

TERNA, TYRRHENIAN LINK: THE AUTHORISATION PROCESS FOR THE EAST SECTION CONNECTING CAMPANIA AND SICILY BEGINS

The Service Conference for the East Branch project begins: converter substations envisaged in Eboli (province of Salerno) and Termini Imerese (province of Palermo)

The project, in which Terna will invest approximately € 3.7 billion, will allow for the better integration of renewable sources, an important boost to the ecological transition and decarbonisation

Rome, 9 November 2021 – The formal launch of the authorisation process of the “Tyrrhenian Link – East Branch”, the section of Terna’s undersea cable connecting Campania and Sicily, has been signed by the Italian Ministry of Ecological Transition.

Having completed the phase of public consultation with administrations and citizens affected by the work, on 22 July Italy’s electricity grid operator submitted a formal application to the Ministry of Ecological Transition for the release of the authorisation for construction and operation of the East Branch.

The 480-kilometre-long East section connects the Sicilian landing point of Fiumetorto, in the Municipality of Termini Imerese in the province of Palermo, with Torre Tuscia Magazzeno, located in the Municipality of Battipaglia in the province of Salerno. The landing point for the underwater cables will be carried out using the horizontal directional drilling technique, which makes it possible to avoid open excavations on the beaches.

The project submitted for authorisation envisages, in Campania, the creation of a converter substation in Eboli (in the area of the former fruit and vegetable market), connected to the Torre Tuscia Magazzeno landing point by a 15-km underground cable that will run along existing road routes without altering the environment or landscape. The switching station will also be built in Eboli: thanks to Terna’s targeted technological decision (the substation will feature GIS) it will be possible to use half of the surface area initially required by the project.

In Sicily, on the other hand, the launch of the procedure by the Ministry of Ecological Transition acknowledges that the converter substation will be located in Termini Imerese, in the Caracoli area, and will be connected to the Fiumetorto landing point with approximately 10 km of underground cable. In addition, a new 380 kV section will be built within the existing substation in Caracoli.

Anyone, especially individuals affected by the works, will be able to view the project and submit any written comments to the Ministry of Ecological Transition within 30 days from the date of publication of the process launch.

The Tyrrhenian Link is a strategic project for the Italian electricity system in which Terna will invest approximately € 3.7 billion over the next few years, involving around 250 companies. The new infrastructure will allow for greater integration between the different market zones and more effective use of the ever increasing flow of energy from renewable sources. The Tyrrhenian Link will also play a decisive role in improving the reliability of both the grid and the electricity system overall, contributing to the safety and adequacy of the electricity system to cope with the expected decommissioning of coal plants and the most obsolete plants with a higher environmental impact, also allowing for the reduction of energy and dispatching service costs.

The new interconnection is a cutting-edge project that involves the construction of two undersea power lines (one from Campania to Sicily and one from Sicily to Sardinia) for a total of 950 km of 1000 MW direct current connection.

The work will be fully operational in 2028, but the first cable – related to the East Branch – will be up and running in late 2025.