

Representatives of the renewable energy industry sectors discuss innovation with the Director General of the Spanish Ministry of Ecological Transition

April 22, 2021 - Abengoa, the international company that applies innovative technology solutions for sustainability in the infrastructure, energy and water sectors, participated, through Solarthermal Innovation director, Cristina Prieto, in a digital meeting that took place on 20 April between Manuel García Hernández, Director General of Energy Policy and Mines of the Spanish Ministry of Ecological Transition, together with Jesús Ferrero, head of the General Sub-Directorate of Renewable Energies, Jacobo Llerena, head of the General Sub-Directorate of Energy Efficiency and Víctor Marcos, Director of Renewable Energies and Electricity Market of the IDAE, and a delegation representing the energy and sustainable buildings industries that was composed of:

- Fernando García Gutiérrez, Head of Just Transition and Special Projects at EDP Renovables.
- Teodosio Del Caño, Chief Technology Officer, Onyx Solar.
- Ignacio Calvo Herrera, Director of Innovation and Digital Transformation (Director of the Construction Technology Centre), ACCIONA.
- Beñat Sanz Antoñanzas, Manager APPA Marina.
- David Fernández Rubial, New Business Impulse Manager of Nedgia.
- Nicolás de la Vega, Project Manager of EUREC (delegation organisation).

During the meeting, various aspects of innovation in renewable energy were discussed, focusing on the issue of support for research and innovation in Spain.

Manuel García Hernández expressed his to know the industry's views on several initiatives that are being developed by the Ministry of Ecological Transition, such as the forthcoming launch of the Sandboxes for testing technologies that are fixed into law, or the approaches related to innovation that are being carried out within the national sectorial strategies that are being drafted.

Teodosio Del Caño of Onyx Solar said that "there are many examples of Spanish companies leading the development of renewable projects and services around the world, but that more could be done to boost domestic manufacturing of parts and

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components by encouraging research and innovation.” He added that “for public strategies on renewables to be successful, more and better follow up by the public sector is needed.”

Cristina Prieto of Abengoa supported this and added that “currently the costs of innovating are being shouldered by the industry. In the highly competitive world that we live in today, this model has no future. Companies need some level of public support to continue innovating and to level the playing field with international competitors. If financing conditions to support innovation do not improve, we run the risk that most of the components that are installed by Spanish companies will be sourced from abroad.”

Ignacio Calvo Herrera of ACCIONA pointed out that “industry also needs national funding programmes to develop innovative technologies at an advanced stage of maturity for larger scale prototypes that are vital before moving to the commercialisation phase.” He added that “the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan known as SET PLAN was a useful European-level forum that needed to be strengthened.”

Beñat Sanz Antoñanzas of APPA Marina highlighted the current opportunity for the country, especially with floating wind power, that is applicable to the rest of marine renewables, for which he urged specific support to capitalise on Spain's technological, technical and scientific leadership. Along these lines, he stressed the importance of establishing ad-hoc support mechanisms for demonstration projects with innovative technologies, as well as regulating on test facilities to speed up the processing of permits and facilitate projects in these areas.

Fernando García Gutiérrez, from EDPR, explained that “it is essential to promote innovation in all aspects of the value chain within the renewable sector, both in the production sector and to improve the operation and maintenance of the facilities and even their dismantling, as well as working to make the most of and add value to the waste that is generated.”

David Fernández Rubial, from Nedgia, added that “the energy transition must be based on the Circular Economy. The biomethane and hydrogen strategies, that are central to the Circular Economy and the energy sector, can make essential environmental and social contributions to our economies. They can boost the energy transition and the smart integration of the electricity and gas sectors in line with the European Green Deal.

About Abengoa

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Innovative technology solutions for **sustainability**

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