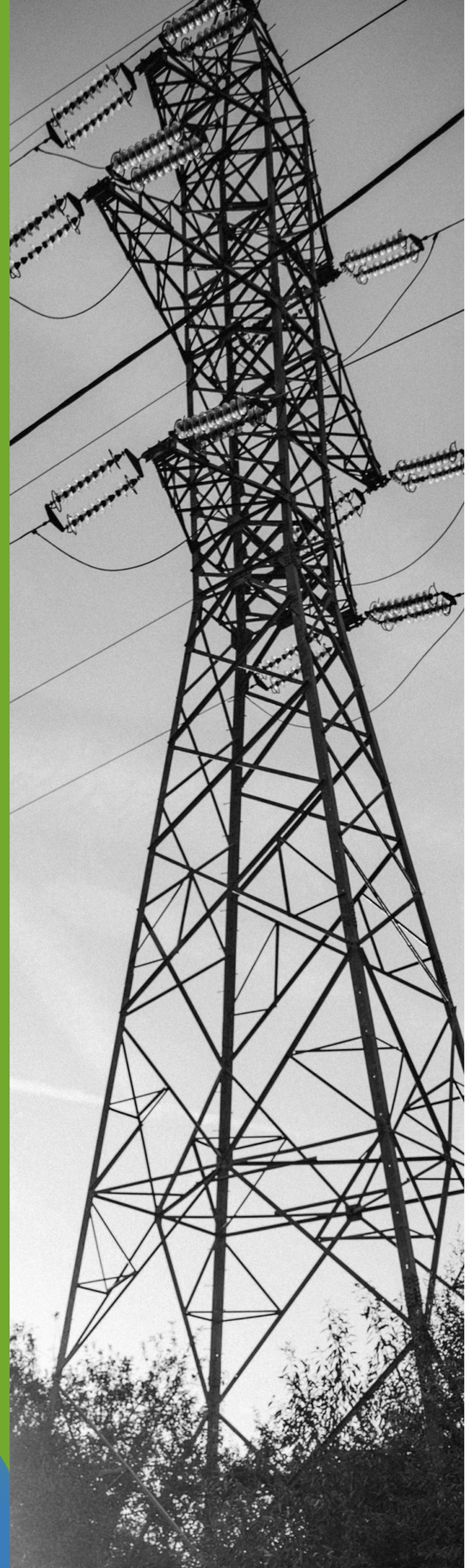
Renewables Grid Initiative

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

“The impacts of extreme weather require us to rethink how we plan and deploy electricity grids and other energy assets. Preparedness needs to become the baseline, not the exception”

Antonella Battaglini



FOREWORD

DEAR READERS,

Annual reports look at the past; they attempt to make sense of all the activities and efforts of the year gone by. For me, the foreword is always an opportunity to reflect on the reality of today and to look ahead to what is still needed and worth doing.

We are in the midst of summer 2026, with excruciating temperatures across Europe. Heat-related deaths are already in the thousands. Once largely associated with southern Europe, forest fires have sadly become a widespread phenomenon. Millions of animals are silently perishing. Water availability is dramatically declining, affecting the energy systems of many countries as well as a wide range of economic activities. And yet, climate change is seldom mentioned, if at all. Geopolitics is increasingly disrupting supply chains, pushing prices up and reinforcing the need for a stronger and more united Europe. The transition to a renewables-based energy system is more urgent than ever.

Yet, attempts to deny, delay and derail investments are increasingly evident. Yes, we still have open questions! Yes, there is no blueprint to follow! But actually, we have all we need to push decarbonisation forward. Direct electrification, electricity grids, wind and solar are the key ingredients of the energy transition. Flexibility, nature protection and stakeholder engagement that deliver local benefits are essential complementary factors. At the same time, scarcity is mounting and costs are increasing, raising concerns among energy regulators and policymakers alike about how to finance the investments required. The impacts of extreme weather require us to rethink how we plan and deploy electricity grids and other energy assets. Preparedness needs to become the baseline, not the exception.

We at RGI have known this since the very beginning. Today, this understanding is reflected in many European policy efforts, including the Renewable Energy Directive (RED), the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), the Nature Restoration Law and the recently proposed Grids Package. Together, these and other regulatory frameworks should support the evolution towards a fully decarbonised energy system across Europe. The daunting task now is rapid implementation, and we should all contribute to making it happen.

In this fast-changing environment, RGI has been systematically addressing emerging challenges while developing solutions and pathways. In 2025, we worked to deepen our understanding of an increasingly complex energy system and identify ways to accelerate planning for a resilient future (see Grids & Energy Systems, pp. 4-7). We strengthened our onshore and offshore work by broadening our scope and expanding our communication and event activities (see Onshore Energy & Nature, pp. 8-9; Offshore Energy & Nature, pp. 10-13). We also scaled up our global Nature- and People-Positive activities (GINGR, pp. 14-15) and continued exploring the power of approaching the energy transition collaboratively (Energy & Society, pp. 16-23).

I hope this report offers fresh insights, sparks new ideas, and perhaps even provides some of the answers we are all seeking.

Cordialmente,

Antonella Battaglini
CEO Renewables Grid Initiative

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GRIDS & ENERGY SYSTEMS

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING DECARBONISED ENERGY SYSTEMS

Successful delivery of Europe's energy transition depends on timely and sustainable electricity grid development. This is not an easy task: grid planning processes must manage growing complexity, including flexibility uncertainty, spatial and permitting constraints, intensifying climate risks and supply chains pressures.

