

## **A radar system developed in Andalusia avoids bird strike against wind turbines**

LOCATION: Los Barrios (Cádiz)

DURATION: 2'28"

**SUMMARY:** The wind farm El Pino at Los Barrios in Cádiz, is the first one where a radar system certified by NASA is being tested by the Andalusian company Torsa. When radars detect a bird they emit an alert sign to stop wind turbines manually, although in the next phase it will be done automatically. The death of birds is the main environmental impact of wind farms.

### **VTR:**

This powerful radar system tries to avoid images like this one: birds and bats striking against wind turbines. It is a system certified by NASA that is used in the American military aircraft so their planes don't strike birds during flight. An enterprise from Málaga is applying it to Andalusian wind farms.

**NURIA RODRÍGUEZ**  
**Torsa technician**

*"The main environmental impact is bird strike against wind turbines, even more in this area which is rich in bird population. It is also an area with a high wind potential, so there is the conflict."*

And it is what this project tries to correct. In this wind farm of Los Barrios in Cádiz, the first tests are being run. We are in front of the Straits of Gibraltar, one of the main migratory routes from Europe to Africa, in a larger proportion for the griffon vulture.

**NURIA RODRÍGUEZ**  
**Torsa technician**

*"They are the birds with more incidences with turbines, they have the highest mortality rate."*

**SANDRA VILLAR**  
**Torsa technician**

*"It is a very big and heavy bird, so it doesn't have the same flight capacity as the rest of the birds. When they find wind turbines for them it is more difficult to avoid them."*

This green spot represents one of the vultures located by the radar, which is crossing in this moment the wind farm. There isn't risk of strike but if there was any, the alert would be activated giving the possibility to stop the turbine.

**SANDRA VILLAR**  
**Torsa technician**

*"The final objective of the project is that the radar becomes autonomous and detects birds, detecting the risk and stopping the turbine."*

The usual surveillance system is based in binoculars, and the decision of stopping the turbines depends on wardens.

**NURIA RODRÍGUEZ**  
**Torsa technician**

*"Each warden perceives risk in a different way; radar is much more objective."*

In Spain there are around 18.000 wind turbines that cover the 16% of the power demand of the country. But also, according to the SEO/Birdlife organization they could be also causing the death of between six and eighteen million birds and bats per year; numbers that this project tries to change.

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