GLOBAL EDITION Vol. 2 | No. 14	ENERGY TRANSITION WEEKLY	WEEK ENDING: 3 APRIL 2026 GLOBAL OFFSHORE LOW-CARBON ENERGY

EDITOR'S BRIEF

KEY NUMBER	Brent crude spot price hit $141.36/bbl on 2 April 2026, the highest since 2008, as Iran's near closure of the Strait of Hormuz cuts ~20% of global oil and LNG supply. Oil futures settled at $112.42/bbl on 3 April. The conflict is simultaneously the greatest short-term threat to offshore project economics AND the most powerful long-term accelerant the energy transition has ever seen.

The week ending 3 April 2026 has been one of the most consequential in recent memory for the global offshore low-carbon energy sector. A month into the US–Israeli war against Iran, the Strait of Hormuz remains effectively closed to commercial tanker traffic, disrupting approximately 20% of the world's daily oil and LNG supply and driving Brent crude to levels not seen since 2008. The IEA has described this as potentially the largest supply disruption in the history of global oil markets, with an estimated 8 million barrels per day shut in. Yet, paradoxically, this same crisis is firing the most powerful acceleration of the global energy transition in recorded history, as governments from Asia to Latin America rush to de-risk their fossil fuel dependency through offshore wind, hydrogen, and CCUS investment.

Against this turbulent macroeconomic backdrop, the offshore clean energy sector delivered a week of substantive commercial and regulatory news: France launched a landmark 10 GW combined offshore wind mega-tender; the UK Crown Estate announced plans for Leasing Round 6 (6+ GW) in 2027 with a North East England focus; Vestas confirmed a €250 million+ nacelle factory proposal for Scotland; Port Talbot secured £64 million to become the UK's first floating offshore wind port hub; and the UK Government blocked Chinese firm Ming Yang's £1.5 billion Highland turbine factory on national security grounds. The US offshore wind industry continued its decline under the Trump administration, with TotalEnergies formally surrendering its Carolina Long Bay and New York Bight leases. Critically, new UK CCUS and offshore hydrogen safety regulations come into force on 6 April 2026, a landmark step for the sector.

ACTION FOR THIS WEEK	Assess your company's exposure and opportunity matrix against two simultaneous drivers: (1) the geopolitically-accelerated energy transition — demand for domestic offshore wind, hydrogen, and CCUS has never been stronger; and (2) rising project input costs driven by oil-price inflation and supply chain disruption. Companies with proven offshore capabilities in harsh marine environments are now at a historic premium globally.

SECTION 1: THE MIDDLE EAST WAR — IMPACT ON THE GLOBAL OFFSHORE LOW-CARBON SECTOR

1.1 The Hormuz Crisis: Scale and Offshore Energy Implications

The US–Israeli war against Iran, now entering its second month, has triggered what the International Energy Agency describes as potentially the largest disruption to global oil markets in history. Tanker traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, the world's most critical energy chokepoint, has collapsed from approximately 20 million barrels per day (bpd) to a trickle, with Gulf producers forced to cut total oil output by at least 10 million bpd. Qatar has declared force majeure on LNG exports following Iranian drone strikes on Ras Laffan, damaging up to 17% of LNG export capability, with Italian and other European buyers now scrambling to source cargoes from US Golden Pass and other Atlantic terminals.

Brent crude futures settled at $109.03 on 2 April, while the spot price for physical Brent delivery surged to $141.36, its highest since 2008, reflecting the acute tightness of physical supply that futures markets are not yet fully capturing. IEA member countries agreed on 11 March to release 400 million barrels from emergency reserves.

1.2 Accelerating the Energy Transition: The 'Hormuz Moment'

Analysts, the IEA, the UN, and governments are converging on a shared narrative: the Hormuz blockade is forcing national governments to urgently accelerate domestic renewable energy. IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol stated last week that 'one of the responses to this crisis will be a hastening of renewable energy adoption — not only do they reduce emissions, but they represent a domestic energy source.' The UN Climate Chief Simon Stiell said the volatility underscored 'the strategic value of renewable energy' and that investment in renewables is 'the clear path to achieving energy security.'

