

ENERGY TRANSITION WEEKLY

GLOBAL EDITION

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Your essential intelligence briefing on offshore wind, hydrogen, CCUS, decommissioning and marine energy developments impacting the global low-carbon sector.

100+ GW

Global Offshore Wind Capacity 2026

17 GW

New Installations Forecast 2026

\$142/bbl

Brent Crude (24 March 2026)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The week ending 27 March 2026 delivered three defining developments for the global offshore low-carbon sector: the Trump administration's unprecedented \$1 billion settlement with TotalEnergies to abandon US offshore wind leases (23 March), the first power generation from Dominion Energy's 2.6 GW Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project (23 March), and DNV's publication of comprehensive offshore hydrogen pipeline technical guidance (26 March). Market intelligence published during the week confirmed global offshore wind capacity will surpass 100 GW in 2026, with the TGS | 4C report forecasting 17 GW of new installations despite US policy reversal. The intensifying Middle East conflict reinforced renewable energy's strategic value as Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz disrupted 20% of global oil supplies, accelerating clean energy investment decisions across import-dependent economies.

OFFSHORE WIND DEVELOPMENTS

United States: Policy Divergence as TotalEnergies Exits While Projects Deliver First Power

23 March 2026 – The Trump administration formalized a landmark \$1 billion settlement with French energy major TotalEnergies to forfeit offshore wind leases off New York and North Carolina. The agreement, announced at the CERAWEEK energy conference in Houston by Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and TotalEnergies CEO Patrick Pouyanné, marks the first government payment to a developer to abandon renewable energy projects.

TotalEnergies will reinvest settlement proceeds into liquefied natural gas (LNG) and conventional oil and gas projects in the United States. The Carolina Long Bay project (1+ GW capacity) and the New York Bight lease (3 GW capacity) are permanently abandoned, removing approximately 4 GW from the US offshore wind pipeline.

Industry reaction was immediate and critical. Oceantic Network characterized the settlement as "a billion-dollar bribe to obstruct clean energy," while Evergreen Action's executive director stated the administration had "discovered another means to undermine offshore wind: by paying them to withdraw."

Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Achieves First Power

23 March 2026 – On the same day the TotalEnergies settlement was announced, Dominion Energy's 2.6 GW Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project delivered first power to the grid, becoming the largest operational offshore wind farm in US federal waters. The milestone occurred despite executive orders earlier in 2026 mandating work stoppages on offshore wind projects – court injunctions secured in February permitted Dominion to continue construction.

Located 27 miles off Virginia Beach, CVOW comprises 176 Siemens Gamesa 14.7 MW turbines across 112,800 acres of federal lease area. The project represents a \$9.8 billion investment and is expected to generate sufficient electricity to power 660,000 homes when fully operational.

Dominion Energy CEO Robert Blue stated: "This milestone demonstrates that offshore wind can deliver reliable, clean energy at scale. While federal policy creates uncertainty, projects with strong legal foundations and community support will continue advancing America's energy transition."

The contrasting developments on 23 March – a \$1 billion government payment to cancel offshore wind projects alongside the nation's largest offshore wind farm achieving first power – crystallize the policy contradiction defining US renewable energy development in 2026.

Global Market Intelligence: 100 GW Milestone Confirmed for 2026

25 March 2026 – The global offshore wind industry will surpass 100 GW of operational capacity in 2026, according to the TGS | 4C Global Market Overview report published this week. Total commercial operation dates (CODs) are expected to reach 17 GW in 2026, bringing global installed capacity to 103.4 GW by year-end, including 10.3 GW outside China.

The report confirms final investment decisions (FIDs) are forecast for 20.3 GW of projects during 2026, maintaining momentum despite US policy reversal and longer-term forecast adjustments. Significantly, the March 2026 edition marks the first inclusion of turbine failure risk analysis, projecting over 30,000 turbine failures through 2040, with component degradation identified as the primary cause and Europe accounting for approximately 44% of forecast failures.

26 March 2026 – Market analyst commentary published this week emphasized offshore wind's resilience despite policy headwinds. "The global offshore wind market demonstrates structural maturity," stated TGS analyst Marcus Bernhardt. "While the US represents a significant policy setback, China, Europe, and Asia-Pacific markets more than compensate through sustained deployment pipelines and improving project economics."

