

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: *Netherlands Offshore Wind*
Project Number: *2011-0411*
Country: *The Netherlands*
Project Description: *The project consists of 2 x 300 MW offshore wind farms (600 MW total), 85 km from shore using new 4MW turbines.*

EIA required: *yes*

Project included
in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: *yes*

(Details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

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

As part of the concession procedures, the project has been subject to an EIA including public consultation and appropriate assessment. Following rounds of public consultation and expert panel advice, the EIA was approved on December 9, 2009. The original EIA includes the assessment of impacts on ship traffic and safety, flora and fauna, noise, humans, as well as cumulative impacts and cross-boundary effects – as the project location is close to the German Exclusive Economic Zone, with two offshore wind farms licensed (Borkum Riffgrund West and Borkum West II).

To reflect changes in project design² since the initial permit, the environmental studies are currently being updated. Updated environmental permits are expected by April 2013. This date could be delayed to November 2013 should there be any appeals to the National Court. This will be further monitored and should be satisfactorily addressed prior to financial close, currently scheduled for June 2013.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

As part of the concession procedures, the project has been subject to an EIA including public consultation. Following rounds of public consultation and expert panel advice, the EIA was approved on December 9, 2009. Meanwhile, an update is being finalised to take into account later changes in project design as well as the cable landing and onshore section. The EIA includes the assessment of impacts on ship traffic and safety, flora and fauna, noise, humans, as well as cumulative impacts and cross-boundary effects – as the project location is close to the German Exclusive Economic Zone, with two offshore wind farms licensed (Borkum Riffgrund West and Borkum West II).

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.

² such as a potential change in export cable route, different turbine type and foundations, changes in installation methods. In addition, the EIA and AA initially submitted did not address the cable landing and onshore part of the project in sufficient detail.

With adequate precautionary measures and subject to the outcomes of the ongoing update studies, the impacts on fauna and flora, including on local and migrating birds, marine mammals, benthos and invertebrates are considered to be minor and acceptable. Precautionary measures include inter alia appropriate working procedures, alternative routing of the export cable, minimum distance from shipping routes, planning of piling works outside the spring season with higher presence of sensitive marine mammals, appropriate piling methods and noise monitoring, and fitting of the turbines with visual signs and radar to prevent bird collision and ship safety hazards. The existing EIA studies and the permit approval identified some gaps in knowledge related to the behaviour of local and migrating bird species and sea mammals as well as underwater noise, which will be subject of a monitoring programme during construction and operations.

As part of the original EIA, following the request of the authorities, an Appropriate Assessment and an addendum to the AA were carried out to analyse the impact on Natura 2000 sites in the North Sea, also considering cumulative impacts with the German projects, in consultation with the German authorities. The AA concludes that there are no significant negative effects on Natura2000 sites.

Following changes in project design since the initial permit (potential change in export cable route, different turbine type and foundations, changes in installation methods), the studies need to be updated. Furthermore, the EIA and AA initially submitted did not address the cable landing and onshore part of the project in sufficient detail. Therefore, an updated EIA and AA are currently being finalized. The Promoter plans to receive the updated and complete set of permits by April 2013, which could be delayed to November 2013 should there be any appeals to the National Court.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Estimated absolute emissions are negligible. Avoided emissions are estimated at 1000 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year