



Reigniting industry momentum through innovation, collaboration and leadership

Nearly 900 offshore wind and ocean energy leaders converged in New York City from February 9th to 12th 2026, for the International Partnering Forum (IPF), the largest marine renewable energy conference in the Americas and a flagship convening produced by nonprofit Oceantic Network. This year's theme, Reimagine. Renew. Reignite, captured a sector entering its next phase: moving from uncertainty and market reset into a confident, collaborative, forward-leaning era of execution.



From government leaders and technology innovators to port developers and marine energy startups, the message of 2026 IPF was unmistakable: the US ocean energy economy is advancing with renewed alignment, stronger conviction and tangible proof that demonstrates readiness for the decade ahead.

Framing the future: a new model for US offshore energy

The Opening Plenary set the tone, with a powerful call to action from Oceanic CEO

Liz Burdock, who challenged the industry to reimagine procurement and transmission planning, renew confidence through project performance data and reignite long-term commitment to building a durable clean energy future. Burdock emphasized that decisions made today will shape whether major projects advance in the early 2030s, placing urgency on modernized regulation, smarter risk sharing and sustained engagement.

NYSERDA President and CEO Doreen M. Harris reinforced this forward momentum,

highlighting how New York's operating projects performed reliably during winter storms and how two additional projects will soon power 10% of New York City's power needs. With thousands of union workers engaged and a 15-year statewide energy plan in place, President Harris emphasized that New York remains a 'port in the storm' for reliability, affordability and stability.

In a panel discussion, speakers from NYSERDA, National Grid Ventures and Haugland Group underscored that the US must move beyond



Liz Burdock

'copy and paste' European frameworks. Instead, they called for transmission coordination, realistic timelines and a new deal style push to build an interconnected and resilient domestic supply chain.

Federal landscape: legal wins and legislative momentum

The Federal Frontline session captured what's at stake: canceling the five offshore wind projects currently under construction would cost US ratepayers \$45 billion over the next decade. Legal and policy experts noted recent wins, including four federal judges who uniformly enjoined attempted federal stop-work orders on national security grounds, calling them 'arbitrary and capricious'.

Speakers emphasized the need to turn these victories into durable legislation. With the House-passed SPEED Act facing setbacks, the Senate now has a crucial three month window to craft a bipartisan package providing 'permit certainty' for large scale energy infrastructure. Programmatic litigation targeting interior 'bottleneck memos' underscores the broader challenge: the US must align regulatory clarity with the scale of capital required to meet surging national energy demand.

The ocean economy: a \$3 trillion global opportunity taking shape

At the Ocean Economy 101 Breakfast, experts outlined the rising scale of the ocean based economy, projected to exceed \$3 trillion globally by 2030.



Doreen M. Harris

Speakers highlighted the United States' vast marine energy technical resource, estimated at 2,300 TWh per year, and emphasized the increasing practicality of scaling a responsible ocean-based industry. From PacWave's grid-connected test site accelerating technology readiness, to the predictability of tidal energy in regions like Cook Inlet and Long Island Sound, the session underscored that the ocean energy opportunity is massive and increasingly actionable. FY2026 appropriations delivered a record \$220 million for water power programs, signaling a strong federal commitment even amid structural shifts.

Ports are a key link, from east to west

Ports have always been multi-use by design. On the East Coast of the US and in Canada, their adaptability positions them to support offshore wind alongside other industries. The Resilient Ports panel highlighted how several eastern Atlantic ports are adapting to offshore wind market challenges by embracing multi-use development models, strategic state level investment, and flexible infrastructure planning.

Looking west, California's Bold Blueprint session captured the array of tasks ahead to achieve ambitious floating offshore wind goals. The speakers emphasized that ports are central drivers of collaboration and innovation as the Golden State and truly the entire West Coast looks to prepare ports for new manufacturing capacity, the assembly of floating foundations and a commitment to the integration of locally-sourced components.



Premier Tim Houston

Floating nuclear: a high impact complement to offshore wind

The Floating Nuclear session highlighted another emerging frontier: clean, flexible, maritime nuclear platforms that could complement offshore wind's intermittency.

CORE POWER's Alice Caponiti emphasized that floating nuclear is no longer conceptual, serial production of shipyard-manufactured units offers predictable costs and rapid construction timelines. Meanwhile, the American Bureau of Shipping introduced the world's first requirements for non-propulsion nuclear power on maritime assets, creating a goal based, reactor agnostic framework for deployment.

With a 600 MW floating nuclear platform requiring only 4.2 square miles of seabed, compared to 167 square miles for an equivalent wind farm, panelists conveyed a compelling case for scale, cost efficiency and dispatchability.

First units may arrive as early as the 2030s, offering a firm power complement that strengthens the reliability and flexibility of an ocean-powered grid.

