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A global outlook and long-term perspective have allowed Abengoa to continuously lead the charge in the rapidly evolving renewable energy industry.

Images courtesy of Abengoa

“We’re trying to get more competitive thermal solar energy and more competitive desalinated water. The only long-term sustainable way to do that is to invest in R&D and support the teams that are carrying out the innovation in our centres.”

- Manuel Sánchez Ortega

The renewable energy sector is growing at a rapid rate as societal and environmental needs create an ever-increasing demand in this innovative industry. Abengoa has been instrumental in shaping and influencing this space with the company developing industry-leading renewable energy technology.

Manuel Sánchez Ortega, CEO of Abengoa, has been with the company for 25 years and steered it as CEO during the volatile economic recession. For the past five years, Manuel has ensured that Abengoa has not only survived but has thrived in this harsh environment with a creative restructure of its financial system and a strengthening of its core mission and values. Manuel recently sat down with *The CEO Magazine* to discuss the electrifying opportunities

and developments that Abengoa is creating in the renewable energy sector.

The CEO Magazine: How is Abengoa working to make renewable energy more competitive and more efficient? What alternatives are you working on to reduce our energy use?

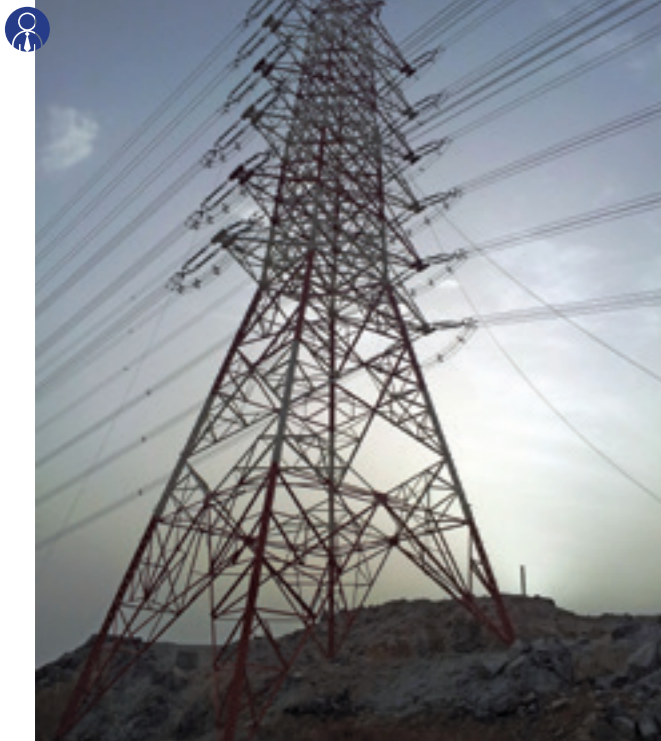
Manuel: We are doing the only thing that can be done to effectively reduce the cost of renewable energies, which is to invest in innovation and research and development. We have been increasing, year after year, the amount that we invest in our R&D centres, trying to get higher efficiencies in the processes that we’re managing.

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sustainable way to do that is to invest in R&D and support the teams that are carrying out the innovation in our centres. As part of that, we also collaborate with research centres in the United States and Spain.

How do you work with the private and public sectors to push the use of renewable energy and better solutions?

What we do with the public sector is to explain the benefit and the need for these types of solutions. More and more they understand this. It’s clear that every country requires more energy independence. They understand that. However, it’s tough to make them understand the importance of reducing CO2 emissions and energy production. In many cases, you don’t find the level of commitment from the public sector that you would like to. >



They're supposed to be representing a society that is increasingly concerned with climate change but I think there's a mismatch between the values of society and the values of the politicians representing the public sector. I think one of the responsibilities of Abengoa is to make sure that the scientific voice of the impact of climate change is heard by the public sector.

We also dedicate a lot of time to work with universities because we believe that better-informed graduates will increase the chances of having a better public sector in the future. I believe that it is very important to work from the beginning, from the base, and make sure that people in university today understand how important it is to have sustainable development. We work directly with the public sector and the universities and we encourage collaboration to ensure the word is spread as much as possible.