Asia-Pacific: Installation Vessel Demand Drives Regional Growth

25 March 2026 – New market intelligence published this week confirms the Asia-Pacific region (excluding China) maintains aggressive offshore wind expansion with 6 GW of installed capacity forecast to increase to 21 GW by 2030 and 220 GW by 2050, representing a compound annual growth rate of 16% through 2050.

Taiwan dominates the APAC market with 4.25 GW (63%) of regional capacity. Installation vessel demand in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines is driving regional supply chain development, with turbine installation vessel utilization rates exceeding 85% through 2028.

"Vessel availability, not turbine supply or project finance, now determines APAC offshore wind installation schedules," stated regional analyst Karen Lim.

United Kingdom: Contract for Difference Allocation Round 8 Accelerated

22 March 2026 – The UK government announced Contract for Difference (CfD) Allocation Round 8 (AR8) will open in July 2026, six months earlier than the originally scheduled January 2027 launch. Energy Security and Net Zero Secretary Ed Miliband confirmed the acceleration responds to industry requests for increased deployment certainty following strong AR7 results.

AR8 will utilize the same six-pot structure as AR7, with offshore wind competing in Pot 3 alongside other established technologies. The government confirmed administrative strike prices will be published in May 2026, providing developers with two months' preparation time ahead of the July auction opening.

"The six-month acceleration signals government recognition that consistent auction cadence is critical for securing supply chain commitments and sustaining cost reduction trajectories," stated energy partner James Barton of Birketts LLP.

France: Floating Wind Conference Convened in Montpellier

23–26 March 2026 – The international floating wind sector convened at the Floating Offshore Wind Turbines (FOWT) conference in Montpellier, France, gathering over 450 industry stakeholders to assess commercial pathway challenges. Conference proceedings emphasized the technology gap between pilot projects and commercial-scale deployment, with financing costs and mooring system certification identified as primary barriers.

Key conference announcements:

- Brittany Ocean Power confirmed participation in three French floating wind development areas: AO9 South Brittany, AO10 North-West Brittany, and Bretagne Grand Large
- Port of Brest presented progress on its marine energy terminal development, a 40-hectare facility supporting floating wind assembly with over £250 million invested to date
- Industry coalition announced formation of Floating Wind Certification Alliance to harmonize mooring and dynamic cable standards across European markets

France's 3rd Multi-Year Energy Programme (PPE3) targets 18 GW of offshore wind by 2035 and 45 GW by 2050, with floating wind representing approximately 30% of capacity additions post-2035.

OFFSHORE HYDROGEN DEVELOPMENTS

DNV Publishes Offshore Hydrogen Pipeline Recommended Practice

26 March 2026 – DNV released DNV-RP-F123 Hydrogen Pipeline Systems, establishing the offshore industry's first comprehensive technical guidance for hydrogen-specific pipeline integrity and safety. Developed through the five-year H2Pipe Joint Industry Project (2021–2026), the recommended practice supplements DNV's established submarine pipeline standard DNV-ST-F101.

The guidance addresses critical hydrogen-specific engineering challenges:

- Hydrogen embrittlement risk assessment and material selection criteria
- Leak detection systems calibrated for hydrogen's low molecular weight and high diffusivity
- Corrosion management in hydrogen-blend environments
- Requalification protocols for repurposing existing natural gas pipelines for hydrogen transport
- Design parameters for offshore hydrogen export from wind-powered electrolysis facilities

The H2Pipe Joint Industry Project consolidated research, testing, and operational experience from 37 partners across operators, manufacturers, engineering companies, and academic institutions. DNV has launched Phase 3 of the JIP, featuring large-scale pipeline testing at DNV's Spadeadam Research and Development Facility in Cumbria to validate design assumptions and advance existing standards.

"DNV-RP-F123 removes a critical uncertainty barrier for offshore hydrogen pipeline investment decisions," stated Dr. Henrik Solgaard Andersen, DNV Energy Systems Director. "Projects can now advance with established engineering standards rather than case-by-case qualification processes."

The recommended practice supports both greenfield offshore hydrogen pipeline developments and brownfield requalification of existing oil and gas infrastructure for hydrogen service, enabling broader hydrogen network deployment and offshore wind-to-hydrogen integration.