In 2025, RGI addressed these aspects through a holistic approach: optimising the system rather than tackling issues in isolation. By improving planning methods, strengthening coordination and supporting resilient infrastructure delivery, the Grids & Energy Systems' team work focused on translating stakeholder dialogues into practical guidance across European grid-related processes. We enabled expert discussions on how to model, plan and implement decarbonised and optimised clean energy systems, focusing on five topics, including various challenges and opportunities they encounter:

- **Planning complexity:** Ensuring inclusiveness and improving assumptions in European grid scenarios
- **Flexibility needs:** Strengthening dialogue and understanding around emerging flexibility assessment methods
- **Good practices of spatial planning and permitting:** Promoting integrated planning approaches
- **Climate change impacts:** Supporting and embedding climate adaptation and resilience into infrastructure investment planning
- **Resource scarcity and material dependencies:** Advancing circular approaches to grid supply chains

Explore RGI's activities on Grids & Energy Systems

BETTER DECISIONS FOR A COMPLEX SYSTEM

Europe's electricity grid is at the heart of the energy transition, but its planning is increasingly complex. Grid development depends on long-term modelling, cross-sector assumptions, and coordination across countries, regions, sectors and voltage levels. In 2025, the Grids & Energy System team worked to strengthen the quality, transparency, and inclusiveness of European system modelling and planning processes.

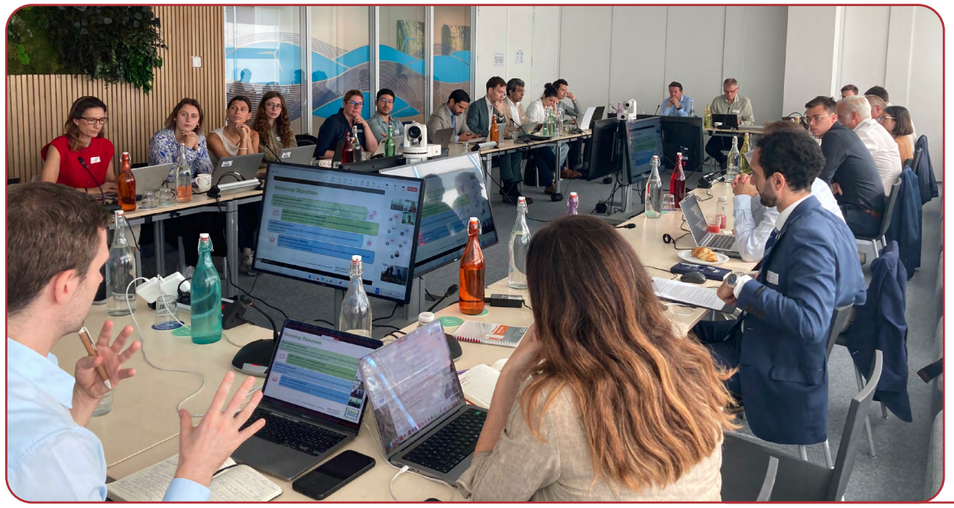
Through our engagement in the Ten-Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) via the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) as well as other opportunities, we helped to ensure that different perspectives are meaningfully reflected in European grid scenarios. Our input contributed to tangible improvements in scenario development, including better approaches to modelling innovations, commodity price assumptions, and gap-filling methodology. By connecting experts and stakeholders representing different sectors with European system planners, we strengthened shared understanding of how modelling choices can shape Europe's decarbonisation pathway.

Flexibility was a central focus of this work. In November, RGI convened a two-day expert workshop bringing together ENTSO-E, EU DSO Entity, TSOs, regulators, modellers, NGOs, European Commission and ACER to explore methodological aspects related to the Flexibility Needs Assessment (FNA) methodology and their links to adequacy and network planning. The discussions underlined the importance of shared data quality (especially from the distribution level, including demand-side and cross-sector flexibility) in enabling reliable future system assessments. The exchanges highlighted that flexibility planning remains as much a coordination challenge across voltage levels as a methodological one, pointing out to the need of improving coherence between European planning processes such as FNA, European Resource Adequacy Assessment (ERAA), and TYNDP.

2142 Actors engaged in the JW4A's Wind Forum throughout the project

In parallel, RGI's completed the Horizon Europe's JustWind4All[1] project by reinforcing how technical planning must remain grounded in societal and environmental realities. Overall, 2025 marked a step forward in making European grid planning more robust, coordinated, and fit for a flexible energy future.

[1] JustWind4All is funded by the European Union under the Grant Agreement no. 101083936



Snapshot from the expert workshop 'Integrated Offshore Planning: Aligning Energy, Nature and Space'.

FASTER AND MORE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Even the best energy system plans will fall short if Europe does not deploy electricity grids and renewable energy sources in view of the current and future constraints. To ensure Europe's energy systems address spatial and supply chain constraints, as well as climate risks, RGI focused on facilitating discussions towards optimisation and resilience. As an outcome, we shared insights and practical solutions for a timely, effective and sustainable infrastructure deployment with different stakeholders.

On spatial optimisation, we contributed to a knowledge-exchange workshop on permitting organised by CINEA, sharing how holistic planning can support an accelerated infrastructure deployment, including good practices that can help addressing permitting challenges.

Furthermore, together with WindEurope and colleagues from the Offshore Team, we convened an expert workshop on integrated offshore infrastructure planning, highlighting the need to align energy expansion with maritime spatial planning and nature objectives. Building on this broader Offshore Energy & Nature work, we translated insights from three years of stakeholder co-production under JustWind4All's Wind Lab 4 into an Energy Read on Maritime Sustainable Planning. The publication sets out practical principles for harmonised offshore wind and grid development in the North Sea basin, supporting infrastructure acceleration that is both nature-inclusive and socially grounded.

Finally, our Best Practice Webinar with grid operators NESO and 50Hertz explored how holistic planning approaches can support faster infrastructure deployment, demonstrating that combining spatial and energy system analysis can improve early corridor identification and reduce stakeholder conflict.

Climate resilience of electricity grid infrastructure was another priority for RGI in 2025. With the organisation of two expert workshops, we concluded a three-year process with ENTSO-E that aimed at co-developing a quantitative indicator for assessing the benefits of climate adaptation and resilience measures in grid investments. The results of this work have informed the updated Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) Methodology.

Explore the JW4A's Energy Read on Maritime Sustainable Planning

Panel Discussion at the JW4A final event: 'Power with People'.

We also expanded the evidence base through a growing collection of good practices on climate-proofing electricity infrastructure, showcasing how it can be protected against hazards such as floodings or wildfires, at the same time filling a knowledge gap on assessing climate risks. This was shared with many stakeholders, for example, at the workshop organised by the International Energy Agency (IEA), pointing out the need to streamline existing methodologies and assessment frameworks. In 2025, we continued contributing to different initiatives on the topic of climate resilience. Our second collaboration under the DestinE Initiative started, aimed at supporting the development of a machine learning application for the integration of climate and weather data into energy system planning. We also joined the second European Climate Risk Assessment (EUCRA-2) development process, toward its conclusion in 2028.