For the offshore low-carbon sector specifically, the crisis is creating a powerful dual dynamic: short-term cost pressures (higher steel prices, supply chain disruption, rising interest rates) on one side; and unprecedented long-term demand acceleration on the other. BloombergNEF analysis published this week suggests the Iran conflict could particularly boost solar energy and battery technologies, while offshore wind investment across Europe and Asia continues its upward trajectory. The GWEC has launched a Wind Action Plan and Energy Security Tracker, calling on governments to fast-track emergency permitting, address grid blockers, mobilise financing, accelerate electrification, and scale up supply chains.

1.3 Regional Implications for the Offshore Low-Carbon Sector

- **EUROPE:** UK/Europe: Record wind generation (23,880 MW on 25 March, a new British record) has demonstrated the value of offshore wind during the crisis. Countries with high renewable penetration (Spain, Portugal, Nordic states) have seen significantly lower electricity prices than gas-dependent nations. Private equity investment in European energy security surged — €900 million RGreen Invest fund and Partech's €300 million impact fund both closed this week.
- **ASIA-PACIFIC:** Asia–Pacific: Japan and South Korea, both structurally dependent on Gulf imports, face the sharpest pressure to accelerate offshore wind. Oxford University's Jan Rosenow stated: 'This crisis is a stress test they were always likely to fail. A serious reassessment of domestic generation capacity is overdue.' Taiwan, Japan and South Korea are all expected to fast-track permitting and grid reforms for offshore wind in response.
- **MIDDLE EAST:** Middle East: Iran's strikes on Saudi, UAE, Qatari, and Iraqi energy infrastructure have damaged the region's nascent renewable energy ambitions. Gulf states are accelerating alternative export route investments while simultaneously reviewing long-term energy diversification. The National News noted this week that attacks on Gulf energy sites are also 'attacks on the global energy transition.'
- **LATIN AMERICA:** Latin America: The Columbia University Energy Policy Centre notes this week that the Iran war is focusing greater attention on Latin America as both an alternative fossil fuel supplier and an accelerating clean energy market. Brazil, Chile, and Colombia are expected to fast-track renewables, EV, and battery investment.
- **SUPPLY CHAIN:** Supply Chain Warning: GWEC's Energy Security Tracker this week flagged disruption to steel supply chains — Iran was a significant exporter of semi-finished steel, and targeting of Iranian steel capacity is driving global steel price increases, adding cost pressure to offshore wind foundation and turbine manufacturing.

SECTION 2: GLOBAL OFFSHORE WIND DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 France: 10 GW Offshore Wind Mega-Tender Launched — 2 April 2026

In one of the week's most significant European developments, France formally announced the relaunch of its offshore wind competitive tender process, combining the previously separate AO9 and AO10 tranches into a single 10 GW mega-auction. The tender covers seven project areas in the English Channel, Atlantic Ocean, and Mediterranean Sea, including approximately 5 GW of fixed-bottom and 5 GW of floating capacity — the largest single offshore wind tender in French history. Winners are expected to be announced by late 2026 or early 2027. Crucially, the French government has embedded requirements for domestic and European manufacturing content, specifically to reduce reliance on Chinese supply chains. This creates significant opportunities for UK, Scottish, and European offshore wind supply chain companies able to demonstrate European content compliance.

2.2 UK Crown Estate: Leasing Round 6 Planned for First Half 2027 — 26 March 2026

The Crown Estate announced on 26 March 2026 that Offshore Wind Leasing Round 6 (LR6) is planned for the first half of 2027, targeting approximately 6–6.5 GW of fixed-bottom capacity predominantly in the North East of England. This is a landmark announcement for the North East supply chain: the round will draw on the Crown Estate's new Marine Delivery Routemap and align with NESO's Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP). Bilateral market engagement with developers and investors formally closed on 31 March 2026. BVG Associates confirmed the 6.5 GW fixed-wind focus, with the North East coast positioned as the primary hub for associated manufacturing, assembly, and O&M investment. The Crown Estate estimates the round could generate billions in private investment and create up to 25,000 jobs.

