

hardt says the quality of the local workforce helped seal the deal. "I don't want to understate that fact." He says there are many industrial manufacturing businesses in the area and a community college, both of which his office was able to provide Vestas access to for possible employees. "The quality of [Vestas'] workforce is very important to them. They don't just have a "human resource" person; they have a People and Culture department!"

Vestas has more than 12,000 employees worldwide and produces more than a quarter of the world's wind turbines. In addition to the attraction of its central location, Colorado is home to the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory. It is also a fertile state for wind development thanks to a green energy mandate—which is on its way to being strengthened by state lawmakers (page 45). The US facility is one of two new Vestas blade plants, the other being in Spain, which the company says will together cost €90 million while increasing annual blade production by 2400, enough for 800 turbines.

Italian pre-serial production

Developer turns turbine maker

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Windpower Monthly
Italy

Italian company Moncada Costruzioni is upgrading its 750 kW prototype

wind turbine to 850 kW prior to pre-serial production of ten machines later this year. The rotor span is being increased to 58 metres from 51 metres following testing of the single prototype since November 2005.

Moncada's Daniel Tuzzeo says the ten 850 kW turbines will be installed at a 34 MW wind plant owned by Moncada near the town of Cattolica Eraclea on Sicily, where the company is based and has concentrated wind development activity to date. "If they work well, we will use these turbines for the entire plant," says Tuzzeo.

He expects the Moncada factory to turn out 50 turbines next year before getting up to what is foreseen as full speed production of about 150 machines a year in 2009. Should all go as planned, Moncada will be only the second company in Italy turning out utility-scale wind turbines. Vestas puts together its 850 kW turbines at a plant in Taranto.

As Moncada gears up for serial production, Tuzzeo says the company has no immediate plans to commercialise its turbines.



Moncada's prototype: Ready for upgrading from 750 kW to 850 kW

"Moncada needs 500 of them for its own plants in Italy and elsewhere," he explains. Eventual sales to third parties could be five years down the road.

The turbines will be made at new facilities in Porte Empedocle, Sicily. The factory site was acquired last month. The company will make the nacelle, tower and blades. Moncada has acquired a licence for the blade moulds and production process from German company EUROS.

Based in Agrigento, Moncada diversified

out of the construction business and into wind power in 2001. Its first wind plant was a 9.25 MW wind station of Gamesa 850 kW turbines at Monte Mele, where its prototype has also been running. Recently it inaugurated four further wind farms with a combined capacity of 96.05 MW. Like Monte Mele, these are also located in the Sicilian province of Agrigento.

Delivery of 200 MW secured

Italian firm favours Spanish suppliers

HEATHER O'BRIAN
Windpower Monthly
Italy

Italy's Veronagest, a relative newcomer to the country's wind business, has turned

to Spanish turbine producer Gamesa for a string of wind projects in southern Italy. Veronagest is paying €205 million for 136 Gamesa turbines with a combined capacity of 202 MW. The deal is more good news for Gamesa in Italy, which was the leading supplier to the Italian wind market last year.

According to the terms of the deal, Veronagest's Eólica Maridiana unit is buying 26 of Gamesa's 850 kW machines for a 22 MW plant in the province of Palermo in Sicily stretching across land in Marineo and Cefalà Diana. Gamesa will hand over the key once the turbines are up and running.

The turbine supplier will also operate and maintain through 2010 an additional 35 of the Spanish group's 850 kW turbines—destined for another 29.75 MW plant in Sicily's Palermo province—and 75 of its 2 MW machines to be used on other projects. Work on both the Sicilian plants has begun, says Luciano Santi of Veronagest, and they are expected to become operational next year.

Veronagest will also soon begin construction work on two other Sicilian wind farms with a combined capacity of 114 MW. The company has not yet decided if it will use Gamesa's 2 MW machines on these projects, but it is also developing a number of other wind farms on which they could be used.

Veronagest, a unit of lender Banca Popolare di Verona e Novara, last year chose another Spanish group for a 70.5 MW plant in Sicily. Barcelona-based Ecotècnia's 1.5 MW turbines have now started to go into the ground at the site in the province of Catania and that plant is expected to be up and running by early 2008. While Veronagest has so far only announced projects in Sicily, it is developing others in the regions of Apulia, Ca-