14 New good practices on climate-proofing the grid, published in our databse

Beyond climate risks, Europe's grid expansion experiences supply chain constraints, including those related to material availability. This is exacerbated by the fact that electricity grid and renewable energy infrastructure depends on components and raw materials that are increasingly exposed to geopolitical tensions, leading to higher costs, project delays and sustainability risks. In 2025, RGI advanced its work in Circularity and Supply Chains workstream, convening stakeholders across the grid value chain to identify practical pathways for reducing material dependence and strengthening supply chain resilience. Our exchanges, for example during the expert workshop 'Powering Security', showed that implementation of circular strategies requires harmonised definitions, access to reliable cross-sectoral data, standardised methodologies, and strong collaborative approaches.

Interactive Session at Expert Workshop 'Powering Security'.

These insights on how circular approaches, from procurement to reuse, can support Europe's competitiveness, autonomy, and decarbonisation goals were incorporated into the RGI's Statement on Circular Economy Act.

Looking ahead, circularity is becoming indispensable for Europe's energy transition: as grid investment accelerates, secure and sustainable access to materials will be as critical as accelerated permitting, holistic planning or financing. Circular grids are, therefore, emerging not only as an environmental ambition, but as a long-term strategy to safeguard infrastructure delivery and reduce exposure to supply chain disruptions.

ONSHORE ENERGY & NATURE

SUPPORTING THE ACCELERATION OF GRID INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURE PROTECTION ON LAND

The need to jointly protect and restore nature while accelerating Europe's energy transition on land continued to gain momentum in 2025. As electricity grids expand and modernise to enable decarbonisation, the importance of embedding nature-positive solutions into grid planning, construction, and operation has become increasingly clear. In 2025, RGI's onshore team advanced nature protection and nature-positive approaches around the electricity grid through a wide range of activities, with a strong emphasis on knowledge exchange and identification of enabling factors for success. Two of RGI's core topics remain central to this effort:

- Bird protection to reduce negative impacts of existing and new power lines on vulnerable bird population, ensuring mitigation measures and regulatory approaches stay effective.
- Integrated vegetation management (IVM) as a nature-positive approach to managing vegetation around electricity grids, supporting biodiversity, system reliability, and socio-economic benefits.

Learn more about Bird-Friendly Power Lines

Learning opportunities and knowledge exchange with peers

In October, RGI organised a learning excursion entitled 'Trust in Transmission - Partnerships and Policy for Bird-Friendly Power Lines' in Bratislava, Slovakia, in collaboration with the NGO Raptor Protection of Slovakia. Protecting bird species not only depends on the measures implemented, but also on the processes and partnerships that enable them. Each country's regulatory, technical, and institutional context shapes the effectiveness of such efforts, and understanding these differences helps identify transferable lessons. RGI's learning excursion explored Slovakia's regulatory approach, its practical implementation, and the long-standing collaboration model between grid operators and Raptor Protection of Slovakia.

The excursion brought together around 40 stakeholders from 13 European countries, including TSOs, DSOs, environmental NGOs, technical experts, and authorities, to discuss bird protection along electricity grids and what makes mitigation measures for bird species truly effective.

The event started with a half-day workshop during which RGI presented successful initiatives such as SafeLines4Birds and RISKY, and Slovak experts shared their success stories and lessons learned.

During the excursion, participants visited an Integrated Vegetation Management pilot site, as well as distribution and transmission lines equipped with anti-collision and anti-electrocution devices. These site visits enabled in-depth discussions on the practical implementation of mitigation measures, monitoring approaches, and the importance of trust and cooperation between grid operators, NGOs, and authorities. The outcomes of the discussion and the main points have been summarised in a report, published in December 2025.

Beyond peer exchanges, RGI launched a deeper analysis of best practice case studies within its network in 2025. Going beyond simple knowledge sharing, this work aimed to identify the enabling factors that have allowed actors in specific countries to become 'champions' in protecting nature around the electricity grid, notably in the fields of integrated vegetation management and bird protection. The case studies examine governance structures, regulatory frameworks, stakeholder engagement processes, and financing mechanisms, and were disseminated through a set of dedicated factsheets presenting five exemplary cases.

Strengthening our role as experts through impactful external events and new projects

In parallel, RGI joined the RISKY project, which aims to develop a digital platform combining open data and scientific knowledge on wildlife mortality caused by energy and transport infrastructure. The platform will provide tools to analyse, predict, and visualise impacts on terrestrial vertebrates, supporting more informed planning and mitigation decisions. Through its involvement in 2025, RGI contributed expertise on electricity grids and ensured strong links between research outputs and practical application by grid operators.

16K+ Impressions for Energy & Nature social media campaigns covered in 16 posts

Finally, RGI continued to strengthen the visibility of biodiversity issues related to electricity grids in international fora. In 2025, RGI proudly sponsored the 8th Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife Impacts (CWW) in Montpellier. At this traditionally wind-focused conference, RGI emphasised the role of electricity grids in the energy transition with a dedicated stand. We also presented IRENA's Coalition's report on Nature-Positive energy principles – of which RGI is a member – alongside our own work on nature-positive approaches for onshore and offshore energy infrastructure. In addition, RGI organised a dedicated side event on bird protection along electricity grids, sharing our work and best practices from our Members with a global audience of experts.

Onshore event 'Trust in Transmission - Partnerships and Policy for Bird-Friendly Power Lines' in Bratislava, Slovakia.

OFFSHORE ENERGY & NATURE

FROM SHARED KNOWLEDGE TO CREATING IMPACT

As offshore wind and grids scale up across European sea basins, RGI continued to support approaches that integrate biodiversity considerations from the earliest planning stages, encourage robust environmental safeguards, and promote ecosystem restoration. Carrying out this work in the two branches of the Offshore Coalition for Energy and Nature (North and Baltic Seas; Mediterranean and adjacent Atlantic waters) was a central pillar of RGI's environmental dimension. RGI is proud to moderate and convene OCEaN, which grew in size this year with four new organisations joining OCEaN – North & Baltic Seas and one new Member joining Med OCEaN.

