

## World's longest interconnector brings European energy cooperation a step closer

The North Sea Link interconnector between the UK and Norway shows that energy union doesn't stop at the EU border said Maroš Šefčovič, Vice President of the European Commission, in charge of Energy Union in Brussels yesterday.

16 Feb 2016

At an event last night, that also included a supportive speech from Ian Duncan MEP, Maroš Šefčovič told the project partners National Grid and Statnett that the renamed North Sea Link (NSL) was a significant step in strengthening regional energy cooperation.

"I have said many times that the Energy Union does not stop at the EU border. The development of a North Sea energy system, based on the complimentary nature of both energy markets is a great example of what the Energy Union can mean to European citizens. The commission is keen to help drive this ambitious project forward."

Construction on the €2 billion project started last year on the Norwegian side at Kvitidal in Rogaland. Work on the UK side will begin at Blyth in Northumberland later in the year.

The interconnector will be the first direct link between the electricity systems of the two countries. Three main contractors won major contracts last year. Prysmian and Nexans are delivering the 720 kilometres of cable needed route length. ABB, the power technology specialist, will build the two converter stations.

John Pettigrew, executive director at National Grid said:

"North Sea Link is a great example of what further interconnection can mean for the European energy market as well as our own individual countries. Interconnectors are one of those rare technologies that can help security of supply, enhance competition between markets and decarbonize the energy we use.

Auke Lont, Statnett CEO said:

"We are very proud to be part of this groundbreaking project. We are building the world's longest subsea power cable, which will facilitate the transition to a sustainable European energy system and help us get the most out of our renewable natural resources for many decades to come."

North Sea Link has been named a European Commission project of Common Interest because the link will enhance electricity market integration. This has resulted in a €31 million grant to support early stage engineering studies. It is expected to be in operation by 2021.

The interconnector comprises a 720 km subsea High Voltage Direct Current system cable system that will be the longest of its type in the world. There is an additional 10 km onshore section and a HVDC converter station will be built at each end of the link.

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Notes for editors

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- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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