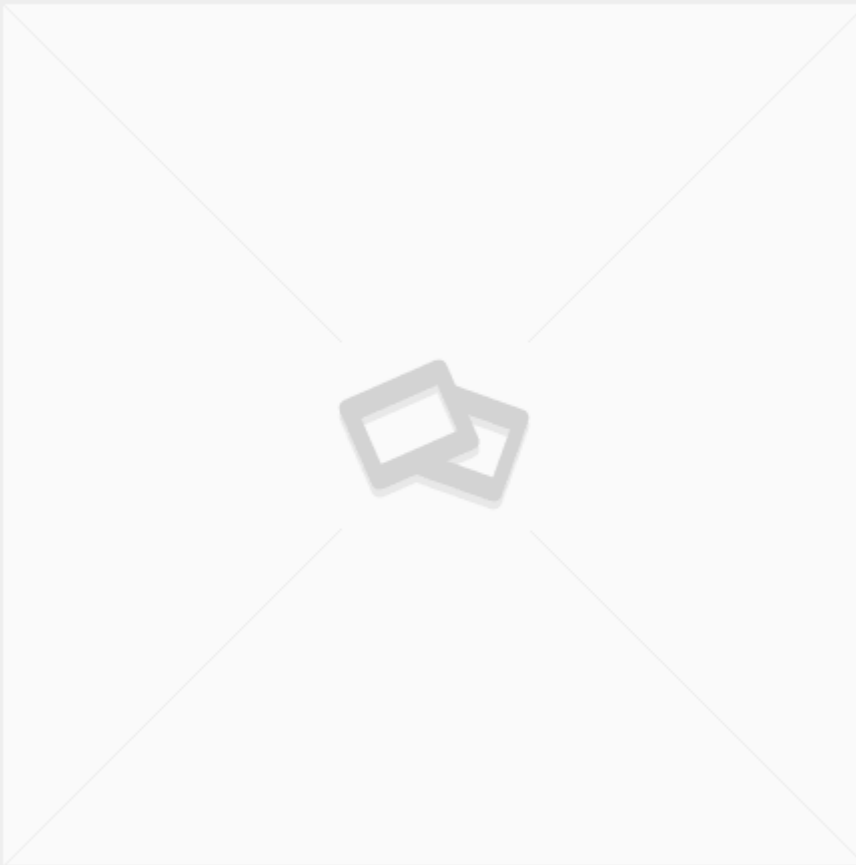


# MAKING THE CONNECTION WITH CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES - OSBORNE CLARKE

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We are seeing a great deal of international interest in clean technologies, and Spain's position as a leading global player already in the wind and solar energy sectors clearly suggests further investment opportunities," says Marta Plana, the head of IT at Osborne Clarke in Barcelona.

Hay un mayor interés en cuanto a las sinergias entre tecnología y energías renovables con el objetivo de crear y reciclar energía de manera sostenible, según Marta Plana de Osborne Clarke en Barcelona. Las "tecnologías limpias" abarcan la energía solar fotovoltaica, la termoenergía, la energía eólica, la hidroeléctrica así como el biogás, los biocombustibles y la biomasa.

Clean technology, or green technology, encompasses processes that promote the efficient use and re-use of natural resources and which reduce the ecological impact of energy production and consumption, she explains.

"Clean technology is not a technology in itself, but rather a position," says Plana who previously worked as an in-house lawyer with Microsoft and in the Silicon Valley office of Osborne Clarke.

The key areas of activity, and investor interest, include photovoltaic solar and thermosolar energies, biomass and biogas, biofuels, wind and mini-wind power schemes, hydropower and marine power schemes.

"US venture capital funds invested \$2.7bn (€1.8bn) in clean technologies last year and a significant number of them are now expanding their interest towards Europe. They are looking for companies wishing to further refine or develop their projects and that want to reach new markets."

There are clearly opportunities across Iberia for both investors and developers, she believes, and highlights as an example the trial wave power scheme in the Canary Islands, and in north Portugal, that offer large-scale commercial potential.

Plana nonetheless cautions that despite the interest of governments in ensuring energy security, and the encouragement of the development of renewable energy resources, hurdles can still restrict the implementation of projects.

"We are seeing the creation of many of the best of these new clean technologies here in Spain, and a move towards greater efficiencies, but regulatory barriers may often prevent their commercial application on a very local level. Nonetheless, the significance of renewable energy processes to governments' energy strategies will continue to ensure that the most efficient technologies will inevitably find a market."