CARBON CAPTURE, UTILIZATION & STORAGE (CCUS)

No significant offshore CCUS developments occurred during the week ending 27 March 2026. Industry activity this week concentrated on onshore direct air capture project announcements in North America and shipping-based CO₂ transport pilot preparations in Northern Europe, which fall outside this newsletter's offshore low-carbon focus.

DECOMMISSIONING & OFFSHORE INFRASTRUCTURE

No significant offshore decommissioning developments occurred during the week ending 27 March 2026. The US Interior Department's proposed relaxation of offshore platform decommissioning bonding requirements (announced 5 March) remained in public commentary period with no substantive updates this week.

OFFSHORE ENERGY INVESTMENT & MARKETS

Record Offtake Contract Awards Despite US Policy Reversal

26 March 2026 – Global offshore wind offtake contract awards are forecast to reach 19.6 GW in 2026, exceeding 2024's record 19.1 GW despite the United States' effective exit from the market, according to market intelligence published this week. The resilience reflects concentrated activity in Europe (UK AR7: 8.4 GW; Netherlands: 2 GW) and Asia-Pacific (Taiwan: 3.1 GW; South Korea: 2.8 GW).

"The Middle East conflict has fundamentally reframed offshore wind investment calculus," stated renewable energy analyst Sarah Chen of Wood Mackenzie. "Governments previously emphasizing cost reduction now prioritize energy independence, accepting higher strike prices in exchange for supply route immunity."

24 March 2026 – Rystad Energy's Offshore Wind Podcast, released 24 March, characterized 2026 as "the year offshore wind decoupled from US policy risk," noting that European and Asian supply chains have redirected capacity previously allocated to US projects toward markets with stable regulatory frameworks.

MIDDLE EAST WAR IMPACT ON OFFSHORE LOW-CARBON SECTOR

IEA: Iran Conflict Accelerating Clean Energy Investment

25 March 2026 – International Energy Agency (IEA) Executive Director Fatih Birol stated the Iran conflict and resulting Strait of Hormuz closure will "steer countries toward increasing investments in clean energy solutions," marking a fundamental shift from previous oil crisis responses. Speaking to CNBC on 25 March, Birol emphasized that unlike the 1970s oil shocks, renewable energy technologies now offer economically competitive alternatives to fossil fuel dependence.

The Strait of Hormuz, which typically transports approximately 20% of global oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG), has been effectively closed by Iran's Revolutionary Guards since mid-March. Iranian forces have damaged at least one Saudi Arabian oil refinery and LNG facilities in Qatar, prompting Qatar to suspend production. Oil prices surged to \$142 per barrel (Brent crude) on 24 March, the highest level since 2008.

Offshore Wind's Strategic Value Validated

The crisis has empirically demonstrated offshore wind's immunity to geopolitical supply route vulnerabilities. European nations with substantial offshore wind capacity – including the UK (15.6 GW), Germany (8.9 GW), and Denmark (2.7 GW) – have experienced minimal electricity price volatility compared to fossil fuel-dependent economies.

"This energy shock validates the strategic case for offshore wind beyond climate considerations," stated EU Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson on 26 March. "Member states with mature offshore wind infrastructure maintain stable electricity prices and energy security while import-dependent economies face severe disruption."

Asia's energy import dependence positions the region at the forefront of vulnerability. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan – which collectively import over 95% of energy requirements – have announced accelerated offshore wind deployment timelines in response to the Strait of Hormuz closure. South Korea's Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy confirmed on 25 March it will advance the 8.2 GW Southwest offshore wind cluster FID timeline from Q4 2026 to Q2 2026.

The crisis impact extends beyond electricity generation. Fertilizer supply disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz threaten food security across Africa and South Asia, reinforcing the strategic imperative for domestic energy production and supply chain resilience.

MARINE & TIDAL ENERGY

No significant marine or tidal energy developments occurred during the week ending 27 March 2026. Industry activity remains concentrated on pre-commercial demonstration projects in Europe (Orbital Marine Power's O2 in Orkney, SIMEC Atlantis Energy's MeyGen in Scotland) and China (Nankun wave platform in Guangdong), with no material commercial announcements this week.

