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KBC sets up syndicated green loan for Jan De Nul

First for both companies

Just six months after the investment announcement for the offshore installation vessel *Voltaire*, Jan De Nul Group orders *Les Alizés*, a floating installation crane vessel from the CMHI Haimen shipyard in China. Together with the *Voltaire*, this acquisition new vessel will be in a super-size class of its own, capable of building the newest generation of offshore wind farms. *Les Alizés*, that will be ready in 2022, is equipped with a crane with a lifting capacity of 5,000 tons and equally impressive lifting heights.

On 5 July 2019, Jan De Nul Group concluded an agreement for a green loan with a consortium of five banks¹, led by KBC Bank, for the financing of both investments.

This transaction is an important milestone and first for both Jan De Nul Group and KBC Bank. It is the first green loan for Jan De Nul Group and the first syndicated green loan within the shipping sector for KBC. A green loan should be used in its entirety to finance green projects.

The green loan was structured according to the 'Green Loan Principles' as drawn up by the Loan Market Association (the sector association in which banks, lawyers and other financial parties are represented) and with the aim of promoting investments in green projects by providing banks and businesses with guidelines on the characteristics of a green loan.

Paul Lievens, CFO at Jan De Nul Group: *"We are proud to be able to take out the first green loan in Belgium. This will finance our two brand new ships, *Voltaire* and *Les Alizés*, where both will mainly be used for the installation and maintenance of offshore wind farms. In this way, we are responding to the increasing worldwide demand for green energy and a growing offshore market."*

Luc Popelier, CEO International Markets Division KBC Group complements: *"KBC is proud to have been able to assist Jan De Nul as coordinator and sustainability coordinator, in the development of this syndicated green loan. We built on our existing knowledge and experience with green bonds to structure and coordinate this green syndicated loan. Among other things, KBC was also responsible for the elaboration of the Green Financing Framework, which describes the criteria that these sustainable ships have to meet in order to be eligible for the green loan. During the design phase, Jan De Nul thought very carefully about the environmental impact and the solutions to minimise that impact. This is a good example of how we deal with sustainable financing and actively contribute to the environmental challenges"*.

¹ The consortium of five banks consists of KBC Bank, BNP Paribas Fortis, ING Luxembourg, Rabobank and Belfius Bank.

Financing two offshore installation vessels

The Voltaire was ordered at the beginning of April 2019 and will be delivered in April 2022. The Voltaire is the third jack-up installation ship of Jan De Nul Group. Thanks to its main crane with a lifting capacity of more than 3,000 tonnes, this jack-up vessel can help the renewable energy sector to build the new generation of offshore wind farms. The Voltaire can also be used for the offshore oil and gas industry as well as for the dismantling of offshore installations.

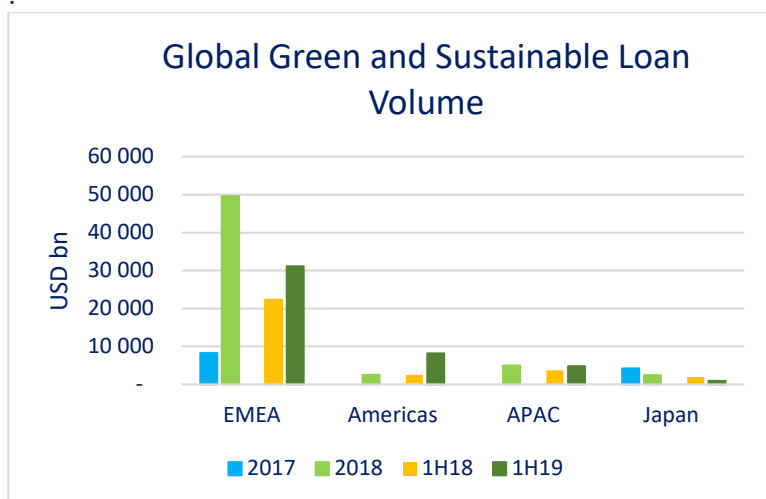
The fact that both new vessels will mainly work for the renewable energy sector, and are both equipped with an advanced exhaust gas treatment system, ensures that these investments were eligible for a green loan.

Collective commitment to the climate

Wim Eraly, Senior General Manager Corporate Banking KBC Belgium Division completes: *"The impact of global warming is one of the greatest challenges facing our society. KBC Group takes its societal role to heart, among other things by entering into discussions with our corporate customers and helping them to support their transition to a greener economy. KBC Group has already subscribed to the Collective Commitment to Climate Action and is thus taking a clear and far-reaching commitment - in cooperation with our clients - to make a concrete and tangible contribution in the short term from its core activities, not only as a bank, but also as an insurer and asset manager. This transaction for Jan De Nul is another strong example of how we are playing a pioneering role in the transition to a more sustainable society."*

The market for sustainable financing is experiencing strong growth

Since 2017, the market for sustainable financing has been growing rapidly, with the EMEA zone as the driving force. This trend continues in 2019 with a 47% increase in the first half of 2019 compared to the same period last year. See graph below.



However, in the market for sustainable financing, the largest share (84%) is made up of so-called sustainability-related loans, where the terms of the loan depend partly on the borrower's performance in terms of sustainability.