2.3 Vestas Proposes €250M+ Nacelle Factory in Scotland — 25 March 2026

Danish wind turbine giant Vestas announced plans on 25 March 2026 to establish a nacelle and hub manufacturing facility in Scotland, UK, with capital investment in excess of €250 million and the potential to create up to 500 skilled direct jobs. The factory would produce nacelles and hubs for Vestas's flagship V236-15.0 MW offshore turbine and would become the company's fifth dedicated offshore turbine facility in Europe. The announcement follows the record-breaking AR7 auction results in January 2026 (8.4 GW secured) and strategic discussions with both the UK and Scottish Governments on co-investment. The final investment decision is conditional on securing sufficient UK-based orders from AR7 and AR8 auctions. Subject to planning, the facility could start production by 2029/2030.

2.4 Port Talbot: UK's First Floating Offshore Wind Port Hub — 26 March 2026

The UK Government confirmed on 26 March 2026 that Port Talbot, South Wales, will become the UK's first dedicated floating offshore wind port hub, with Associated British Ports (ABP) receiving £64 million in government grant funding. ABP will commence detailed design and engineering for new port facilities to support the assembly and deployment of floating turbines for the Celtic Sea. This development directly supports Crown Estate Round 5 Celtic Sea projects and Wales' broader ambition to develop up to 4 GW of floating offshore wind capacity.

2.5 Ming Yang China Security Block — 25 March 2026

In a highly controversial national security decision, the UK Government blocked Chinese wind turbine manufacturer Ming Yang from proceeding with its proposed £1.5 billion wind turbine manufacturing facility at Ardersier, near Inverness, Scotland. Ming Yang had proposed what would have been the world's largest wind turbine manufacturing facility in the UK, potentially creating up to 1,500 jobs. The UK Government stated it 'cannot support the use of their turbines in UK offshore wind projects,' citing concerns about Ming Yang's links to the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese legislation requiring domestic companies to cooperate with security agencies. The decision has been condemned by Scottish political parties and Ming Yang, who called it a missed opportunity amid a global energy crisis.

2.6 US Offshore Wind: TotalEnergies Exits — 23 March 2026

TotalEnergies signed settlement agreements with the US Department of the Interior on 23 March 2026 to relinquish its Carolina Long Bay (OCS-A 0545, $133 million) and New York Bight (OCS-A 0538, $795 million) offshore wind leases, both awarded in 2022. TotalEnergies will recover its lease fees and reinvest an equivalent amount (~$928 million in 2026) into US LNG production, including the Rio Grande LNG plant and Gulf of Mexico oil developments. CEO Patrick Pouyanné stated: 'Considering that the development of offshore wind projects is not in the country's interest, we have decided to renounce offshore wind development in the United States.'

2.7 Global Pipeline Update

TGS | 4C's latest Global Market Overview confirms 2026 is set to be a busy year for offshore wind globally: total global installed capacity is expected to reach 103.4 GW by year-end, with 17 GW of commissioned capacity during 2026. The UK's AR7 alone awarded 8.4 GW in January, contributing to a projected 19.6 GW in offtake awards for the year. However, the 2030 forecast has been revised down by 17% year-on-year (to 236 GW globally), reflecting geopolitical headwinds, supply chain constraints, and the US retreat. RWE's Sofia 1.4 GW offshore wind farm (100 × 14 MW turbines, Dogger Bank) remains on track for commissioning in late 2026. Poland's BC-Wind (399 MW, Ocean Winds/ENGIE) broke ground in 2026 following €2 billion financial close, with first power targeted for 2028.

SECTION 3: HYDROGEN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS

3.1 UK CCUS and Offshore Hydrogen Regulations: Coming into Force 6 April 2026

The Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage and Offshore Hydrogen Production (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2026 (SI 2026/185), laid before Parliament on 11 March and coming into force on 6 April 2026, extend the full suite of UK offshore health and safety regulations to CCUS installations, CO_2 pipelines, and offshore hydrogen production. This is a watershed moment for the UK's offshore hydrogen sector, providing the regulatory certainty that commercial operators and investors have long sought. The regulations cover offshore Safety Case Regulations, Pipeline Safety Regulations, Diving Regulations, and COMAH requirements as applied to CCUS and hydrogen installations — creating parity with existing offshore oil and gas safety regimes. Companies in the offshore engineering, subsea, and HSE consultancy sectors should review how their existing competence frameworks map to the new regulatory requirements.

