

Strategic infrastructure that reinforces Italy's role as Mediterranean energy hub

TERNA: AUTHORISATION PROCEDURE LAUNCHED FOR THE ADRIATIC LINK, A NEW SUBMARINE CABLE BETWEEN ITALIAN REGIONS OF ABRUZZO AND MARCHE

The power line will promote integration of renewables and ecological transition

The connection, running for a total of 250 km, with 210 km in submarine cable, will see Terna invest over one billion euro

Rome, 1 February 2023 - The Ministry of Environment and Energy Security has launched the authorisation procedure for creation of the Adriatic Link, a new direct-current submarine power line connecting the Italian regions of Abruzzo and Marche. The project will see Terna invest over one billion euro and will directly or indirectly involve roughly 120 companies.

Planned work will enable an increase in exchange capacity of approximately 1000 MW between the Centre-South and Centre-North zones of the country, boosting the security, efficiency and resilience of the entire national transmission grid.

The Adriatic Link, a project included in Terna's 2018 Development Plan, is highly advanced in both technological and environmental terms. The "invisible" power line, running for a total of approximately 250 km, will be made up of two submarine cables with a length of approximately 210 km and two underground cables of approximately 40 km. The two electrical conversion stations will be created near the existing substations of Cepagatti (province of Pescara), for Abruzzo, and Fano (province of Pesaro-Urbino) for the Marche region, and will have a minimal impact on local areas.

Cable laying on the seabed will reach a maximum depth of 100 metres. At the landing sites, horizontal directional drilling (HDD) will be used, enabling installation of conduits with limited environmental and social impacts on the coastline and guaranteeing protection of the electrical connection from possible coastal erosion. Similarly, for the overland stretch, the route primarily follows existing roadways.

In the context of the marine survey, which certified the suitability of the seabed to host the line, approximately 700 km² of the Adriatic Sea were inspected. This activity was carried out in two phases: during the first, geological, sedimentological, seismic, coastal-erosion, flora, fauna and ecosystem factors were assessed for authorisation purposes. During the second, bathymetric, morphological and geophysical surveys were performed in preparation for authorisation of the definitive plans.

“Launch of the authorisation process for the Adriatic Link by the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security is another key step in the current energy transition”, explained Stefano Donnarumma, CEO of Terna. “Thanks to the work of all Terna people and the active support of the Ministries, regional authorities and all bodies involved, it has been possible to accelerate the project authorisation process, with plans for the connection to be fully operational by 2028”.

Recognising its strategic importance, the Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and the Environment (ARERA) has, in fact, requested that operations begin two years earlier than the initial forecasts. The Adriatic Link will have a front-line role in development and integration of renewables, contributing to decarbonisation of the Italian energy system and, in line with the goals set out in the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC), will further strengthen Terna’s role as director and enabler of the ecological transition, as well as Italy’s role as an electricity hub for Europe and the whole Mediterranean region.

The project is the result of a long process of consultation and dialogue with local areas. Since December 2020, more than 100 meetings have been held, also involving public consultation, with regional and municipal authorities, associations and citizens, giving the opportunity to present proposals, analyses and initiatives connected to the planned work.