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How Vale's Sohar Max will look with Anemoi rotor sails. Photo: Vale

Vale to retrofit world's biggest ore carrier with rotor sails

Mining giant to use Anemoi kit on Asyad-owned dry bulk behemoth Sohar Max

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By [Gary Dixon](#) in **London**

Brazilian mining giant Vale is planning to carry out the biggest wind propulsion retrofit ever.

The company has chosen to install five rotor sails from Anemoi Marine Technologies on the world's largest ore carrier — the chartered, Asyad-owned, 400,000-dwt Sohar Max (built 2012).



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The Valemax VLOC will have 35-metre-high and five-metre-diameter cylindrical sails deployed on a folding system, so they can be lowered to minimise the impact on cargo-handling operations.

Work is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2024.

The most powerful wind-assisted ship operating today is Berge Bulk's 210,000-dwt bulk carrier Berge Olympus (built 2018), which was retrofitted in China this year with four huge WindWings designed by UK company BAR Technologies.

Rotor sails harness the renewable power of the wind to provide additional forward thrust and improve the energy efficiency of the vessel, along with significant cuts to carbon emissions.

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Vale's fleet of Valemaxes typically trade on deepsea routes between Brazil, China and the Middle East, which are particularly well-suited for wind propulsion and analysing the resultant savings, the miner argues.

The group is expecting a 6% fuel reduction and a drop in CO₂ equivalent emissions of up to 3,000 tonnes per year.

Rodrigo Bermelho, shipping technical manager at Vale, said: "Wind energy will play a central role in our strategy to decarbonise the maritime transportation of iron ore."

Nick Contopoulos, chief operating officer of Anemoui, added that his company has been developing tailored solutions for Vale's vessels for a number of years.

Important step

"This latest project signifies an important step in Vale's decarbonisation journey, using wind-assisted propulsion as they lead the way to improve the energy efficiency of their vessels and reduce their net emissions," he said.

Anemoui has a partnership agreement with Chinese state-owned shipbuilder CSSC Chengxi Shipyard and other Chinese companies to secure its supply chain.

The organisation will undertake a full array of technical services both before and after delivery, including on-board training.

Three of Anemoui's sails were fitted to the 82,000-dwt kamsarmax bulker TR Lady (built 2017) in June.

Initial data from the vessel suggests more than 10% average annual savings can be achieved. [\(Copyright\)](#)

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