

The Government of the Canary Islands approves the declaration of General Interest regarding the submarine electricity interconnection between Tenerife and La Gomera

Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 22 December 2022

The declaration of General Interest regarding the project for the Tenerife-La Gomera underwater interconnection line and its associated infrastructure by the Island Council of the Canary Islands is a very important step forward in the fight against climate change and that enables an energy transition based on electricity systems that are more resilient, safer and cleaner.

This declaration of General Interest, plus the recent approval by the Commission of the Regional Government of the Canary Islands regarding the Environmental Impact Statement, are decisive steps towards obtaining the administrative authorisations and permits that will allow the construction of this new infrastructure, which is essential for the green transition and for which the collaboration between the Regional Government of the Canary Islands, the Island Councils of Tenerife and La Gomera and the local corporations is key.

It is estimated that the cable laying work of the submarine electricity interconnection between Tenerife and La Gomera can begin in the next quarter, once all the procedures for the authorisations and permits have been completed.

This infrastructure will create a more robust and larger electricity system between islands and will contribute to a more efficient and safe electricity supply system on both islands. Furthermore, it will promote the implementation of new green energy facilities, especially in La Gomera, taking advantage of its natural resources, i.e., the abundance of sun and wind. All this will result in a reduction of electricity generation costs for the Canary Islands' electricity system as a whole and will not only reduce its external dependence on polluting fossil fuels but will also result in an environmental improvement of the interconnected islands.

This link will enable the electricity systems of Tenerife and La Gomera to operate as one single system, achieving very important synergies between them for the integration of renewable energy. It will also make it possible for La Gomera to be the first island in the Canary Islands to produce more renewable energy than it consumes during the year, thus reducing production from more expensive and polluting sources on both islands of the archipelago.

A technological challenge worldwide

The electricity interconnection between the islands of Tenerife and La Gomera is a huge technological challenge worldwide, due to the depth of the link, the volcanic nature of the

terrain and the complex terrestrial and submarine orography, as the subsea section of the link will be the deepest three-core alternating current interconnection in the world to date.

This axis is composed of:

- The 66 kV (kilovolt) Tenerife-La Gomera underground-submarine double-circuit electricity line (called Chío-El Palmar de La Gomera interconnection), which will consist of a submarine section of approximately 36 kilometres that runs along the seabed at a maximum depth of 1,145 metres, and two land sections in La Gomera and Tenerife.
- The new 66 kV electricity substation in Chío (Tenerife), which will be built in the vicinity of the existing Guía de Isora substation.
- The first 66 kV electricity substation in El Palmar de la Gomera, in the vicinity of San Sebastián de La Gomera substation (La Gomera), to be built near the El Palmar thermal power station, which currently supplies power to the entire island. This reduces the length of the new infrastructure that will connect the transmission grid and the electricity distribution network and avoids having to redesign the distribution network that supplies consumers on the island of La Gomera. In short, the synergies of the site will be maximised.

Respect for the environment

The project has been designed and will be carried out following the highest standards of quality and best international practices, with the utmost respect for the environment; an aspect of the project that is guaranteed thanks to the terrestrial and marine studies carried out during the initial stages of the project. These studies, together with the compulsory public information and consultation process, have contributed significantly to defining the solutions proposed for the projects that have received the Environmental Impact Statement approval.

The project also includes an environmental monitoring programme that will not only guarantee the implementation and integration of the infrastructure into the environment according to best practices but will also guarantee it complies with the terms and conditions set out in the Environmental Impact Statement. Said programme will be observed at all times throughout the construction phase of the project and will continue to be monitored for several years after the commissioning of the facility.