UPCOMING EVENTS & CONSULTATIONS

Industry Conferences

World Hydrogen Summit & Exhibition – Rotterdam Ahoy, 19–21 May 2026

Official meeting place for hydrogen deals, partnerships, and project developments into the 2030s. Features CCUS World and Energy Storage World zones.

Renewable Energy Supply Chain Conference 2026 – Aberdeen, 28 May 2026

Scottish Renewables conference bringing together suppliers, developers, and stakeholders to explore opportunities and maximize economic opportunity from Scotland's green energy future.

Global Offshore Wind 2026 – Manchester Central, 16–17 June 2026

Major international offshore wind industry gathering.

Floating Offshore Wind 2026 – P&J Live, Aberdeen, 7–8 October 2026

World's largest dedicated floating offshore wind exhibition and conference.

Tender Deadlines

Danish Offshore Wind Tenders

Spring 2026 deadline for North Sea Mid (minimum 1 GW) and Hesselø (minimum 800 MW) submissions. North Sea South (minimum 1 GW) tender deadline autumn 2028.

Philippines Offshore Wind Auction

2026 auction targeting 3,300 MW capacity. Energy Regulatory Commission raised ceiling price to PHP 11/kWh to ensure first-wave project revenue certainty.

Netherlands IJmuiden Ver Gamma-A

2026 tender for 1 GW capacity under SDE++ support scheme with maximum strike price of EUR 104/MWh.

OUTLOOK: WEEK ENDING 3 APRIL 2026

Anticipated coverage for next week includes:

- Norfolk Vanguard FID progress and timeline updates
- Inch Cape offshore wind farm marine construction commencement
- Hamburg Declaration implementation analysis and national commitments
- Further assessment of Middle East conflict implications for European energy security
- China offshore wind installation rates and capacity milestone tracking
- Revolution Wind grid delivery ramp-up (Rhode Island)
- Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) operational performance data

CONCLUSION

The week ending 27 March 2026 delivered stark policy divergence that will define the global offshore low-carbon sector through the remainder of the decade. The Trump administration's \$1 billion payment to TotalEnergies to abandon offshore wind leases – announced the same day Dominion Energy's 2.6 GW Coastal Virginia project delivered first power – crystallizes the fundamental contradiction in US renewable energy policy. While approximately 4 GW was removed from the US development pipeline through the TotalEnergies settlement, the nation's largest offshore wind farm achieved operational status despite executive orders mandating construction cessation.

Market intelligence published this week confirmed the global sector's resilience independent of US participation. The TGS | 4C report's projection of 17 GW installations in 2026 and the achievement of the 100 GW global capacity milestone demonstrate that European and Asian markets more than compensate for US policy reversal. Record offtake contract awards of 19.6 GW – concentrated in the UK (AR7: 8.4 GW), Netherlands, Taiwan, and South Korea – underscore sustained deployment momentum in markets with stable regulatory frameworks.

The intensifying Middle East conflict provided empirical validation of offshore wind's strategic value beyond climate mitigation. The Iran-driven closure of the Strait of Hormuz and resulting oil price surge to \$142/barrel (24 March) demonstrated renewable generation's immunity to geopolitical supply route vulnerabilities. IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol's assessment that the crisis will "steer countries toward increasing clean energy investments" reflects structural recognition that energy security and geopolitical stability increasingly favor domestic renewable generation over imported fossil fuels.

Technical infrastructure maturation advanced through DNV's publication of offshore hydrogen pipeline recommended practice (26 March), removing critical uncertainty barriers for offshore wind-to-hydrogen integration and pipeline investment decisions. The UK's acceleration of Contract for Difference Allocation Round 8 to July 2026 – six months ahead of schedule – signals government recognition that consistent auction cadence maintains supply chain commitment and cost reduction trajectories.

The offshore energy sector enters Q2 2026 with clear geographic bifurcation: coordinated European and Asian expansion pursuing energy independence through offshore wind deployment versus US fossil fuel prioritization. Supply chain reallocation, installation vessel utilization, and regulatory stability will determine which regions capture the substantial economic opportunity associated with the 300 GW North Sea target by 2050 and global offshore wind's projected contribution to net-zero pathways.

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