



OPEC Press release notes:

OPEC: Offshore Platform for Energy Competitiveness project conclusions

The 15 month OPEC (Offshore Platform for Energy Competitiveness) feasibility project has produced a number of conclusions and recommendations which may be taken forward if further funding can be sourced.

OPEC, explored the technical and economic feasibility of using large offshore floating platforms to support various combinations of revenue generating applications such as renewable energy (wind, wave and current), generation, aquaculture and security and surveillance.

The project concluded that it is technically feasible to combine certain marine energy devices with other activities such as aquaculture in order to reduce the overall costs of build and operation of multi-use platforms at sea. However, the project also found that the economic viability of such a platform remains challenging and further work would be required to optimise the design and bring together the right combination and scale of marine energy and other revenue generating activities.

The project identified several deployment cases that would be most suitable for future investment:

- Integration of offshore wind electricity generation and shellfish farming
- Partnering with existing floating wind developers to integrate limited aquaculture production, capable of offering a worthwhile revenue stream without major impact on platform cost;
- Engineering and pilot deployment of a wind+aquaculture OPEC platform to serve a small island developing state where such a platform would deliver high socio-economic value

In addition, the project highlighted two further development possibilities which merit investigation: the replacement of conventional wind turbines with a kite system and the combination of an offshore port with wave energy capture in small island states.

Although the concepts identified remain some way from commercial deployment, the project has highlighted important conclusions and recommendations for further action that could enable progress towards commercialisation.

In addition to the market potential for the platform itself, there are also opportunities for a wide range of companies along the value chain supporting the platform engineering, construction, installation, operation and decommissioning.

Options are currently being explored to fund a follow-up project to look at the detailed engineering required for two pilot multi-use platforms, one in South Africa and one in the UK.

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OPEC Project partners:

