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Colombia proposes forcing offshore wind bidders to partner with state company

By **Oliver Griffin**

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BOGOTA, Oct 3 (Reuters) - Colombia is proposing to force bidders for offshore wind projects to give a state company a stake in the developments, as part of a wider set of draft modifications to the rules governing the process published this week.

The government of President Gustavo Petro, Colombia's first leftist leader, has set its sights on weaning the Andean country from its dependence on fossil fuels while ensuring energy self-sufficiency.

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Last month, three sources told Reuters that Colombia's government was looking to make majority state-run oil company [Ecopetrol](#) [ECO.CN](#) an obligatory partner for all offshore wind projects, without specifying how big any stake might be.

If finally approved, the proposed changes first published last year would mean companies bidding for licenses to produce offshore wind energy must show they would enter agreements to include a state company in the project.

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Once a license has been awarded, the bidding company must "show the constitution of a consortium or the promise of a future partnership with a company in the energy sector where the state has a shareholding," one of the proposed modifications stated.

Before a license is fully awarded, bidders "must present a shareholding agreement with the Colombian state company" for the license in question, to be verified by the Ministry of Mines and Energy, another of the suggested modifications said.

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The resolution did not specify a state company but one source told Reuters that **Ecopetrol** would be the only company capable of taking part.

The state company will be defined at a later date, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Mines and Energy said.

Comments, suggestions and proposals on the draft resolution can be submitted up to Oct. 17, according to a web page dated Monday that was published by the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

Reporting by Oliver Griffin, Editing by Jamie Freed

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Oliver reports on energy and the environment as well as general news from Bogotá in Colombia. He has a special interest in reporting on Colombia's rampant oil crime, where hydrocarbon theft fueled by the drug trade leads to widespread pollution. He previously worked at Dow Jones Newswires in Barcelona where he covered oil and mining. Contact: +573045838931

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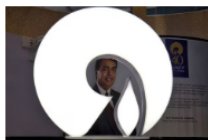
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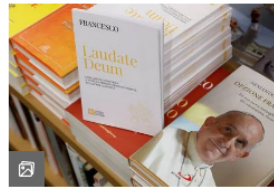
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