3.2 Green Hydrogen at Port of Tilbury — 1 April 2026

GeoPura and Forth Ports signed a landmark 10-year agreement on 1 April 2026 to produce green hydrogen on-site at the Port of Tilbury, supported by £2 million from Thames Freeport seed capital. GeoPura is developing an initial 1 MW low-carbon hydrogen production plant powered by on-site solar, producing hydrogen via electrolysis for port decarbonisation and heavy industrial use. This positions Tilbury as one of the first major British ports to host commercial-scale hydrogen production, signalling a broader trend of port-integrated hydrogen production highly relevant to offshore wind port infrastructure strategies.

3.3 Clean Hydrogen Partnership 2026 Calls — Open Until 15 April

The Clean Hydrogen Partnership has launched its 2026 Call for Proposals under Horizon Europe, making €105 million available for advanced hydrogen research and innovation. The call covers 21 topics across renewable hydrogen production, storage, distribution, transport, heat and power, and Hydrogen Valleys, and is open until 15 April 2026. For UK companies, this represents a significant export market R&D funding opportunity — collaborative projects with EU partners can still access funding.

3.4 Iran Conflict: Green Hydrogen Demand Accelerates

The Hormuz crisis is materially strengthening the commercial case for green hydrogen in Asia. Japan and South Korea, already planning 10 GW and 12 GW of offshore wind respectively, are now urgently reviewing their dependence on imported LNG and hydrogen carriers. The crisis is expected to accelerate offtake commitments for green hydrogen exports from Europe (including UK ScotWind-linked H2 projects) and Australia. The CCUS regulatory amendment (Section 3.1 above) and the Port of Tilbury announcement are timely signals that UK hydrogen infrastructure is advancing into commercial-scale deployment.

SECTION 4: CCUS — REGULATORY, PROJECT AND INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 UK CCUS Regulatory Milestone — 6 April 2026

As noted in Section 3.1, the new CCUS and Offshore Hydrogen Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations (SI 2026/185) come into force on 6 April 2026, extending the UK's proven offshore regulatory framework to CCUS activities. Wood Mackenzie has noted that 2026 is pivotal for CCUS as major hubs advance to FID, but success hinges on policy support. The UK's East Coast Cluster reached FID in December 2024, and Eni's Liverpool Bay CO_2 Transport and Storage network achieved FID in April 2025. Both UK clusters are targeting operational start in 2028. Denmark's Greensand project is set to begin operations this year, the first commercial offshore CO_2 injection project in Europe.

4.2 Canada CCUS Investment — 2 April 2026

Canada's government announced on 2 April 2026 a total of CAN$28.9 million investment across 12 projects to accelerate clean energy development, of which CAN$16.9 million is directed to five CCUS research, development, and demonstration projects. The largest tranche of CAN$10 million goes to Carbon Alpha for seismic survey innovation for CO_2 storage measurement, monitoring, and verification, a capability highly relevant to North Sea and global offshore CCUS storage site development.

4.3 Global CCUS Sector Momentum

Globally, the CCUS sector entered 2026 with over 600 projects in various pipeline stages and investment tripling toward approximately $6.4 billion (as of 2024). Germany's €6 billion industrial decarbonisation initiative, which includes CCS technologies, is beginning to roll out competitive support mechanisms in mid-2026. The Iran conflict is indirectly boosting the CCUS case: higher fossil fuel prices strengthen the economics of blue hydrogen (SMR + CCS) as a near-term decarbonisation pathway for industrial sectors unable to switch quickly to electrification.

SECTION 5: DECOMMISSIONING MARKET INTELLIGENCE

5.1 Global Regulatory Tightening — Published 29 March 2026

A major new comparative analysis published on 29 March 2026 by the Global Energy Network confirms that offshore decommissioning regulatory regimes are tightening across 10 major jurisdictions simultaneously — including Angola, Australia, Brazil, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania and the UK. The analysis reveals a consistent pattern: decommissioning is governed by detailed statutory frameworks, enforced through joint and several liability, underpinned by mandatory financial security, and subject to escalating regulatory scrutiny. Critically, Brazil's Law No 15.097/2025 now explicitly permits consideration of asset reuse in decommissioning planning, mirroring emerging UK and Norwegian practices.

