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SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS JANUARY 22, 2019 / 5:44 PM / A DAY AGO

France mulls converting Cordemais coal power generators to biomass

Bate Felix

3 MIN READ



PARIS (Reuters) - The French government and utility EDF ([EDF.PA](#)) will study the possibility of converting the 1.2 gigawatts (GW) Cordemais coal power generators to burn biomass due to its importance in guaranteeing security of supply, the energy ministry said on Tuesday.

Cows graze in a field in a view that shows the Electricite de France (EDF) coal-fired power plant in Cordemais, near Nantes, France, October 18, 2018. REUTERS/Stephane Mahe

President Emmanuel Macron's government plans to phase out electricity production

from France's remaining coal-fired power plants by 2022 as part of measures to curb carbon emissions and global warming.

The government also plans to reduce France's dependence on nuclear power which accounts for over 75 percent of French electricity needs, while boosting the development of greener energies.

French power grid operator RTE, has warned that the plan to shut down some coal and nuclear generators, could leave France, a net exporter of electricity in Europe, largely dependent on neighbors during peak demand periods, particularly in winter.

Anxious to guarantee French electricity supply, the ministry and state-controlled utility EDF are studying a project to convert the power station to biomass, the energy ministry said in a statement.

It added that the Cordemais conversion project would only be considered under the strict condition that power production from the site would be necessary to guarantee French security of supply after 2022.

The ministry said the study would look at the environmental impact and economic viability, while additional analysis would be carried out by grid operator RTE on the security of supply particularly in western France.

Trade unions are against the closure of the plant and have been carrying out protests and production stoppages at the units since last year.

The current series of strikes forced RTE to call for the restart of the units when France faced a cold spell last week as power demand for heating rose sharply.

Tree waste could help fuel cars, says Swedish scientist

Power output at the 580 megawatts (MW) each Cordemais 4 and 5 units was reduced by a nearly 400 MW due to another strike as of 2200 GMT on Tuesday, RTE data showed.

As cold weather and snowfall hit France on Tuesday, the country was a net importer of electricity for most of the day, according to RTE data. It was importing around 6 GW of electricity from neighbors Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy and Belgium and exporting nothing at around midday.

Reporting by Bate Felix; Editing by Sandra Maler

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ENERGY JANUARY 24, 2019 / 3:01 AM / UPDATED 9 HOURS AGO

Vestas launches more versatile wind power platform

2 MIN READ



COPENHAGEN, Jan 24 (Reuters) - Danish wind power company Vestas on Thursday presented a new platform it says will enable customers to produce cheaper energy through turbines tailored for different wind conditions and locations.

EnVentus, the first new Vestas platform since 2011, will offer customers more flexibility than its existing 2 megawatt (MW) and 4 MW platforms, it said, adding that it was also launching new V150-5.6 MW and V162-5.6 MW turbines to run on the EnVentus platform.

“EnVentus is a great achievement by everyone at Vestas that allows us to meet customers’ increasing needs for customisation and continuous reduction of cost of energy,” Chief Executive Anders Runevad said in a statement.

The wind power industry has been grappling with reduced subsidies in recent years and governments seeking more competitive contract tenders, increasing pressure on suppliers, turbine makers and wind farm developers to reduce costs.

The EnVentus platform will lower the cost of energy produced throughout the lifespan of the turbine, Vestas said. (Reporting by Jacob Gronholt-Pedersen Editing by David Goodman)

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