The urgent need to deploy offshore wind and combat both the climate and biodiversity crisis was starkly visible in 2025, while at the same time worries about environmental deregulation and the financial woes of industry players created new uncertainties. Throughout the year, OCEaN responded accordingly and strengthened dialogue among their Members, maintaining their role as a key reference point for decision-makers and the entire ecosystem of actors working at the intersection of offshore wind, grids, and nature. We consolidated shared positions on key policy and regulatory developments, submitting joint messages on behalf of OCEaN to two European Commission calls for feedback – on the European Ocean Pact and on NZIA's Implementing Act concerning non-price criteria. With these submissions, we demonstrated the relevance of our multistakeholder insights for the advancement of European policy priorities, clearly laying out recommendations, highlighting nature-friendly paths forward, and outlining potential roadblocks.

OCEaN's two Coalitions also released targeted joint statements at key junctions in the year. In September, Med OCEaN outlined recommendations on the integration of non-price criteria in offshore wind auctions, while in the North and Baltic Seas, a statement outlining recommendations to the North Sea Energy Cooperation (NSEC) was released in November to coincide with the NSEC Ministerial Meeting. RGI's CEO Antonella Battaglini was onsite at the NSEC Ministerial Meeting on behalf of OCEaN to share these messages, showcasing OCEaN's vital role in conversations at the highest level of decision-making. Complementing these efforts, RGI's offshore team maintained consistent engagement throughout the year with EU institutions, regional cooperation fora, and actors at Member State level to spread our messages further. These actions further increased interest in our work, confirming our importance as a platform delivering multistakeholder views built on trust, collaboration, and experience.

Check out OCEaN's website to learn more

Antonella Battaglini onsite at the NSEC Ministerial Meeting on behalf of OCEaN.

Beyond sharing our views through advocacy actions, OCEaN's messages were spread to a larger audience with diverse communication outputs, online and in-person events, and engagement opportunities. This is especially highlighted by the dissemination of OCEaN's work on mitigation. Building upon the 2024 publication of the report 'Avoidance and Minimisation of Environmental Impacts from Offshore Wind and Grid Infrastructure', an interactive infographic was developed and promoted, with strong interest from stakeholders confirming the added value of accessible, practical tools to support environmentally responsible offshore wind development. The report was also translated into French and the executive summary translated into Dutch, which was then presented to the climate minister of the Netherlands. We complemented these efforts with online events explaining how avoiding and minimising impacts from infrastructure development on marine ecosystems is essential in advancing a nature-friendly offshore energy transition, and that many solutions already exist and are in use. To translate this to a diverse audience, we held two informative webinars with collaborators and external experts: one introducing OCEaN's work and how to use the report and database, and the other on the effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) on fishery species.

52 OCEaN Members by end of 2025

Finally, 2025 saw the debut of the official OCEaN LinkedIn page in April, expanding our reach to a wider online audience. After a positive launch at WindEurope's Annual Event, our first social media campaign #SeaSolutions highlighted innovative concepts that support renewable energy and healthy seas, ranging from habitat-enhancing Reef Cubes® to 'eco-crossings' on offshore grid cables. The campaign was a resounding success, with comments, likes, and shares from industry professionals as well as the general public. Together, these milestones reflect OCEaN's expanding impact and leadership in advancing sustainable solutions for both our oceans and offshore renewables.

TACKLING CHALLENGES AND CREATING CONSENSUS IN EUROPE'S SOUTHERN WATERS

Building on over two years of momentum, RGI continued advancing nature-friendly offshore wind and grid development in the Mediterranean Sea region and its adjacent Atlantic waters through the work of Med OCEaN. Counting 16 Members from across Spain, France, Portugal and Italy, in 2025 the coalition fostered constructive dialogue between civil society and the offshore wind and grid sectors and pursued their aims at both the national and regional level.

In September, Med OCEaN Members presented a unified position with their second joint statement, which focused on effectively integrating ecological criteria into offshore wind tenders in line with the requirements of the Net-Zero Industry Act (NZIA). The use of non-price criteria allows countries to consider non-financial aspects when assessing offshore wind projects, which can include measures that contribute to sustainability and biodiversity. These criteria have been used in countries in Northern Europe, and this statement represented clear consensus from our Members on what steps nations in Southern Europe should take to implement relevant requirements from the NZIA and align environmental priorities with offshore wind expansion.

Explore RGI's activities on Energy & Nature

At national level, RGI co-organised a range of activities with Members, with highlights including a study tour in northern Spain, a technical meeting in Madrid, a panel discussion at the Floating Offshore Wind Turbine conference in France, and a workshop in Portugal focused on Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for floating offshore wind. These activities allowed Members to freely exchange on key topics, challenges, and opportunities for nature-friendly offshore wind and grid development in the region. Interest and participation from partners and external experts highlighted the growing visibility and relevance of the coalition's work in a region where plans for offshore wind and the deployment of newer, floating technology are still at an early stage. The EIA workshop, for example, allowed Members to shift from more abstract policy-level discussions on the topic to concrete examples and actionable solutions, with strong support for continuing these practical discussions in the future.

Closing a successful year, Members gathered in Porto for the annual Members Assembly to exchange on the year's achievements and agree on 2026 priorities, including the addition of more technical, country-specific exchanges. Med OCEaN looks forward to building upon the groundwork laid this year and continuing to cement our impact with new events, exchanges, and publications in 2026.

Med OCEaN Members at the Members' Assembly in Porto.

STRENGTHENING OUR ROLE AS A HUB OF EXCHANGE THROUGH IMPACTFUL EVENTS

Cristina Simioli at the WindEurope Annual Event in Copenhagen.

In 2025, RGI shared OCEaN's messages in a variety of online and in-person events, bringing together trusted partners, informing new stakeholders about our work, and cementing our role as a hub of exchange on key topics at the intersection of offshore wind, grids, and biodiversity protection and restoration.