Communications sessions: reclaiming the narrative and powering public confidence

With energy affordability dominating headlines ahead of the 2026 midterm elections, IPF's communications focused sessions delivered a resounding message: the industry must be loud, visible and relentlessly factual.

During one session, Talking Energy in 2026: Countering Myths & Reframing Messaging, experts stressed the role of real-world data in countering misinformation. For example, Massachusetts Clean Energy Center’s Lisa Engler highlighted the birth of more than 18 North Atlantic right whale calves, the highest count since 2011, during a year when five offshore wind projects were under construction, directly challenging claims about impacts to marine mammals.

Speakers encouraged elevating local voices, particularly fishermen now working on projects, as trusted messengers and drawing a clear line to connect today’s grid constraints and the need for clean energy infrastructure.

‘Silence is deadly right now,’ warned Abby Watson of The Groundwire Group, reinforcing the need to speak plainly about reliability, affordability and the consequences of failing to modernize grid interconnection.

Building together: Nova Scotia’s 60 GW vision

The Closing Plenary brought attendees full circle, reminding the industry that the global offshore wind opportunity is not only expanding, but accelerating. Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston, returning to IPF for the second year in a row, delivered a powerful

message about the province’s rising clean energy ambitions and its readiness to lead on the world stage.

With 8,000 miles of coastline and some of the planet’s most consistent offshore wind resources, Houston emphasized that Nova Scotia’s competitive edge lies in the strength of its natural environment. The province is targeting up to 60 GW of offshore wind potential, supported by seabed depths under 100 meters, stable regulatory frameworks and a maturing project pipeline.

Central to this strategy is Wind West, a flagship development capable of powering one quarter of Canada’s energy needs. Houston underscored that the province is moving decisively, not only to advance its own projects, but to position Nova Scotia as a global partner in clean-energy production, green hydrogen and long term economic growth.

He closed with a clear invitation to the international supply chain and the broader IPF community:

Nova Scotia is ready to collaborate, innovate and build.

Addressing skepticism: jobs, reliability and real-world proof

In Addressing Skepticism: Powering America’s Future, panelists focused on the strongest

evidence the industry now has: real projects delivering real performance.

United Brotherhood of Carpenters Northeast Manager John Dunderdale spotlighted workforce impact, 3,700 total jobs and 1,500 union jobs from a single project, illustrating the scale of economic benefits now being realized, not projected. Connecticut DEEP Commissioner Katie Dykes emphasized that early projects such as South Fork Wind and Vineyard Wind are meeting reliability expectations precisely during winter peaks, when New England’s grid is most strained. Supply-chain leader Jan Klaassen of DEME Offshore US, noted that the US has now moved from theoretical modeling to five commercial-scale projects under construction, offering unprecedented data to guide future investments.

Co-located events: opportunity, innovation and partnership

Beyond the core program, IPF’s co-located events provided high value touchpoints for the broader ecosystem. From the New York City Maritime Tour that gave a firsthand perspective on critical port assets like South Brooklyn Marine Terminal and Governors Island, to the NOWRDC Technical Symposium advancing offshore-wind R&D strategy,



Chris Waterson, CEO of Waterson Terminal Services, LLC, and Billy Haugland, CEO of Haugland Group LLC, sign a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on port development projects across New York State

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stakeholders had multiple pathways to build relationships and accelerate innovation.

Collaboration and discovery took center stage at the 2026 Windward Innovation Celebration, allowing attendees to meet the founders behind breakthrough technologies, from subsea biodiversity monitoring and modular AUVs to metocean intelligence, blade repair robotics and continuous blade health analytics. Special remarks from Doreen Harris (NYSERDA), Jeanny Pak (NYCEDC), Ashley Ball (Equinor Renewables America) and Frank Paz (Morrison & Foerster) emphasized that these innovations are arriving exactly when the industry needs them most, as developers and suppliers work

to accelerate deployment and enhance project economics.

Deals, supply chain strength and an exhibit hall energetic with collaboration

The IPF Exhibit Hall demonstrated the scale of the evolving ocean energy supply chain, featuring leaders across offshore wind, ports, vessels, transmission, manufacturing and more.

IPF's Connecting Currents matchmaking program again produced high value deals, MoUs and supplier-developer relationships, often the precursor to major announcements later in the year.

The week also witnessed a new partnership between Haugland Group and Waterson

Terminal Services, formalized through an MOU to advance New York's port development capabilities, demonstrating how IPF remains a launchpad for strategic collaboration.

Conclusion: an industry ready to reignite

By the conference's close, Oceanitic's leadership summarized the week's momentum: IPF continues to be the most vital convening for advancing a resilient, innovative and durable ocean energy future. With renewed alignment, real-world performance data, early legal victories and a wave of innovation coming online, the US ocean energy industry left New York City reignited, resolute and ready to deliver.

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