



KENYA

First power at Lake Turkana

26 September 2018 by Craig Richard

KENYA: The long-delayed Lake Turkana wind farm has finally delivered first power to the grid, its developer has announced.



The Lake Turkana wind farm first delivered power to the grid in September (pic credit: Ketraco)

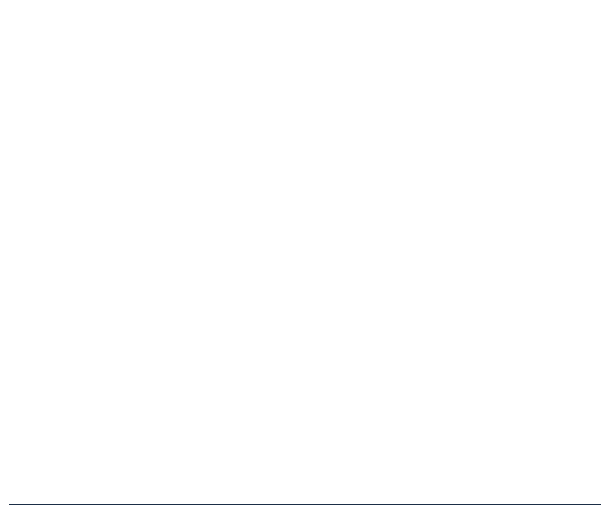
Lake Turkana Wind Power (LTWP) is now carrying out further tests and commissioning protocols and aims to bring between 10 and 12 turbines online per day, it added.

Installation of the project's 365 Vestas V52-850kW turbines was completed in June 2017, but connecting them to the wind farm's 434km transmission line – like construction – was delayed due to financial uncertainty.

But the developer now expects the project to be fully commissioned in October.

In the week following the first circuit of the transmission interconnector being energised (on 20 September), an average capacity factor of 74% has been recorded, the developer told *Windpower Monthly*.

Contractor Isolux Corsán delayed signing the contract for the transmission line and later went bankrupt. This left national transmission system operator (TSO) Ketraco to take responsibility for completing the high-voltage Loiyangalani-Suswa transmission line – the longest in Africa.



It completed the line to meet a revised deadline of 31 August, but tests had to be carried out before the wind farm's turbines could be connected to the grid.

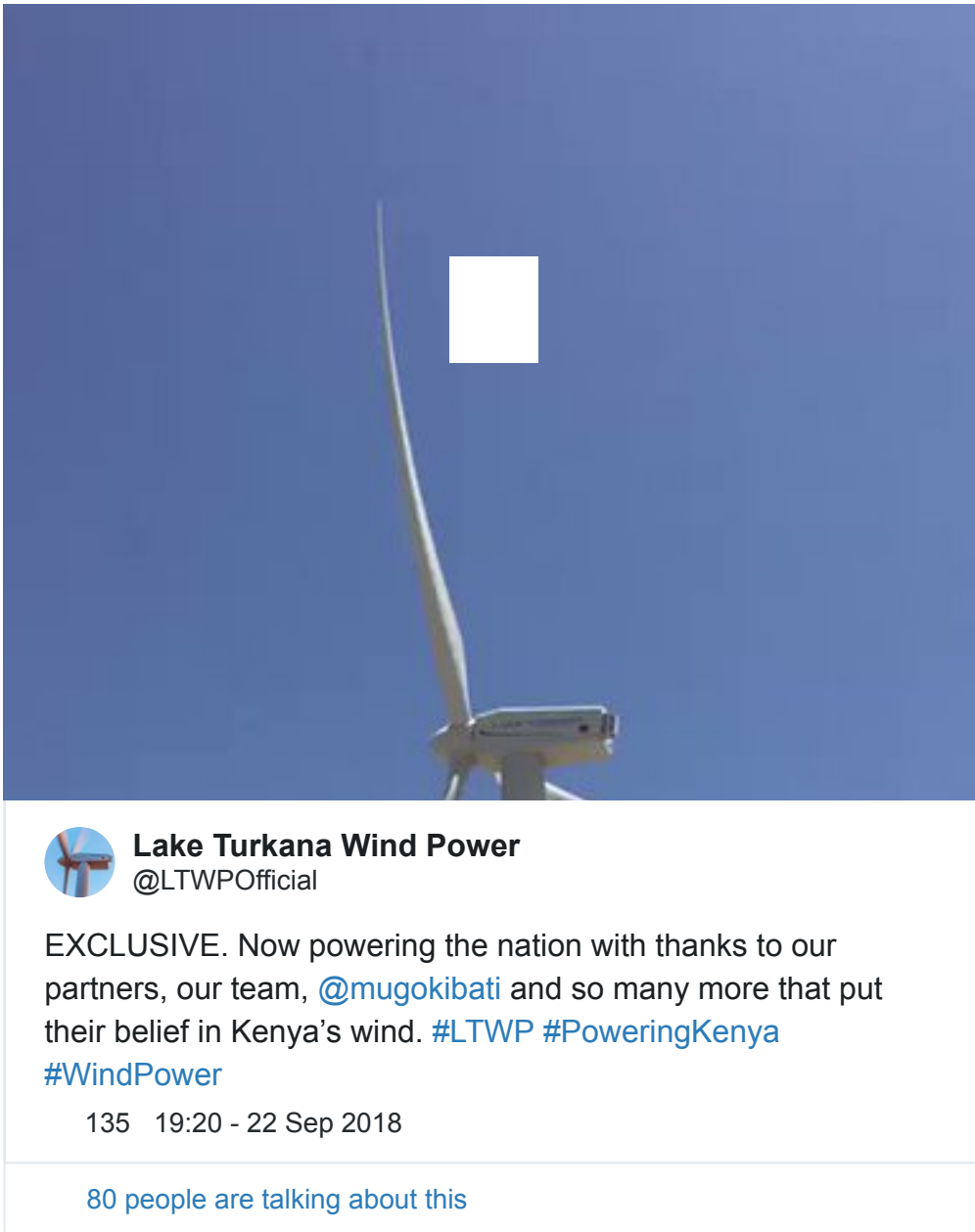
While the project's 353 turbines were idling, LTWP – a consortium of Danish and African investment funds and turbine supplier Vestas – was unable to receive the agreed sum of \$75.20/MWh under its power purchase agreement (PPA) with national utility Kenya Power & Lighting Company.

From 1 September, Lake Turkana Wind Power was due to receive compensation from national utility Kenya Power and Lighting Company. This was to be funded by increased electricity bills for consumers.

However, the developer's project finance advisor confirmed it had not billed the utility for delayed payments in September.

In June 2018, Phylip Leferink, then general manager of Lake Turkana Wind Power, told *Windpower Monthly* the developer received a "rather sizeable amount of money" – enough to keep the consortium out of financial difficulties – in compensation, but would not disclose the specific amount.

Building Kenya's largest wind farm has created many challenges for the developer and for the government.



But what can be learned from the development of Lake Turkana wind farm?

"The government has risk on the transmission line; we have risk on the wind farm," said Leferink, who oversaw the construction of the wind farm.

"If one is on time and the other is delayed, you risk the degeneration energy payments."

He concludes: "If a project like this – the size of Lake Turkana, in an isolated, non-connected area – is being built, I think it would make sense to keep the transmission line construction and wind farm construction separate."

Have you registered with us yet?

Register now to enjoy more articles
and free email bulletins.

[Sign up now](#)

Already registered?

[Sign in](#)