For digital audiences, we held seven webinars throughout the year, discussing our work on mitigation measures (see page 11) and expanding our Nature Inclusive Design series with editions on the Rich North Sea's Toolbox and the NID4BIRDLIFE project. As part of RGI's role in the consortium NiD4OCEAN, we also supported a webinar launching their Innovation Challenge and its aim to find and test new nature-inclusive design solutions for offshore wind and grid infrastructure. Last but certainly not least, our Country Profiles series explored biodiversity-focused offshore wind planning in France and the United Kingdom. Each webinar offered participants a chance to learn and exchange on the unique engagement efforts and institutional context of these nations, with factsheets published afterwards with an overview of each country's progress.

Beyond our online work, RGI and OCEaN maintained a presence at major industry and academic events. This included the Conference on Wind Energy and Wildlife Impacts in Marseille in September, where RGI presented the work of OCEaN at our dedicated stand and in panels and workshops throughout the event. For the third year running, we also organised a variety of activities throughout the WindEurope 2025 Annual Event in Copenhagen in April, welcoming visitors at our stand and delivering three interactive presentations on OCEaN Member collaborations and projects.

We have seen remarkable growth in the discussions on nature within this industry-dominated conference, and count RGI and OCEaN as key drivers changing the conversation. Our presentations in the exhibition area drew their largest crowds yet, addressing topics ranging from pilot projects on environmental monitoring to approaches to minimising the impacts of offshore wind and grid infrastructure on nature and climate, and solutions for monitoring bats at offshore wind installations in the Baltic Sea.

The center piece of our presence in Copenhagen was RGI and OCEaN's side event 'Beyond Turbines: Powering the future and boosting marine nature'. Over 120 participants came together for a series of panels and discussions focused on turning policy into action to expand offshore wind energy, addressing the climate crisis, and strengthening energy security. In the first session, wind developers, TSOs, NGOs, and policymakers debated how to align offshore wind expansion with nature and other sea users, addressing key planning challenges and identifying solutions. A second session showcased practical examples of ecosystem restoration and nature-inclusive design projects, with speakers sharing the ups and downs of developing these innovative pilots alongside plans to scale up implementation and further vital collaboration.

All of these events reinforced RGI's role as a trusted platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange, helping ensure that the expansion of offshore energy and grid infrastructure goes hand-in-hand with the protection and restoration of Europe's marine ecosystems. Presented in a variety of formats, lengths, and levels of interaction, we are proud to maintain our high quality events and continue to bring together experts, introduce our topics to newcomers, and expand our ecosystem of partners. Stay tuned for 2026, where we plan to continue sharing OCEaN's work with nuanced, interactive and impactful public-facing activities!

GINGR

SCALING UP GLOBAL ACTION FOR NATURE- AND PEOPLE-POSITIVE ENERGY

2025 marked an important step in GINGR's journey, moving from ambition towards measurable delivery. Throughout the year, GINGR advanced practical approaches to make Nature- and People-Positive outcomes measurable, applicable and ultimately testable in real-world renewable energy and grid infrastructure planning. Working closely with industry, governments, financial institutions, and civil society, the initiative is developing the metrics, guidance and assessment approaches needed to translate global climate, biodiversity and social goals into better infrastructure decisions.

At the same time, the partnership between RGI and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) continued to deepen, further strengthening the institutional foundation of GINGR. With RGI now also an IUCN Member, the two organisations are working increasingly closely across the energy and conservation communities. Through GINGR, this partnership combines their complementary expertise to develop practical, credible approaches that respond to real-world infrastructure challenges and can ultimately support more consistent and comparable Nature- and People-Positive outcomes.

Four Technical Working Groups - Metrics, Offshore, Linear Infrastructure and People-Positive - drove the development of the GINGR Frameworks, advancing practical approaches to assess Nature- and People-Positive outcomes across renewable energy and grid infrastructure.

Two international events were used to promote wider engagement with GINGR in 2025. At the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi in October, GINGR convened a ministerial dialogue and a closed-door finance roundtable, examining how governments and investors can align the goal to triple renewables with the 30-by-30 nature target, underpinned by credible metrics and monitoring. At COP30 in Belém, GINGR reinforced the importance of integrating safeguards, transparency and community legitimacy into project design from the outset.

GINGR also delivered a series of offshore webinars linked to the UN Ocean Conference and provided a set of new GINGR White Papers representing outcomes from the Technical Working Groups. A newly established GINGR newsletter helped to engage a variety of stakeholders and keep an expanding network informed of emerging insights, tools and milestones.

The GINGR team together with participants of the Ministerial Dialogue at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi

Check out the GINGR 2025 Annual Report

SPOTLIGHT: LINEAR INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP – TOWARDS NATURE- AND PEOPLE-POSITIVE GRIDS

Electricity grids are essential to deliver renewables at scale, yet linear infrastructure can also create lasting impacts across landscapes and communities. In 2025, GINGR's Technical Working Group on Linear Infrastructure, advanced the foundations for a grid-focused strand of the GINGR Framework. Building on RGI's existing work on energy, nature and communities, the group engaged experts from around the globe to stress-test and further refine a methodology that systematically links biodiversity considerations with ecosystem services and community priorities.

The Working Group's focus has been to move beyond high-level principles towards practical, measurable pathways. Work in 2025 explored how existing biodiversity and social metrics can inform upfront decisions on routing, design, mitigation hierarchy application, and long-term landscape management, rather than relying predominantly on late-stage assessments. The evolving methodology addresses ecological pressures (such as habitat fragmentation, disturbance and collision risk) while embedding Cultural Ecosystem Services to strengthen the integration of Nature-based Solutions. It also highlights how operational measures - including bird mitigation technologies and integrated vegetation management (IVM) - can contribute to measurable biodiversity, resilience and accounting outcomes when appropriately designed and monitored over the life cycle of grids.

In 2026, GINGR will pilot elements of the methodology in real-world contexts, including sensitive transmission corridors in Europe, to test feasibility, data needs, governance sequencing and usability across jurisdictions and project types. We are seeking partners - grid operators, developers, authorities, researchers and civil society - to help trial and refine the approach, strengthening it into a robust, practical and scalable basis for transparent grid development that is Nature- and People-Positive and supports durable community benefits, grounded in measurable ecological and cultural evidence.

