

World's first floating wind turbine opens in Norway

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The world's first floating full-scale offshore wind turbine in the North Sea off the coast of Norway. Norwegian energy giant StatoilHydro said that the world's first floating full-scale offshore wind turbine has been inaugurated in the North Sea off the coast of Norway.

The world's first floating full-scale offshore wind turbine has been inaugurated in the North Sea off the coast of Norway, Norwegian energy giant StatoilHydro said Tuesday.

The turbine known as Hywind, which measures 65 metres (213 feet) tall and weighs 5,300 tonnes, lies some 10 kilometres (seven miles) off the island of Karmøy near the Scandinavian country's southwestern coastline, the company said.

It rests upon a floating stand that is anchored to the seabed by three

cables. Water and rocks are placed inside the stand to provide balast.

StatoilHydro plans to test Hywind over the next two years before it looks to set up any more floating [wind turbines](#) with international partners.

StatoilHydro sees Japan, South Korea, California, the east coast of the United States and Spain as some of the potential markets to where this technology could be exported.

Hywind can be used in waters from 120 metres to 700 metres deep allowing it to be placed much further away from the shore than static wind turbines already in operation.

StatoilHydro's Anne Stroemmen Lycke told AFP that the floating turbine has "great advantages."

"It is not so easily seen from the coast, it can be placed in areas not used by others," she said.

"We could use such wind turbines in countries where [coastal waters](#) are very deep or where there is little space left for land-based turbines," Stroemmen Lycke added.

A total of 400 million kroner (46 million euros, 66 million dollars) has been invested in the 2.3-megawatt floating turbine, making it a far more expensive option than its fixed counterpart.

"Our goal is to bring down the price to the level of fixed wind turbines that are currently installed in waters some 60 metres deep," Stroemmen Lycke said.

France's Technip and Germany's Siemens both worked with the Norwegian energy giant on the Hywind project.

It is set to start producing electricity in the next few weeks, StatoilHydro said.

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