JVITORINO@MACEDOVITORINO.COM

FREDERICO VIDIGAL

FVIDIGAL@MACEDOVITORINO.COM

MANUEL TOLEDO

MTOLEDO@MACEDOVITORINO.COM

The advisory committee of the Portuguese Minister of Economy has approved the draft plan for the allocation of areas and volumes in the national maritime space for offshore windfarms (“PAER”) drafted by the Directorate-General for Natural Resources, Safety, and Maritime Services.

For that purpose, the advisory committee work group appointed one year ago by the Portuguese Government engaged in an in-depth consultation process from May to September 2023. During this period, collaborative efforts from diverse stakeholders shaped an acceptable solution to all while maintaining a balanced approach to accommodating various activities within the national maritime boundaries.

For instance, concerns were raised, particularly by the fishing industry and environmental advocacy groups, about potential environmental and biodiversity impacts in the context of offshore wind energy, and consequently, the working group responsible for defining the rules for the inaugural offshore wind auction revisited the designated auction areas.

According to the working group's proposal, there is the potential to generate up to 2 GW of electricity in Viana do Castelo, solidifying its role as a significant contributor to the Government's phased auction strategy aimed at awarding until 2030 up to 10 GW of offshore wind power.

By year-end, exploration opportunities will expand to encompass 3.5 GW in areas off Viana do Castelo, Leixões, and Figueira da Foz.

A recent announcement from the Ministry of Economy marks the beginning of the next phase, which will involve an upcoming public consultation, the details of which will be disclosed soon.

In the coming months, the Portuguese Government intends to initiate the first national auction for these purposes, with the initial tenders expected to be announced later this year and the actual competitions scheduled to take place in early 2024.

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