

FISHWF⁺

Investigating interactions between fish and offshore wind farms
(2024 - 2027)

NEWSLETTER #1

May 2026



« Offshore wind farms are reshaping seascapes, and we want to understand how fish are adapting to these new structures. With FISHWF+, we are moving from proof of concept to large-scale action: tracking fish in seven wind farms to understand how this infrastructure influences their behaviour. A key project for science-informed offshore development. »

Lydie Couturier | Scientific lead of the project.

Partners



This project receives French State funding managed by the French National Research Agency under the France 2030 investment plan.

With the financial support of the Pays de la Loire, SUD Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Bretagne and Normandie regions





Why this project?

FISHOWF+ is studying the interactions between fish and offshore wind farms, including their connection cables, using acoustic telemetry. The project aims to gain a better understanding of the potential impact of these infrastructures by addressing key questions regarding fish presence and behaviour within and across wind farm development areas.

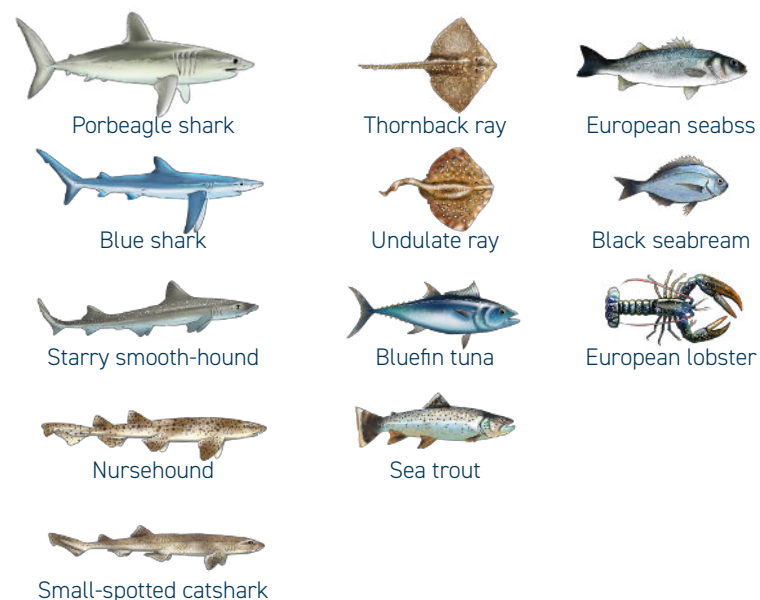
Overview



Equipment deployed



Main species monitored



News

Seven wind farms monitored

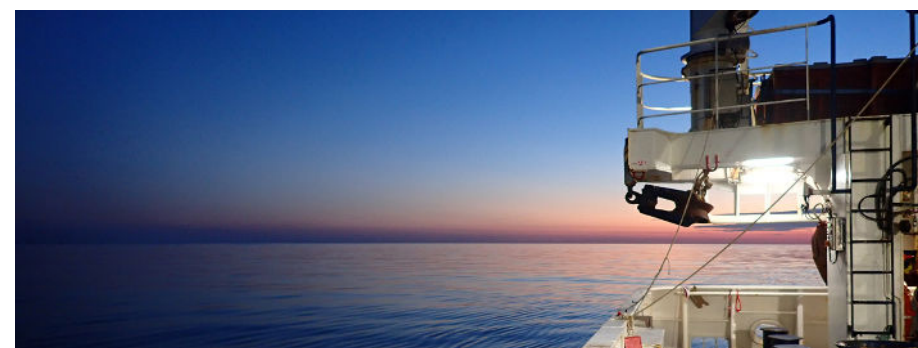


Deployment of receivers at the Provence Grand Large floating wind farm.

Acoustic telemetry receivers have been installed in two new offshore wind farms: the Dieppe Le Tréport offshore wind farm in June 2025 and the Provence Grand Large offshore wind farm in October 2025. A receiver has also been installed on a float of a wind turbine at the EFGL pilot farm off Leucate by our partner ECOCEAN. With more than 80 receivers deployed, the FISHOWF+ acoustic telemetry network now covers seven offshore wind farms, either in operation or under construction, in the English Channel, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

New fish tagging campaigns

More than 200 fish, including sharks, skates, seabass, seabream and sea trout, were equipped with acoustic tags during several campaigns carried out between June and October 2025 in the Channel, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. In particular, over one hundred individuals were tagged by the teams last October aboard the vessel Thalassa as part of a fishery resource monitoring campaign (CGFS) led by Ifremer. More than 200 individuals were also tagged by partners as part of related projects including Telepomimer, CABECO, NorTrack and DTOTrack.



Fish tagging carried out on the Thalassa during the CGFS campaign in October 2025.



A European monitoring initiative

FISHOWF+ focuses its efforts on France's coastlines, but is also part of a wider initiative, in collaboration with the European Tracking Network, to monitor several species across the continent and gain a better understanding of their ecological connectivity. In particular, FISHOWF+ contributes to the NORTRACK and DTOTRACK projects, which aim respectively to track the movements of key marine species in the North-East Atlantic and to produce a prototype of digital twin of the area to inform decision-making.

Innovative monitoring of electrosensitive species



Fine-scale monitoring is being implemented at two sites: the Saint-Nazaire and Provence Grand Large wind farms. The objective is to study the behaviour of electrosensitive species, such as skates and sharks, in the vicinity of underwater infrastructure generating electromagnetic fields. These

infrastructures include electrical substations, where there is a high density of cables on the seabed, and dynamic cables of floating wind turbines that pass through the water column. The approach involves precise positioning and synchronisation of acoustic telemetry receivers deployed in a dense array around monitored structures. Such setup enables the fish movements to be tracked within a metre resolution in the water column allowing for the detection of attraction or avoidance behaviours. In total, 12 receivers were positioned around the substation of the Saint-Nazaire wind farm, and 12 receivers loaned by the Ocean Tracking Network were deployed around one of the three floating wind turbines at the Provence Grand Large wind farm. In parallel, several tagging operations on electro-sensitive species were carried out in 2025.

Agenda

Journées scientifiques de l'éolien

- Presentation of the project
- 5-6 February 2026
- Marseille

Last progress meeting

- 20/05/2026
- La Turballe

STRICT REGULATIONS

All France Energies Marines projects involving animal handling comply with a very strict regulatory framework. They have been approved by an ethics committee and have obtained autorisation from the French Ministry of Research, which must be renewed every five years. All staff involved in these operations have attended and passed specific training courses on animal experimentation. In addition, the Institute has developed collaborations with approved partners to ensure the monitoring of protocols and their adjustment to any new practices, as well as ongoing staff training.

In pictures



Read the comic strip



What is acoustic telemetry? What is it used for? A short comic strip has been produced to answer these questions. Through four illustrated panels, it invites readers to follow the journey of a small-spotted catshark and understand the principles behind this fish-tracking method used in FISHOWF+.

Learn more about the key issues driving FISHOWF+ in a video presentation of the project.

Watch the video

