

## „Windpark Pretul” – a sustainable success story in project development.

Austria’s most powerful windpark in the Alps, developed by Österreichische Bundesforste AG\* (ÖBf AG) recently celebrated its first anniversary. Finadvice congratulates and recapitulates the lessons learned from a consultancy point of view.

### Short project overview:

42 MW wind park at an altitude of 1,600 m.  
14 wind turbines type Enercon E-82 E4 with 3 MW each, equipped with a state of the art heating system. P75: 84 GWh - reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions amounting to 74 k tons p.a. Total investment: ca. 48 mn

ÖBf AG concluded the development phase in 2015 after receiving the positive notification of the obligatory EIA\*\* in December 2014 in all required fields.

Reaching this milestone and having verified all facts and figures a major decision had to be made before the kick-off of the largest single investment by ÖBf AG in history: Erecting the wind park on one’s own account or with a partner, if at all?

Finadvice provided parts of the necessary elements of evidence for taking this decision based on the well-grounded project information collected by the project development team managed by Mr. Robert Nusser and Mr. Stefan Danzcul.

At the end of April 2015 Finadvice joined the advisory board as independent body for project controlling and from then on served as exclusive financial advisor. A forward looking approach initiated by the ÖBf AG team.



Finadvice undertook its utmost to obtain favourable project financing offers. The financial close between ÖBf AG and the European Investment bank took place in December 2015.

For the first time in history the European Investment Bank (EIB) invested directly into an Austria based project. EIB undertook the project financing with agent Raiffeisenlandesbank OÖ. The total financing by EIB and its agent amounts to some 36.7 MEUR. EIB as the bank of the European Union is specially focused on financing projects of positive social and environmental impact.

The entire team was highly motivated and finalized the construction without noteworthy interruptions in minimum time due to a remarkable project management. The test phase already started at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2016.

Since that time wind park Pretul economically outperformed planning assumptions and positively surprised all stakeholders.

Last but not least the success is based on the solid communication management involving the local communities starting at day one.

\* ÖBf AG / Österreichische Bundesforste AG = Austrian Federal Forest AG

\*\* Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung (UVP) = Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)


**Despite all positive milestones; any lessons learned? Yes, of course!**

- Form a highly motivated team who is eager to reach the finish line even when facing backlashes and strenuous times.
- Install an advisory board with periodical meetings including an independent body for quality assurance until the project is successfully concluded.
- Always keep in mind: If you buy cheap you probably don't buy beneficial – this applies specially to core elements like insurance, finance, technique, legal etc.
- Budget enough time for a detailed Q&A process along the due diligence.
  - Never underestimate the importance of categories like regional-, social- and environmental project impacts within a proper undertaken due diligence.
- Note upfront in detail the “usual” standards of all involved parties in order to avoid let-downs on both sides.
- Make sure all definitions within the loan agreements, the model and the documentation are fully in line with the intentions of all involved parties.
- Allow yourself sufficient time to fully understand the individual needs of the different departments within the involved institutions.

**Statements from the CEOs Dr. Robert Nusser and Mag. Stefan Danzcul of the Windpark Pretul GmbH:**

*“Planning, projecting, construction and financing of the project were based on a clearly defined structure and predetermined levels of decision-making. These were crucial success factors enabling the fulfilment of all temporal and budgetary requirements. Finadvice has not only supported and continuously evaluated the realization of the process but has also laid the foundation for the project financing. Thus it was possible to realize together with EIB and Raiffeisenlandesbank OÖ an innovative funding concept.”*

**Some more aspects are noteworthy and will be explained by the author in case of further interest.**



**Manfred Hofstätter**  
Vienna - Linz

**Experience:**  
18 years, thereof 15 years at Finadvice

**Specialization:**  
Focused on medium sized companies (green-energy, biotec, b2b-marketing)  
Project development (M&A), -finance  
Central-EU, project driven locations

Finadvice congratulates and thanks all involved parties but especially Österreichische Bundesforste AG.