How do you work with suppliers and partners to develop the best solutions for the world's energy needs?

With suppliers, we try to make them understand the importance of working towards a more sustainable model. We do that by setting the same standards

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and level of commitment that we have. We don't ask them to do anything that we're not willing to do ourselves. Everything we ask of them is based on our own experience.

We want to know the CO2 footprint of any product that we integrate as part of our solutions so we require our suppliers to be part of our sustainable model and report any CO2 emissions associated with their production processes. We evaluate our suppliers with those metrics, so if we have to choose between two products, and one has lower emission rates than another, then we'll always choose the more sustainable supplier.

For the past five years as CEO, you've been dealing with the economic recession and the European crisis. How have you restructured Abengoa's objectives and dealt with these issues?

What we've done in recent years is we've strengthened the balance sheet of Abengoa by issuing new equity and dealing with the maturities that we had. We have tried to optimise the financial structure of the company to accommodate the new economic environment. We were living in a comfort zone with excess liquidity and this crisis demonstrated that this comfort zone doesn't exist forever.

To get out of that zone, we started to design a financial system that was more protected against any future crises that could occur. It was more diversified and robust. After diversifying the business of Abengoa, the last thing we did during this crisis was to diversify the source of finance in Abengoa to make us a stronger company against these type of events in the future, and they will happen again.

We didn't change our strategy. We didn't change our belief in the

need for more renewable energy solutions. We didn't change our commitment to the R&D programs and the social responsibility that we have in the areas where we're working. We didn't change the company—we just changed the financing model to make it more solid and resilient against future financial events.

Where do you see Abengoa and the renewable energy industry going in coming years?

There's no way back for the renewable energy sector. This is not a matter of direction—it's just a matter of speed. The direction is very clear and nobody can change that. The world is going to have more and more renewable energies year after year. If you look at the past few decades, you can see the growth in renewable energies and the new solutions each decade.

We're going to see more renewable energies and more competitive energies every single year from now on because the reality is that that's the only long-term valid solution. Fossil fuels will disappear and the world has a huge challenge and the only sustainable solution to that challenge is renewable energies. I see a brilliant future for renewable energy, despite all the criticism and everything that has been said against it. I believe that renewable energy is a sector that is full of innovation, improvements in competitiveness, and hard work.

In terms of Abengoa, our dream is to continue to play a leading role in that space. We want to continue our commitment to innovation and dedication that we've shown in the past. I don't know where that will take us but I believe that if we continue working and doing what we've been doing then Abengoa will have a very brilliant role in this brilliant sector. ●

"For Rodamientos Bulnes, working with a leading international company like Abengoa has brought along the implementation of important improvements in our business management system, which has in turn allowed us to have access to international markets where we are currently present." - Mr Joaquín M. Bulnes, General Manager, Rodamientos Bulnes



The way to keep moving



Rodamientos Bulnes designs, manufactures and supplies bearings for a wide range of industrial applications, renewable energy, industrial and automotive machinery. In fact, more than 2,000 Mws of Renewable Energy Projects in the world turn around bearings manufactured by Rodamientos Bulnes.

Among our main aims are the ongoing pursuit of excellence, the continuous improvement with the implementation and innovation in order to offer improved bearings that

embrace the new requirements and expectations of our customers.

Rodamientos Bulnes is notable for its creativity: questioning the existing solutions, trying unusual ways and considering things from another point of view are the requirements to create extraordinary ideas.

We have achieved greater efficiency, productivity and innovation in our management system, growing thanks to our model of sustainable company, for this reason, Abengoa awarded us

"First Prize Sustainable Companies" in 2014.

Rodamientos Bulnes dedicates a special effort to design and manufacture bearings in a responsible way towards the environment, contributing directly to keep our planet free of CO2 emissions.

Bulnes, the way to keep moving!

For further information, please visit our website www.bulnesmba.com or contact us on (+34) 955 762 933