5.2 UK North Sea: Record Spend and Escalating Obligations

The NSTA's 2025 Decommissioning Cost and Performance Update confirms record decommissioning spend of £2.4 billion in 2024, with total UKCS decommissioning liability now estimated at £44 billion, of which £27 billion is expected to be committed by 2032. Alvarez & Marsal's latest analysis of UKCS decommissioning (published March 2026) highlights that the challenge for operators 'is not merely to remove infrastructure, but to do so in a manner that is strategic, value-preserving, and aligned with the basin's net-zero transition.' Multiple new decommissioning programmes were submitted to OPRED in February–March 2026 by Perenco UK and NEO Energy Production UK.

5.3 AF Offshore Decom: Second Major Ithaca Energy Contract

AF Offshore Decom signed a contract with Ithaca Energy (NOK 350–400 million) for the engineering, receipt, cleaning, dismantling, and recycling of a 24,000 metric ton floating storage unit from the UK North Sea sector. This follows the award for FPF-1 in December 2025, meaning AF Environmental Base Vats will receive close to 50,000 tons of floating production and storage facilities from Ithaca Energy in 2026. The steel will be recycled and upcycled for agriculture, construction, and civil industry applications — an example of the circular economy model now embedded in the North Sea decommissioning sector.

SECTION 6: MARINE ENERGY — TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS

6.1 Hybrid Offshore Platforms: Research Breakthrough Published

University of Surrey researchers published findings this week from a comprehensive review of hybrid offshore renewable energy harvest systems. The research demonstrates that combining wind turbines with wave, solar, and tidal devices on shared platforms can: reduce electricity costs by 10–15% compared with standalone offshore wind; increase power generation by up to 70% when tidal turbines are added to wind installations; and improve structural stability — with platform motion reduced by 15%.

6.2 UK–France: Tidal Stream Investment Momentum

A peer-reviewed analysis published on 31 March 2026 confirms that the UK and France are investing in tidal stream energy with a plan to install at least 400 MW of capacity over the next decade. The analysis notes that at the 90 most researched tidal sites globally, turbines could generate approximately 110 TWh annually — equivalent to Portugal's entire yearly electricity consumption. The predictable nature of tidal energy (driven by gravitational forces, forecastable years ahead) makes it a highly complementary baseload resource alongside intermittent offshore wind.

SECTION 7: REGIONAL MARKET INTELLIGENCE

7.1 Europe: North Sea and Baltic Sea

- **UK:** UK: Crown Estate Leasing Round 6 announced (6+ GW, 2027 launch); AR7 8.4 GW secured; Sofia (1.4 GW, Dogger Bank) targeting commissioning late 2026; RenewableUK confirms UK wind pipeline at ~17 GW and 12 GW under construction.
- **FRANCE:** France: 10 GW mega-tender launched 2 April 2026 (5 GW fixed + 5 GW floating), with European content requirements — directly relevant for UK/Scottish offshore supply chain companies.
- **SCOTLAND:** Scotland: Vestas proposes €250M+ nacelle factory (500 jobs); Ming Yang Highland factory blocked on national security grounds.
- **POLAND:** Poland: BC-Wind (399 MW) breaking ground in 2026 following €2 billion financial close, first power to grid in 2028. Baltic Sea offshore wind pipeline targeting 50 GW by 2040.
- **NORTH SEA:** North Sea Summit Investment Pact: North Sea countries targeting 100 GW connected offshore wind capacity and long-term pipeline of 300 GW by 2050.

7.2 Asia-Pacific

- **JAPAN/KOREA:** Japan and South Korea facing acute fossil fuel import pressure from Hormuz crisis — both expected to fast-track offshore wind permitting and grid reforms. Japan targeting 10 GW by 2030; South Korea 12 GW by 2030.
- **GWEC:** GWEC's forthcoming Global Wind Report 2026 (to be launched in Madrid in April) expected to confirm Asia-Pacific as the dominant driver of record 2025 global wind installations (~150 GW).
- **ASIA:** Marsh analysis published 26 March 2026 estimates Asia has potential for 1,200 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2040, requiring over $1 trillion in investment.
- **EVENTS:** APAC Offshore Wind Roundtable scheduled for 22 April 2026 in Singapore (in conjunction with Singapore Maritime Week) — a key networking event.

