

RES update

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**National Plan for Energy and Climate
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National Plan for Energy and Climate

Greece recently adopted its first National Plan for Energy and Climate, which regulates all energy sectors (Decision 4/2019 of the Governmental Council of Financial Policy, published in OJ B' 4893/2019). The plan defines Greece's energy and climate targets up until 2030, as well as priority policies and implementation measures which should help to both develop and reform the energy sector by 2050. The plan will also facilitate the shaping of the country's energy and climate strategy for the years 2030 to 2050.

As regards the renewable energy sector (RES), the targets set out in the plan comprise:

- achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 in conformity with the European Green Deal;
- doubling the percentage of power produced from RES sources to achieve the target of becoming 35% of the country's total consumption by 2030;
- further developing RES hybrid power plants on the non-interconnected Greek islands; and
- promoting RES-powered transport.

RES 2020 auctions

The wind and photovoltaic (PV) capacities to be auctioned in 2020 in order for producers to receive the operational state aid for the next 25 years are regulated by Decision 11163/409 of the Ministry of Environment and Energy (issued on 7 February 2020). Pursuant to this decision, the following types of auction will take place in 2020:

- separate auctions for wind and PV plants;
- at least one joint auction for both wind and PV power plants; and
- at least one auction for a specific territory in Greece.

Separate auctions

More specifically, in the separate auctions per RES technology, the auction quantities will be:

- up to 480MW for wind power plants with a capacity ranging from 3MW to 50MW;
- up to 20MW for wind power plants with a capacity up to 60kW; and
- up to 300MW for PV plants with a capacity ranging from 500kW to 20MW to be increased for the quantities which have remained unallocated during previous auctions.

All the above have been increased for the quantities which have remained unallocated during previous auctions.

Joint auctions

As regards joint auctions, the auction quantities will be up to 600MW, while the following categories of power plants will be entitled to participate:

- wind plants with a capacity exceeding 50MW;
- PV plants with a capacity exceeding 20MW;
- groups of wind, PV or mixed-power plants that cumulatively have these capacities having a single grid connection point; and
- PV plants licensed under the so-called 'fast-track' procedure or approved as strategic investment projects with a capacity exceeding 20MW.

Specific territories

Lastly, as regards the auction for specific territories in Greece (ie, for the connection line Nea Makri

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– Polipotamos and for the high voltage network of South Evia), the decision determines that the following categories of power plant will be entitled to participate:

- wind power plants with a capacity ranging from 3MW to 50MW;
- wind power plants with a capacity exceeding 50MW;
- PV power plants with a capacity ranging from 500kW to 1MW, from 1MW to 20MW and exceeding 20MW; and
- groups of these plants with a common grid connection point.

The initial auction prices are set as follows:

- for the first separate auctions per RES technology:
 - €63/MWh for PV plants with a capacity ranging from 500kW to 20MW; and
 - €62.99/MWh for wind plants with a capacity ranging from 3MW to 50MW; and
- for the auction regarding the specific territories of South Evia and Nea Makri – Polypotamos, €62.99/MWh.

The first auction to take place in 2020 will be the joint technologies auction pursuant to Regulatory Authority for Energy (RAE) Decisions 204/2020 and 260/2020. This auction will take place on 2 April 2020 and applications for participation should have been submitted by 25 February 2020. The initial auction price has been set at €61.32/MWh; the competition coefficient (which determines the final quantities to be auctioned) has been set at 40%; and the guarantee for participation and the performance guarantee have been set at 1% and 4% of the investment value, respectively.

Notably, during the last auction launched pursuant to RAE Decision 828/2019 and held on 12 December 2019, two categories of power plant participated:

- PV plants with a capacity of up to 20MW, for which a total of 105MW was awarded; and
- wind power plants with a capacity of up to 50MW, for which a total of 225MW was awarded.

The initial auction price for the first category was €66.02/MWh, with the final reference prices ranging from €65.99 to €53.82/MWh (the average price being €59.99/MWh). For the second category, the initial auction price was set at €68.25/MWh, with the final reference prices ranging from €61.94 to €55.77/MWh (the average price being €57.74/MWh).

Amendments to RES licensing process

The Ministry of Environment and Energy has announced important amendments to speed up the RES licensing process, with the amending law expected to be submitted to the legislature for voting within February 2020. In particular, these amendments aim to resolve the bottleneck effect caused by the thousands of production licence applications (reportedly in the area of 28GWs) currently pending before RAE. Remarkably, during the aforementioned December 2019 application submission round, 485 applications were submitted, corresponding to a capacity of 15.6GW, most of which concerned solar PV projects.

The most significant amendment announced will be the replacement of the production licence issued by RAE, with a certificate of registration with the Electronic Producers Register. This should reduce the volume of documents and data submitted to RAE and simplify the procedure for obtaining the certificate. Other amendments concern the simplification of the process of obtaining environmental approvals and other necessary licences for RES projects.

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