If you are interested to get involved, please reach out to info@gingr.org

Download the GINGR Publications

GINGR
Global Initiative for Nature, Grids and Renewables

ENERGY & SOCIETY

RGI GRID AWARDS: RECOGNISING INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION IN GRID AND RENEWABLES DEPLOYMENT

As Europe continues to address evolving challenges around energy security, affordability, and sustainability, cooperation and innovation remain essential to advancing the clean energy transition. Now in its 12th edition, the RGI Grid Awards continue to highlight outstanding contributions across the sector. Also known as the Good Practice of the Year Award, this recognition celebrates achievements in technological progress, stakeholder engagement, and environmental responsibility – all crucial elements of a resilient and future-ready energy system.

At the 2025 RGI Grid Awards ceremony, held in Brussels during the 6th PCI Energy Days, a diverse set of forward-looking initiatives was recognised. Awards were presented across Technological Innovation & System Integration, Communication & Engagement, and Environmental Protection, alongside a Social Achievement award, showcasing practical approaches that support a sustainable and reliable energy landscape.

Explore more practices in the award brochure

Technological Innovation & System Integration

Unlocking 25%+ Grid Capacity by Arne Brufladt Svendsen (Siemens) & Tørris Digernes received the Good Practice of the Year award in Technological Innovation & System Integration. The initiative demonstrates how advanced forecasting and system optimisation tools can enhance grid efficiency and resilience, enabling higher renewable integration while maintaining secure and stable operation.

Communication & Engagement

WIMBY – open, science-based tools for wind energy planning by Utrecht University & BOKU University was recognised in the Communication & Engagement category. By providing accessible, data-driven tools that allow stakeholders to explore and assess wind energy development, the initiative fosters transparency, informed dialogue, and greater public participation in decision-making processes.

Environmental Protection

Seeking safe skies for the Bearded Vulture by Red Eléctrica was awarded in the Environmental Protection category. The project highlights how targeted, nature-positive measures - such as installing bird diverters on grid infrastructure - can reduce impacts on wildlife and support biodiversity alongside grid expansion.

Outstanding Achievement

AquaSol for Equity by Green Hope Foundation received the Social Achievement award for its contribution to social sustainability and community resilience. By combining renewable energy solutions with water access and education initiatives, the project illustrates how the energy transition can deliver tangible benefits for people and communities beyond the power sector.

Through these winning practices, the RGI Grid Awards continue to emphasise the importance of innovation, collaboration, and environmental stewardship in shaping Europe's grid development. We warmly congratulate all winners and participants and look forward to continuing our shared efforts towards a sustainable, secure, and interconnected energy system.

The RGI Grid Award Winners at the 6th PCI Energy Days In Brussels.

DEEPENING CONNECTIONS: NATURE, FINANCE AND RESILIENT GRIDS IN THE 'CONNECTING ENERGIES' 2025 SERIES

As the energy transition accelerates, so too does the need to bring diverse perspectives into the conversation. Technical solutions alone are not enough. Building a renewables-based system that is both resilient and equitable requires stronger links between energy, nature and finance, alongside meaningful participation from civil society. In 2025, RGI's 'Connecting Energies' Civil Society Training Series continued to nurture these connections, creating space for shared learning, critical reflection and collaborative thinking.

Explore RGI's activities on Energy & Society

This year's series focused on two timely and interlinked themes: the role of finance in shaping nature-positive energy infrastructure, and the importance of biodiversity considerations in grid development. Participants from across Europe came together in two interactive sessions, each designed to unpack complex topics while keeping the conversation grounded in real-world challenges and opportunities.

The first session, 'Connecting Nature and Finance', explored how financial frameworks and investment decisions can support, or hinder, the integration of nature-positive approaches in energy infrastructure. Participants examined the growing importance of sustainable finance, including emerging standards and taxonomies, and discussed how these tools can incentivise projects that align with both climate and biodiversity goals. The session highlighted the need for transparency, robust criteria and active civil society engagement to ensure that financial flows genuinely contribute to a just and sustainable energy transition. Building on this foundation, the second session, 'Connecting Pollinator Corridors', shifted the focus to biodiversity on the ground. As grid infrastructure expands to accommodate more renewables, it also creates opportunities to support ecosystems if designed thoughtfully. Participants explored how transmission corridors can be managed to enhance habitats for pollinators and other species, turning energy infrastructure into a positive force for nature. The discussion emphasised practical approaches, from vegetation management to cross-sector collaboration, as well as the importance of long-term stewardship and local engagement.

Across both sessions, a common thread emerged: the energy transition must work in harmony with nature and society. Whether through financial mechanisms or ecological design, decisions made today will shape not only our energy system, but also the landscapes and communities it touches.

Through Connecting Energies 2025, RGI reaffirmed its commitment to fostering inclusive, informed and forward-looking dialogue. By bringing together civil society, experts and practitioners, the series continues to empower participants to engage confidently with the complexities of the energy transition. These conversations are not just about understanding systems, they are about shaping them in ways that are fair, resilient and nature-positive.

Panel Discussion at the 2025 RGI Annual Conference.

THE BIG SWITCH: ACHIEVING 100% DECARBONISED POWER IN EUROPE

In September 2025, RGI convened its Annual Conference, 'The Big Switch: Achieving 100% Decarbonised Power in Europe', in Brussels, bringing together grid operators, policymakers, regulators, environmental organisations, and civil society to explore how Europe can deliver a fully decarbonised power system. As electrification accelerates and renewable energy becomes central to Europe's energy mix, discussions focused on turning ambition into implementation—ensuring that grid transformation is timely, affordable, and aligned with Nature-Positive and People-Positive principles.

The conference opened by highlighting electrification as the most efficient pathway to decarbonisation, alongside the need for system-level optimisation, cost reduction, and stronger cross-sector collaboration. Participants stressed that environmental considerations are now central to infrastructure planning, with biodiversity loss increasingly recognised as both a financial and societal risk. Europe's geopolitical context further reinforced the importance of solidarity and coordinated action to ensure resilience.

