

Sempra wraps up deal to buy massive wind project in Mexico



Rob Nikolewski Contact Reporter, San Diego Union Tribune, December 16, 2016

Sempra Energy, a Fortune 500 company based in San Diego, now owns the biggest wind farm in Mexico.

The corporation's Mexican subsidiary, IEnova, officially wrapped up the acquisition of the Ventika I and Ventika II wind generation facilities, [about 35 miles](#) from the Texas border in the state of Nuevo Leon. Comprised of [84 wind turbines](#) with an installed generation capacity of 252 megawatts, the Ventika project cost about \$900 million, which includes the assumption of outstanding debt. "The acquisition of Ventika will enhance our renewables portfolio in Mexico and is consistent with IEnova's strategic growth plan," J.C. Thomas, director of external affairs for Sempra International, said in a statement to the Union-Tribune. "We are proud of the ongoing expansion of our Mexican business and the important role we are playing in Mexico's drive to increase clean energy."

Ventika started commercial operations in April. The project will be managed by [Cemex](#), a Mexican multinational building materials company that jointly developed the wind farm with two other companies. The acquisition has been in the works for months, with Mexico's antitrust commission [approving the deal](#) Wednesday.

The move is the latest in an overarching corporate [strategy by Sempra to expand IEnova's presence in Mexico](#), a country that is growing its energy and renewable infrastructure.

In addition to the Ventika, IEnova owns a 50 percent stake in the 155-megawatt Energía Sierra Juarez wind-generation facility in Baja California and was recently awarded two 141-megawatt solar energy projects elsewhere in Mexico, totaling 548 megawatts of production.

The Mexican government has established a clean energy mandate that calls for 35 percent of its power generation to come [from renewable sources by 2024](#). [Breaking up the monopoly status of Pemex](#), Mexico's state-run oil company, has offered international firms plenty of investment opportunities.

“Part of the (Sempra and IEnova) strategy moving forward is to build out their presence with various energy infrastructure projects in Mexico and South America,” said [Andy Smith, senior utilities analyst at Edward Jones](#). “They don't have nearly the infrastructure that we have here (in the U.S.) ... and Sempra wants to be one of the primary companies involved in those efforts.”

In September, IEnova purchased a 50 percent stake in a Mexican infrastructure company for [\\$1.1 billion](#). The deal includes three natural gas pipelines, an ethane pipeline, a liquid petroleum gas pipeline and an associated gas storage terminal.

In June, [IEnova partnered with TransCanada](#) to construct and operate a \$2.1 billion underwater natural gas pipeline that will run from South Texas to Tuxpan, Mexico.

The first energy infrastructure company listed on the Mexican Stock Exchange, IEnova at the end of last year listed [more than \\$4 billion](#) in operating assets and projects under construction in Mexico. IEnova already operates a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility called Energía Costa Azul, just outside of Ensenada. The processing center imports LNG and Sempra officials are considering adding an export component to Costa Azul that could [go online by 2022 or 2023](#).