7.3 Middle East and North Africa

- **GULF STATES:** The ongoing Iran war has effectively paused near-term offshore wind development feasibility work in the Gulf states, as all focus turns to immediate energy security and infrastructure protection. However, the longer-term imperative for offshore wind diversification in Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Oman has never been stronger.
- **STRATEGY:** Gulf states (Saudi Aramco, UAE ADCOP) are fast-tracking pipeline and alternative export route capacity as emergency measures; analysts note these are 'strategic mitigation, not strategic transformation.'
- **STRATEGIC OUTLOOK:** Atlantic Council analysis published 2 April 2026: the Iran war could shift energy policies globally, with states accelerating domestic clean energy, energy storage, and demand-reduction measures.

SECTION 8: POLICY, REGULATION AND INVESTMENT SIGNALS

8.1 UK Regulatory Update

- **CCUS/H2:** CCUS and Offshore Hydrogen Regulations (SI 2026/185) in force 6 April 2026 — extending UK offshore H&S regulations to CCUS installations and offshore hydrogen production.
- **LR6:** Crown Estate bilateral market engagement for Leasing Round 6 closed 31 March 2026; formal launch targeted for 2027 with 6+ GW capacity focus in North East England.
- **SUPPLY CHAIN:** UK Government blocked Ming Yang's £1.5bn Scottish factory on national security grounds, sparking supply chain debate about the balance between energy security, economic development, and geopolitical risk.

8.2 European Policy

- **FRANCE:** France's 10 GW combined offshore wind tender (AO9/AO10) represents the largest single offshore wind procurement in French history, with European content requirements aligned to the 'Made in Europe' industrial strategy.
- **EVENTS:** WindEurope Annual Conference (Madrid, 21–23 April 2026) will be a key event for offshore wind policy positioning in the context of the Middle East energy crisis.
- **GWEC:** GWEC Wind Action Plan issued this week calls for emergency fast-track permitting, grid investment, and supply chain scaling across all European markets as an energy security imperative.

8.3 Private Investment Response to the Crisis

- **INVESTMENT:** PitchBook data: €46.5 billion ($53.3 billion) invested in European energy sector in 2025 — a record, with strong emphasis on energy transition.
- **PE:** RGreen Invest (Paris) closed a €900 million European energy independence fund; Partech closed a €300 million impact fund with energy security focus — both linked to the Middle East crisis driving investor urgency.
- **OIL PRICES:** Brent crude futures at $112.42/bbl on 3 April — 39.8% above year-ago levels — creating a powerful economic case for energy security-driven offshore renewables investment globally.

SECTION 9: INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND MARKET DATA

9.1 Market Data Snapshot — Week Ending 3 April 2026

Global offshore wind: 89.2 GW installed at end 2025; 103.4 GW forecast by year-end 2026 (TGS|4C). AR7 (UK): 8.4 GW secured — largest UK offshore wind auction result ever (fixed-foundation strike price £91.20/MWh England & Wales, £89.49/MWh Scotland). Brent crude: $112.42/bbl on 3 April (futures); $141.36/bbl physical spot on 2 April — highest since 2008. UK CCUS pipeline: East Coast Cluster (FID Dec 2024), HyNet/Liverpool Bay (FID April 2025), Scottish Cluster/Acorn (development funding confirmed). Global CCUS investment: ~$6.4 billion (2024 base), 15% year-on-year growth, 600+ projects in pipeline.

9.2 Technology Highlights

- **HYBRID TECH:** Hybrid offshore platform research (University of Surrey): 10–15% LCOE reduction and up to 70% power generation increase from integrating tidal turbines with offshore wind platforms.
- **SOFIA:** Sofia offshore wind farm (Dogger Bank): 100 × 14 MW Siemens Gamesa turbines nearing commissioning — with recyclable blades manufactured in Hull, a world first for circular economy integration in offshore wind.
- **VESTAS:** Vestas V236-15.0 MW turbine proposed for Scottish nacelle factory: the largest offshore wind turbine planned for series production in Scotland, representing the global frontier of turbine technology.