Speakers emphasised that Europe's decarbonisation journey is not only technical, but also political and social. Balancing security of supply, affordability, and sustainability remains a core challenge, particularly as electricity demand grows rapidly. Grid capacity was identified as a key bottleneck, with solutions including smarter planning, flexible connections, and improved price signals. However, permitting delays, supply chain constraints, and financing gaps continue to hinder progress.

Innovation and system integration were highlighted as essential enablers. Cross-border cooperation, digitalisation, and flexibility solutions will be key to ensuring a resilient energy system. At the same time, environmental stewardship was positioned as an accelerator of grid development. Strategic planning, early-stage assessments, and stronger data sharing can help streamline permitting while protecting nature and building public trust.

The conference concluded with a call for openness, pragmatism, and collaboration. Achieving full decarbonisation will require compromise, stronger cooperation, and active participation from society. The Big Switch reaffirmed RGI's role in fostering dialogue and ensuring that Europe's energy transition is not only fast and efficient, but also fair, resilient, and grounded in a shared commitment to people and nature.

120 Attendees of the 2025 RGI Annual Conference

FROM POLICY TO IMPLEMENTATION: SHAPING EUROPE'S GRIDS FOR THE FUTURE

2025 was a year marked by a newly elected European Parliament and a freshly constituted European Commission who strongly focused their agenda on competitiveness, affordability, decarbonisation and security. Electricity grids occupied a central role in these debates that eventually led to the unveiling of the European Grids Package in December.

RGI joined the Grids Package consultation underlining that it should give due attention to implementation with key care being put on efforts for planning a resilient and future-proof energy system, a holistic approach to acceleration and unlocking investments for electricity grids.

Alongside this overall vision for grid development in Europe, RGI also published statements on additional files including the Flexibility Needs Assessment Methodology and the Circular Economy Act, and debated the implications of Iberian Peninsula Blackout in a dedicated statement. In the context of the Electrification Alliance, RGI discussed with EU stakeholders and helped issue joint position papers on the Industrial Decarbonisation Bank, the Affordable Energy Action Plan, the Clean Industrial Deal and the Electrification Action Plan.

Beyond our official statements, RGI actively participated in and created discussion forums around grids in Europe. Examples include our contribution to an implementation dialogue on environmental assessments and a successful session we hosted with Eurelectric during the EU Sustainable Energy Week. The latter explored how grid operators can align their operations with EU's climate, energy and nature objectives, reduce their environmental impact and foster investment in sustainable assets.

Looking ahead, RGI will continue to advocate for electricity grids that are resilient, sustainable and fit for a rapidly changing energy system. As Europe moves from ambition to implementation, we will remain committed to fostering dialogue, supporting effective solutions and ensuring that grid development advances hand in hand with climate, nature and societal objectives

Read our 2025 Statements here

POWER OF PARTICIPATION WORKSHOP

The Renewables Grid Initiative (RGI), together with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Energy and ACER, convened the 'Power of Participation' workshop in Brussels on 23 October 2025. The event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to advance a shared ambition: embedding meaningful public engagement at the heart of Europe's energy transition.

Building on the Pact for Engagement launched in 2023, the workshop marked an important step in translating principles into practice. Discussions focused on the development of Public Engagement Plans (PEPs), a new tool designed to ensure that stakeholder participation becomes structured, measurable, and integral to electricity grid development. Participants emphasised that public engagement is no longer optional but a strategic necessity for delivering infrastructure efficiently, fairly, and with public trust.

Throughout the day, speakers highlighted that the energy transition is not only a technical transformation but a societal one. Communities must be recognised as active partners, with engagement processes creating value by improving project design, reducing risks, and strengthening legitimacy.

Antonella Battaglini at the Power of Participation Workshop.

Panel Discussion at the Power of Participation Workshop in Brussels.

100 Participants at the event workshop

The workshop reinforced that early, transparent, and continuous dialogue can accelerate project delivery while fostering long-term acceptance.

Concrete examples illustrated how engagement can work in practice, from community benefit schemes and local forums to innovative outreach formats and co-creation approaches. These cases demonstrated that when communities are genuinely involved, outcomes improve for both project developers and local stakeholders.

A central theme was the need to move from fragmented practices towards a more consistent yet flexible framework across Europe. PEPs are expected to play a key role in this shift by linking engagement activities to project phases, defining responsibilities, and enabling monitoring and learning over time. At the same time, participants stressed the importance of adapting approaches to national and local contexts.

The workshop concluded with a strong sense of shared ownership and momentum. Insights gathered will feed into the ongoing development of the PEPs roadmap, to be presented in 2026, supporting a more transparent, inclusive, and trusted energy transition across Europe .

8,000+
downloads from the website

ADVANCING THE ENERGY TRANSITION THROUGH DIGITAL DIALOGUE

RGI's digital engagement in 2025 continued to educate, inform, and inspire diverse audiences on the role of electricity grids in enabling a renewables-based energy future. Through targeted social media campaigns and engaging multimedia content, RGI fostered public dialogue on the necessity of grid expansion, energy security, and climate action.

Throughout the year, RGI strengthened its social media presence with a clear strategic focus. Following its departure from Twitter in 2024 and the launch of a Bluesky channel, we concentrated our efforts on building strong and engaged communities on LinkedIn and Bluesky. By 2025, RGI's Bluesky audience had grown to nearly 850 followers, marking an increase of over 70% compared to 2024. This growth supported meaningful dialogue on the future of electricity grids and pathways towards a Nature- and People-Positive energy transition.

RGI's LinkedIn community also continued to expand, growing by 17% compared to 2024 and generating more than 270,000 impressions. This steady increase reflects a rising interest in RGI's work and outputs. Across all platforms - LinkedIn, Bluesky, Instagram, and TikTok - RGI published over 550 posts in 2025, sharing knowledge and encouraging dialogue around its core topics.

In collaboration with nearly 40 partners, RGI delivered 34 impactful campaigns, further reinforcing its message of a resilient and interconnected energy future – one that is not only efficient but also aligned with nature and responsive to the needs of local communities.

