

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: *ELDEPASCO NORTHWIND OFFSHORE WIND*
 Project Number: *2009-0682*
 Country: *Belgium*
 Project Description: *The project consists of the design, construction and operations of a large-scale offshore wind farm with a capacity of 216 MW situated 37 km off the Belgian coast. The project aims at assisting the country to meet EU and national targets for energy generated from renewable energy sources.*

EIA required: YES

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: YES

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

An offshore wind farm falls by virtue of its technical characteristics under Annex II of Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC) with regard to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), thus leaving it up to national competent authorities to decide on the need for an EIA. As the project is however located in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of the North Sea, it is also subject to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ("UNCLOS") and national regulations concerning installation activities in the sea, making an EIA mandatory under national law.

An EIS dated December 2008 was submitted to the competent authorities coordinating the EIA process, including 45 days of public notification. The environmental permit has been granted together with the construction and operation permit by the competent authority on 19 November 2009. The main potential permanent impacts identified relate to ship traffic, local and migrating bird populations as well as local sea mammals, fish and invertebrates. In addition, some temporary effects can be expected due to cable laying, noise and vibrations during the works. The identified impacts are expected not to be significant and a monitoring programme (initially 4 years) is required during implementation and operation, in coordination with the neighbouring off shore wind farms and the competent authorities. Monitoring requirements include fieldwork, investigations and reporting related to biodiversity but also hydrodynamics and sedimentology, vibrations and noise, electromagnetic fields; and meteorological conditions. If the monitoring of the activity indicates a significant negative impact on the marine environment, additional conditions may be imposed by the Minister. The studies further conclude that the project, alone or in combination with other permitted activities in the area, does not impact on any related site of marine or coastal site of nature conservation.

Mitigation measures include appropriate working procedures such as ramping-up during piling, on site surveillance for presence of mammals during critical activities such as piling, and fitting of the turbines with measures to prevent bird collision or ship safety hazards.

Absolute emissions of the project are zero, with relative emissions estimated at -460 ktCO₂/year. For EIB's carbon footprint reporting, this figure will be adjusted proportionally to the eventual loan amount.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.