- **AFC ENERGY:** GeoPura/AFC Energy UK regulator approval: AFC Energy received UK Environment Agency approval to commercialise hydrogen from its ammonia cracking pilot plant at Dunsfold — 300 kg/day, 99.97% purity — marking a transition from demonstration to early commercial hydrogen operations.

SECTION 10: FEATURE DEEP-DIVE — 'THE HORMUZ EFFECT: HOW THE MIDDLE EAST WAR IS RESHAPING THE GLOBAL OFFSHORE LOW-CARBON INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE'

Few events in modern energy history have been as consequential for the pace of the global energy transition as the US–Israeli war against Iran and the resultant near-closure of the Strait of Hormuz. As this issue goes to press, the world is confronting the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market — with approximately 20 million barrels of oil per day and over 112 billion cubic metres of LNG annually that once transited the strait now blocked or severely disrupted.

Cost Pressures: For the offshore low-carbon energy sector, the implications are both threatening and transformative in equal measure. On the cost side, disruption to global steel supply chains, the surge in diesel and energy prices, and the potential for rising interest rates as central banks fight to contain inflation — all represent genuine near-term headwinds for offshore wind, hydrogen, and CCUS project economics. GWEC's Energy Security Tracker specifically flags that construction and logistics costs across the Middle East wind sector are rising, and that no wind turbines have yet been shipped to the 5,295 MW of onshore wind capacity awarded to Chinese OEMs in the region last year.

Demand Acceleration: Yet the 'Hormuz Effect' is simultaneously generating the most powerful demand signal the offshore low-carbon sector has ever witnessed. Across Europe, Asia, and Latin America, the crisis is making energy security synonymous with renewable energy. For senior executives in the offshore wind, hydrogen, and CCUS supply chain, this is the moment when 'energy transition' stops being primarily an ESG story and becomes the most important national security and economic competitiveness story of the decade.

UK Opportunity: The UK is particularly well-positioned to capitalise on this dynamic. The record 23,880 MW wind generation achieved on 25 March 2026 — which pushed gas to just 2.3% of the electricity mix — demonstrated in real time the energy security value of offshore wind. The Crown Estate's announcement of Leasing Round 6 (6+ GW), combined with France's 10 GW mega-tender, the Port Talbot floating wind hub, Vestas's proposed Scottish factory, and the new CCUS/offshore hydrogen regulatory framework, collectively represent the most comprehensive set of enabling signals the UK offshore low-carbon sector has seen in years.

Strategic Priorities: For North East Scotland energy supply chain companies, three immediate strategic priorities stand out from this week's newsletter:

- Engage now with the Crown Estate's LR6 pre-development process and position for the 6.5 GW of fixed-bottom projects expected in NE England waters, the geographic sweet spot for Aberdeen-based firms with existing North Sea operational infrastructure.
- Map your capabilities to France's 10 GW tender European content requirements, where UK firms with proven offshore track records have a genuine competitive advantage.
- Respond to the new CCUS and offshore hydrogen regulatory framework: SI 2026/185 creates a level playing field between offshore O&G and CCUS/H2 operations, opening a direct route for offshore engineering firms to apply their existing competences in the rapidly scaling CCUS and offshore hydrogen market.

SECTION 11: KEY EVENTS AND RESOURCES — COMING UP

- CCUS and Offshore Hydrogen Regulations SI 2026/185 — In force 6 April 2026 (UK — immediate compliance requirement)
- Clean Hydrogen Partnership 2026 Horizon Europe Call — Deadline 15 April 2026 (€105 million available)

- WindEurope Annual Conference — Madrid, 21–23 April 2026
- GWEC Global Wind Report 2026 Launch — Madrid, April 2026
- APAC Offshore Wind Roundtable — Singapore, 22 April 2026 (in conjunction with Singapore Maritime Week)
- Wood Mackenzie Hydrogen Conference — London, 4 June 2026
- PSEW2026 Conference — Świnoujście, Poland, 8–10 June 2026
- Hydrogen Technology World Expo 2026 MENA Edition — Abu Dhabi, 9–10 June 2026
- Offshore Foundations / Wind Week 2026 — Bremen, 24–26 August 2026

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