In 2025, we relaunched our RGI website with a new design and structure, strengthening its role as the organisation's central communication platform. The updated website brings together comprehensive information on RGI's activities and provides streamlined access to publications and resources through a new 'Resource Centre'. The website maintained its strong performance, with 43,847 visits in 2025, in line with previous years. Supported by a wide range of activities, news updates, publications, and targeted social media campaigns, engagement remained high: RGI's materials were downloaded more than 8,000 times, and the website recorded over 77,000 page views.

550+
Posts published in 2025

270,000+
LinkedIn impressions generated

43,847
Visits on new website

70%+
Bluesky Audience Growth

OUR MEMBERS

Supporting Members

OUR BOARD

Jasón Besga
Head of Institutional & International Affairs
Red Eléctrica

Ariel Brunner
Regional Director
BirdLife Europe & Central Asia

Bernard De Clercq
Group Head EU Affairs
Elia Group

Francisco Ferreira
President
ZERO

Seda Orhan
Renewable Energy Program Manager
CAN Europe

Francisco Parada
Asset Management Director
REN

OUR SECRETARIAT

as of July 2026

Antonella Battaglini
Chief Executive Officer

Sylvia Kessler
Office Manager

Himakshi Gurnani
Manager
Finance

Marie Delair
Manager
Fundraising

Natali Machado Souza
Personal Assistant
to the CEO

Sabrina Rahman
Assistant
Finance

Tolga Dizer
Junior Manager
Finance

Abida Mohammadi
Assitant
Finance

Stephanie Bätjer
Director
Communication

Mara Zainea
Manager
Communication

Charlotte Mueller
Manager
Communication

Nathália Pimentel
Manager
Communication

Wilm Lindenblatt
Junior Manager
Communication

Gus Schellekens
Director
GINGR

Annika Lilliestam
Coordinator
GINGR

Adrián Maté
Environmental Coordinator

Adriana Sahagún Martínez
Manager
GINGR

Cristina Simioli
Director
Offshore Energy & Nature

Dení Aguilar Bellamy
Coordinator
Offshore Energy & Nature

Matilde Doni
Manager
Offshore Energy & Nature

Manon Thiel
Manager
Energy and Nature

Lena Isabell Kolle
Manager
Energy and Nature

Dr. Andrzej Ceglarz
Director
Energy Systems

Alexandros Fakas Kakouris
Senior Manager
Energy & Policy Systems

Morjana Moreira dos Anjos
Manager
Socio-Energy Systems

Ira Shefer
Manager
Energy Systems

Anaïs Picart
Junior Manager
Socio-Energy Systems

Sara Gaçe
Junior Manager
Socio-Energy Systems

- Organisational Enablers
- Energy & Society
- Energy & Nature
- GINGR
- Grids & Energy Systems

OUR GOODBYES

Ana Miljanović Rusan | Manager, Offshore Energy & Nature

RGI would like to express our sincere appreciation to Ana Miljanović Rusan, who left our team in August 2025. At RGI, Ana contributed to the Offshore Coalition for Energy and Nature (OCEaN), developing a mitigation report, a database of mitigation measures, and co-creating an interactive card game. We valued her curiosity, reliability, and dedication, as well as her thoughtful and collaborative approach. We thank Ana for her contributions and wish her all the best for the future.

Liam Innis | Senior Manager, Energy Ecosystems

RGI would like to express its appreciation for Liam Innis, who was our Senior Manager - Onshore Energy and Nature until October 2025. Liam made an outstanding contribution to our work on biodiversity, birds and nature. Our unofficial "plant doctor", he brought warmth, humour and positivity to the team, helping both our office plants and colleagues thrive. We wish him every success and happiness in the future.

Amanda Schibline | Manager, Socio-Energy Systems

RGI would like to express our appreciation for Amanda Schibline, who left our team in early 2026. Amanda, as Manager Socio-Energy Systems in the Grids & Energy Systems dimension, was responsible for Horizon Europe projects such as SENTINEL, WHY, and JustWind4All. She also contributed to developing internal capacities on flexibility. We are grateful for Amanda's diligence, commitment, and constructive solutions, and wish her every happiness and success in her future endeavors.

Anna Barbanti | Marine Manager, Offshore Energy & Nature

RGI would like to recognise Anna Barbanti. First as a team member until November 2025 and, more recently, as a consultant. Anna was closely involved in Med OCEaN. She contributed to our work on environmental data management and monitoring, strengthening the evidence base for nature-friendly offshore energy development. We valued her creativity, energy, and deep commitment to the marine environment, as well as her openness and strong sense of teamwork. We wish Anna all the best in Australia.

Eston McKeague | Manager, Communication

RGI warmly thanks Eston McKeague, who joined our team in 2022 and contributed to our work with expertise, creativity and humour as Manager - Communication until April 2026. With engaging storytelling and a fresh perspective, Eston helped strengthen RGI's voice, look and audience interaction as well as the team's insight into Berlin history. We are grateful for the imprint Eston left on RGI and wish him all the best for the next stage of his journey.

Trouble
Senior Director
Networking and Wellbeing

His name may sound like he brought a lot of turmoil, quite the opposite is true. Trouble was the well-behaved, friendly and compassionate office dog that knew how to put a smile on every person's face. Whenever you would meet him in the office, he would get you to take a short break and recharge with a cuddle or game of catch.

Trouble effortlessly brought people together leading to discussions on topics ranging from climate change to the de-stressing effects on humans brought on by canine interaction. Due to his long experience, Trouble also had direct responsibility for the recruitment of staff into RGI's expanding team. He will be forever missed in our office and at home!

2025 ANNUAL REPORT
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Renewables Grid Initiative, e.V.
Manfred-von-Richthofen Strasse 4
12101 Berlin, Germany

CEO: Antonella Battaglini

Team Lead: Stephanie Bätjer
Project Lead: Mara Zainea
Design: Wilm Lindenblatt

Contact: communication@renewables-grid.eu

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Renewables Grid Initiative

ABOUT RGI

The Renewables Grid Initiative is a unique group of transmission system operators (TSOs) and environmental and climate NGOs collaborating on a nature-friendly renewables grid for the energy transition. Our aim is to speed up the transition towards a renewables-based energy system

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