Green loans themselves represent a minority of the total market (16%), as these green loans apply stricter criteria. The proceeds must be used in full to finance green projects.

Second offshore installation vessel with impressive lifting capacity strengthens Jan De Nul's position in the offshore wind market of tomorrow

Les Alizés will mainly be used for the construction of offshore wind farms, **but with her impressive crane she is also extremely suitable for decommissioning oil and gas platforms at sea.**

Thanks to her dimensions and impressive lifting and loading capacities, Les Alizés will be able to load out, transport and install multiple units of the largest and heaviest wind turbine foundations in one trip. In addition, as a crane vessel that floats, it will be able to install heavier and larger foundations into deeper waters and in more challenging seabed conditions.

This vessel investment is a response to the global trend within the offshore wind sector to design and install increasingly larger wind turbines. This newest generation of turbine can be more than 270 metres high, with blades up to 120 metres and sit on foundations up to 2,500 tonnes. The offshore installation vessels currently available on the market are experiencing great difficulties in installing these new turbines and their heavier foundations, with their enormous dimensions and installation heights.

Philippe Hutse, Offshore Director at Jan De Nul Group, explains: *"We continue to invest in the future of offshore renewable energy. By ordering the Les Alizés today, from 2022 we will have not one, but two offshore installation vessels that will be able to install the newest generation of offshore wind farms. This is how we offer our customers the most efficient installation method. Similar to the Voltaire, we have financed this investment by means of a green loan thanks to the green emission reduction technology on board the vessel. During the design phase, as is the case for all our new vessels, we studied very carefully the environmental impact and the solutions to minimize that impact."*

Peter De Pooter, Manager Offshore Renewables at Jan De Nul Group: *"The order of the Voltaire was a first step in our strategy to install the newest generation of offshore wind turbines. With Les Alizés we want to further strengthen our vision and our belief in the future of offshore wind energy. We want to be a major and enduring player in this sector. For that reason, we continue to invest in the further expansion of our offshore renewables department."*

The vessel will be built at a shipyard of China Merchants Industry Holdings Co. Ltd., located in Haimen, Nantong City, China. As a subsidiary of China Merchants Group, this shipyard has a proven track record in supplying marine and offshore facilities which gives Jan De Nul Group sufficient confidence to award this contract to CMIH.

The name 'Les Alizés'

The Offshore Installation Crane Vessel is named after the French word 'alizé', which means 'trade wind'. Trade winds are regular winds in the intertropical regions (between 23°27 north and 23°27 south), blowing from east to west.

The reason for choosing this name is because for centuries, trade overseas has been done by means of performant sailing ships. Without engines or any form of propulsion, traders succeeded in sailing the world thanks to their thorough knowledge of nature, the seasons and the regular winds, so-called trade winds. They used the forces of nature as their energy source... renewable in the purest sense of the word.

The world today returns to renewables. Les Alizés will be at the service of offshore renewables, remembering the challenges the sailing ships faced in the past.

Impressive lifting and loading capacity

Les Alizés is specifically designed for loading, transporting, lifting and installing offshore wind turbine foundations. The main features are a main crane of 5,000 tons, a deck load capacity of 61,000 tons and a deck space of 9,300 m². With these characteristics, Les Alizés can easily transport the heavier future foundations, several in one trip, to the offshore installation site, with direct benefits in planning, fuel consumption and emissions reduction.

Unlike the Voltaire, Les Alizés does not have four legs to lift itself above the sea surface. It is a crane vessel for floating installations, which means that the vessel is not dependent on the water depths and the seabed conditions. Les Alizés is equipped with a high-performance DP2 system.

Green technology and innovations on board

When designing the vessel, Jan De Nul Group took into account the environmental impact. Jan De Nul tackles environmental challenges by focusing on reducing the footprint of its activities, particularly on water and air quality, and on the climate. Air pollution is one of the greatest threats to public health. Construction activities at sea are usually located close to coastlines, large and small ports, and densely populated areas. The Group is aware that, regardless of the choice of fuel or engine technology, the exhaust gases must always be filtered.

As one of the world's leading players in hydraulic engineering, Jan De Nul Group pioneers in the field of such an emission treatment. The latest generation of Jan De Nul's vessels is equipped with an exhaust gas filtering technology that complies with the strict European EURO STAGE V guidelines for emissions on land and inland waterways. So it will be for Les Alizés.

The highly advanced dual exhaust filter system removes up to 99% of nanoparticles from emissions using a diesel particulate filter (DPF) followed by selective catalytic reduction system (SCR) for NO_x removal. As a result of these exhaust filtering systems, the Les Alizés and the Voltaire will be the first seaworthy installation vessels in the world with extremely low emissions (Ultra-Low Emission Vessel or ULEv for short) and with EURO STAGE V certification (ULEv notation).

Les Alizés will also have a Cleanship NDO7 label and a Green Passport EU label. The Cleanship label confirms that the vessel checks and minimizes the waste water and all other residual waste. The second Green Passport label means that all materials and hazardous substances are mapped out during the construction phase, in order to facilitate the recycling of the vessel when decommissioning. Both certificates are issued by a specialized external agency.

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