TECNALIA launches the first floating laboratory in Europe for tests at BIMEP, a real offshore environment

- **The lab is partly funded by the Basque Government and enables testing of new materials and solutions against corrosion, ageing and fouling in the marine environment, in real conditions that are monitored on site.**

- **It meets the specific needs of Basque companies that want to increase their offshore energy business. Companies such as Erreka, Credeblug, Ditrel, Navacel, Tubacex, Vicinay, Nem Solutions and Sasyma Coatings will be the first to test their solutions, as part of an initiative promoted by the Basque Energy Cluster.**

- **The construction and installation of this lab has been supported by the Basque Government, and it will be situated and started up at BIMEP, Biscay Marine Energy Platform, the open-sea marine energy research platform, located in Armintza and developed by the Basque Energy Agency (EVE).**

- **It was launched this morning in Bermeo Port at an event that was attended by the Regional Minister for Economic Development and Infrastructure of the Basque Country and Chairperson of the EVE, Arantxa Tapia; the CEO of TECNALIA, Iñaki San Sebastián; and the Managing Director of the Basque Energy Cluster, José Ignacio Hormaeche**

Bermeo, 20 July 2018. The sea is an infinite energy source, but the companies involved in harnessing this enormous energy source face the same challenge: the survival of energy systems in a highly hostile environment – the marine environment. Now Basque companies will be able to use a lab that is unique in Europe to test materials and solutions in a real offshore environment. It has been developed by the Research and Technological Development Centre TECNALIA, with the support of a number of Basque companies, coordinated by the Basque Energy Cluster and supported by the Basque Government.

It was launched this morning in Bermeo Port at an event that was attended by the Regional Minister for Economic Development and Infrastructure of the Basque Country, Arantxa Tapia; CEO of TECNALIA, Iñaki San Sebastián; and the Managing Director of the Basque Energy Cluster, José Ignacio Hormaeche. Over the next week, the lab will be taken to BIMEP, Biscay Marine Energy Platform, the **open-sea** marine energy research platform situated in Armintza and developed by the Basque Energy Agency (EVE), where there is constant surveillance and which will enable fast access to HarshLab.

The lab, called HarshLab, will offer accurate information to enable companies to predict the performance of materials, components and equipment in this hostile environment, in order to develop offshore energy systems with a high survival rate. It should be taken into account that if the life cycle of components and equipment in this environment is extended, costs will be reduced and it will enable offshore energy to be competitive and sustainable.

Companies will be able to use the facilities to assess, amongst other things, fixing solutions for the wind energy and oil&gas sectors; systems for monitoring and controlling underwater handlers; underwater electrical connectors; hydraulic systems; oil-hydraulic systems and components, metal tubes for piles; protective covering and solutions; and multi-material joints or mooring systems.

A lab to be used by companies

The lab is aimed at companies providing solutions in the offshore energy market, such as Erreka, Credeblug, Ditrel Industrial, Glual, Hine, Navacel, Nem Solutions, Sasyma Coatings, Tubacex and Vicinay. These companies will be the first to test their systems at the new facilities.

Although the lab was originally designed to promote offshore energy, other sectors like naval, civil works, fishing, communications, sports, etc. will be able to make use of this infrastructure. We also hope it can be used to train professionals in offshore environments.

One of the lab's innovative features, as well as the fact that it tests in a real offshore environment, is that it enables analysis in three different areas: splash (where the waves break), immersion (under the surface, at different depths), and atmospheric

(above the surface). HarshLab1.0 is the first prototype of a larger and more complex lab, which is currently being developed and will be launched next year. HarshLab2.0, as well as the current capabilities, will enable companies to test and validate heavier and more complex equipment that requires electricity. New exhibition areas will also be added, as well as the option of testing in confined spaces (in the hold) and on the seabed.

HarshLab has been developed with the support of the Basque Department of Economic Development and Infrastructure through the Hazitek programme (HARSH project), and with direct funding from the Lehendakaritza Innovation Fund and the Basque Energy Agency's programme to fund investment to test and validate renewable marine energy technology, supported by the Basque Country's 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

About TECNALIA

TECNALIA is a benchmark Research and Technological Development Centre for Europe; with 1,400 experts from 30 different nationalities, focusing on transforming technology into GDP to improve People's quality of life, by creating business opportunities for Companies.
www.tecnalia.com

About the Basque Energy Cluster

The Basque Energy Cluster is made up of the main companies in the Basque energy value chain (energy operators, equipment and component manufacturers, engineering firms and service companies), agents of the Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Network, and public bodies with responsibilities in the energy sector. It currently has over 168 members and carries out many activities regarding internationalisation, technological development and business innovation.
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