



Promoting practical application of the Convention and the Protocol

Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

Case studies

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EIA studies template

EIA and SEA



BACKGROUND

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ESPOO CONVENTION

- (a) EIA procedure and determination of the likely significant adverse transboundary impact (article 2(2), 2(5), Appendix I and Appendix III)
- (b) Notification of affected Parties (articles 2(4) and 3)
- (c) EIA Documentation (articles 4, 2 (11) and appendix II)
- (d) Consultations with affected Parties (article 5)
- (e) Public Participation (articles 2(6), 3(8), 4(2))
- (f) Final Decision on the proposed activity (article 6)
- (g) Post-project analysis (article 7 and Appendix 7)

BENEFITS OR INTERESTING FEATURES

USEFUL LINKS

SAARE WIND ENERGY OFFSHORE WIND FARM IN ESTONIA: Background

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100 wind turbines with
a total production
capacity reaching 1 400
MW

+
its transmission
connection to the
general electricity grid

Distance from the coast
exceeds 10 km

Sea depth 20-35
meters



EIA procedure and determination of the likely significant adverse transboundary impact

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The necessity of EIA for this project was defined directly by the national Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act that prescribes mandatory EIA for planned offshore wind parks in the country's territory.

The transboundary impacts of the proposed wind farm were defined together with other potentially significant environmental impacts in national settings

Main potential impacts

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- Impact on birds - the most important possible negative impact is the impact on waterfowl migration, as they can migrate in masse at the low height (in the height zone of the wind turbines and thus in the area of direct impact).
- Impacts on the natural environment - particularly on the quality of seawater during the installation of wind turbine foundations and submarine cables + impacts on seabed habitats and seabed biota by wind turbine foundations and submarine cables,.
- Fish fauna – impacts on fish due to the increased ship traffic, and noise emissions generated by wind turbines.
- Visual impact - Large offshore wind turbines are visible from a distance of 10 kilometres with good visibility in case of weather. However, the nearest wind turbine is at least 10 km away from the coast – the visual impacts were limited to a distance of ~10...15 km.

Notification of affected Parties

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The Ministry of the Environment sent a notification letter to the potentially affected Parties (Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, and Finland) in July 2020. [The Helsinki Commission under Article 7\(1\) of the Helsinki Convention has not been notified separately.](#)

Standard format for notification (Decision I/4 of the First MOP to the Espoo Convention) used:

- information on the proposed activity and available information on its possible transboundary impact;
- the translated initiation decision on the EIA procedure ;
- the schematic map of the location of the proposed project;
- an indication of a reasonable time within which a response is required, taking into account the nature of the proposed activity

Sweden, Latvia and Lithuania decided to participate and shared their lists of issues that need attention in the EIA process during August-September 2020. Finland choose not to take part.

EIA Documentation (February 2021-October 2022)

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The actual EIA process started with so-called EIA programme (EIA scoping document) which provided, among other things, an overview of the studies to be carried out during the EIA.

The developer had translated the EIA programme almost fully into English, also brief summaries in Swedish, Latvian and Lithuanian had been prepared.

The EIA Report assesses zero alternative (do nothing) and two other main alternatives of the proposed project within the 'preferred area' in the maritime spatial plan.

BENEFITS OR INTERESTING FEATURES

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- Involve neighbouring countries early and jointly plan the EIA procedure
- Provide, as Party of origin, the (summary) translations of the relevant/additional documentation already in the notification stage;
- Provide longer time frames in the EIA procedure for the countries to submit comments – necessary to carry out effective public participation in the affected Parties;
- Send the documentation in electronic format (instead or in addition to hard copies), as well as the link of the dedicated webpage for additional information;

Thank you!

