

State aid: Commission approves French support for tidal energy demonstration plant Raz Blanchard

Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said: *“Tidal energy is one of the technologies that can contribute in the transition towards a climate friendly energy supply in Europe. The French project approved today will help showcase tidal energy technology, while limiting distortions of competition”*

The Normandie Hydro plant is a demonstration plant for producing electricity from tidal energy. It will be developed by OpenHydro and operated by EDF EN and will be located at Raz Blanchard, west of the Cotentin peninsula, on the English Channel. The demonstration plant will comprise seven turbines with a power generation capacity of 14 megawatts. The turbines will have a rotor diameter of 16 meters and will be installed on the sea floor.

France intends to support the development and operation of the Raz Blanchard tidal energy demonstration plant. The objective of the public support is to test this novel technology and verify the potential for tidal energy in France before deploying it on a larger scale. The project will facilitate the development of this type of energy and will help France meet its 2020 renewable energy target.

The demonstration plant will receive operating aid and investment aid. Part of the investment aid will be paid in the form of repayable advances that will be reimbursed if the technology is successful.

The Commission assessed the scheme under its 2014 [Guidelines on State Aid for Environmental Protection and Energy](#), which allow Member States to support renewable energy, subject to certain conditions.

The Commission found that the project promotes market penetration of a novel renewable energy technology and that the level of aid is proportionate and will not lead to overcompensation, in line with the Guidelines.

Therefore the Commission concluded that the project will promote the use of electricity generated from renewable sources, in accordance with the objectives of the [European Energy Union](#), without unduly distorting competition.

Background

The [Renewable Energy Directive](#) established targets for all Member States' shares of renewable energy sources by 2020. For France that target is 23% of domestic energy supplies produced from renewable sources by 2020.

For more information on the 2014 [Guidelines on State Aid for Environmental Protection and Energy](#), see also the Commission's Policy Brief on [“Improving](#)

[State Aid for Energy and the Environment](#)".

More information on today's decisions will be available, once potential confidentiality issues have been resolved, in the [State aid register](#) on the Commission's [competition](#) website under the case number [SA.46874](#). The State Aid Weekly e-News lists new publications of state aid decisions on the internet and in the EU Official Journal.