MEDOW
MULTI-TERMINAL DC GRID FOR OFFSHORE WIND

‘The Supergrid is a grid not a patchwork’

Ana Aguado

Lecture of Ana Aguado

Ana Aguado, CEO of ‘Friends of the Supergrid’ gave a lecture the last day of the meeting held in Porto related to the regulatory issues and current barriers of the so-called Supergrid, which technical implementation must be done by means of the DC grid.

FOSG is a group of companies and organisations which have a mutual interest in promoting and influencing the policy and regulatory framework required to enable large-scale interconnection in Europe. It combines companies in sectors that will deliver the HVDC infrastructure and related technology, together with companies that will develop, install, own and operate that infrastructure.

She put emphasis on the regulatory and political barriers which the DC grid will face with instead of the technical aspects which are mainly dealt with in the MEDOW project.

First the approval procedures that new large infrastructures need to strive for in the coming year were introduced. The EC is limiting the new priority projects to 12 strategic corridors; these projects are defined as ‘Common Interest Projects’ by the EC. Lately the permitting process has been limited to a maximum of 3.5 years. If after this process the project does not move forward, it might be finally implemented for reasons of ‘imperative overriding public interest’.

But, according to Ana, the reality is different. Due to public opinion and different regulatory procedures between countries, all this process takes longer. Still the security of supply is seen as a national issue and thus all the decisions are taken regarding the national approach in order to ensure the reliability in each country separately. By this, several politics are being adopted such as renewable generation curtailment, huge capacity payments. These approaches are making the cost of the energy very expensive and still dependant from external energy sources –like gas- at the same time that the renewable generation is being encouraged.

Nevertheless the electrical interconnection between countries could optimize the generation portfolio in Europe as well as optimizing the use of all the existing renewable generation among the different countries. According to Anna, interconnection is always cheaper than build your own generation.

Finally she presented some data regarding the approximated cost of the future Supergrid and possible approaches for paying it.


Why then....the Supergrid or Highways?


What is security of supply?
FRIENDS OF THE SUPERGRID
Further European integration via a common project of total cost 600-800bn€ in 30 years
Negotiating nationaly driven long-term contracts with third countries for gas and oil of 450bn€ every year