

## EAA Position Statement Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE)

### The EAA calls for:

1. **Licenses to operate offshore wind turbines shall be for a limited time** (25 years) and after that, require renegotiation with affected member states and stakeholder organisations.
2. **Win-win solutions** shall be prioritised e.g. built in fish sheltering and nursery functionality to support fish recruitment and replenishment. Ecosystem conditions and services rendered to co-users should be taken into account when considering lease extensions or site remediation obligations.
3. **Windfarms should be accessible and open to recreational anglers** (rod and line fishers) during production and after decommissioning, while adhering to the rules valid for navigating and conduct in offshore wind farms (example: Denmark<sup>1</sup>)
4. **Funding is needed** to restore damages, to invest in a plus for biodiversity according to the biodiversity net gain principle, to compensate disadvantaged (prior) users and specifically:
  - Angler education programmes to support fishing in offshore wind farms.
  - Environmental mitigation measures should be included in all projects to **protect and improve the biotope and fish stocks**, both in and outside of wind farms. Such measures should **compensate for damage during the creation, operation and removal of offshore wind turbines**.
  - To the extent that **negative impacts** are known, these **should be properly managed** right from the project start.
  - Together with other (public) funding, **extensive scientific research** in this area is required. This is underlined by the '23 report of the European Court of auditors<sup>2</sup> that highlights the risks of a large scale rollout while many risks are still uncertain at this point.  
To **establish reliable ecological baseline data well before any construction activities start**, extensive monitoring should begin as soon as an area has been designated for wind park construction.
  - **New insights on the effects of offshore wind may impact lease terms** and in extreme cases, **the lease period**. Co-use management may likewise be influenced by ongoing insights.

### Background

In 2022 the European Commission released the REPower EU Plan and an amendment to the Renewable Energy Directive, with the goal being to increase renewable energy production and reduce the need for import of third country fossil fuels. The revised

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<sup>1</sup> [www.xn--bd-via.dk/lovlig-sejlad-i-havvindmoelleparker-saadan-goer-du](http://www.xn--bd-via.dk/lovlig-sejlad-i-havvindmoelleparker-saadan-goer-du)  
[www.sn.dk/art1460263/gribskov-kommune/styrelse-vi-stiller-ikke-krav-om-trawl-venlig-vindmoellepark](http://www.sn.dk/art1460263/gribskov-kommune/styrelse-vi-stiller-ikke-krav-om-trawl-venlig-vindmoellepark)

<sup>2</sup> **Offshore renewable energy: EU auditors highlight green dilemma**  
<https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/news/NEWS-SR-2023-22>

Renewable Energy Directive (Oct 2023) raises the EU's binding renewable target for 2030 to a minimum of 42.5%, up from the previous 32% target, with the aspiration to reach 45%.<sup>3</sup>

This increase implies that EU Member States will have to more than double their wind energy capacity (in GW) by 2030, from 16 GW installed in 2022, to 44 GW in 2030.<sup>4</sup>

The UK's target for offshore wind in the 2020 Government Energy White Paper includes 40GW of offshore wind by 2030, "enough to power every home in the UK".<sup>5</sup>

The EU and UK goals will only be achievable with a massive and forced program of construction of offshore wind energy.

Meanwhile the EU Commission's DG MARE has asked ICES fisheries scientists an advice on offshore windmills<sup>6</sup>

The EAA supports the EU and UK renewable energy targets and believes that an acceleration of renewable energy is needed. Nevertheless, this cannot come at the expense of nature, either through increased hydropower development, or poorly planned offshore wind energy.

If not properly planned, developed, and implemented the deployment and installation of offshore renewable energy infrastructure can cause disturbance, and have long-term implications for the marine environment. Proper spatial planning to manage the multiple pressures and their combined effects<sup>7</sup> is of the essence. In many marine areas human activities overlap or compete for space. To make ends meet, the environment may be chosen to lose out, which the EAA would deem unacceptable.

**Offshore wind turbines utilise a public resource and public space, and therefore a user pays principle should be applied to wind turbine owners. Wind turbine utility companies shall also fully compensate for all damage to the environment caused by installation and operation of offshore wind turbines (the polluter pays principle).**

Of the many possible user pay schemes to implement such a tax the EAA recommends a sales or turnover based tax, a recurring capacity based tax such as the French offshore wind turbine tax<sup>8</sup>.

Funds collected may also be used to compensate commercial entities such as commercial fishers and charter boat operators for loss of income.

There are currently large data and science gaps concerning the effects of large scale and multiple offshore wind energy farms on local and migratory fish populations.

A concrete example of possible significant ecological consequences of the large scale offshore wind power roll out is the vertical mixing of water layers and the resuspension of sand

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<sup>3</sup> a) **The EU Directive 2023/2413 of 18 October 2023:**

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023L2413&qid=1699364355105>

b) **EU's renewable energy targets. Info page:** [https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-directive-targets-and-rules/renewable-energy-targets\\_en](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-directive-targets-and-rules/renewable-energy-targets_en)

<sup>4</sup> [www.wwf.eu/what\\_we\\_do/climate/?11885916/PR-Blowing-in-the-Wind-report](http://www.wwf.eu/what_we_do/climate/?11885916/PR-Blowing-in-the-Wind-report)

<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-white-paper-powering-our-net-zero-future](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-white-paper-powering-our-net-zero-future)

<sup>6</sup> Commission reply to the BSAC 15 Dec 2023:

[www.bsac.dk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/reply-to-BSAC-follow-up-on-recommendations-on-offshore-wind\\_2023.pdf](http://www.bsac.dk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/reply-to-BSAC-follow-up-on-recommendations-on-offshore-wind_2023.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [www.eionet.europa.eu/etcs/etc-icm/products/etc-icm-reports/etc-icm-report-4-2019-multiple-pressures-and-their-combined-effects-in-europes-seas](http://www.eionet.europa.eu/etcs/etc-icm/products/etc-icm-reports/etc-icm-report-4-2019-multiple-pressures-and-their-combined-effects-in-europes-seas)

<sup>8</sup> [Offshore wind energy in France | CMS Expert Guides](#) Apart from the fees that are due for occupying the public domain, the offshore wind energy producer shall pay an annual amount of EUR 15,471 per megawatt of installed capacity **80 Article 1519B of the General Tax Code**. This fee is collected by the State and granted to the local municipalities, and local "users of the sea".

and silt. These phenomena may likely increase bioavailability of nutrients but at the same time decrease sunlight penetration due to increased turbidity. Both factors affect primary production but the combined effect is yet unknown and will vary between locations. The EAA therefore stresses once more her call for an increase in investment in scientific monitoring and research. **All results from such research shall be continually adopted into both environmental impact reports for planned wind farms, and operation of current wind farms.** Funding from member states and the offshore wind energy industry must be significantly increased to procure the environmental data necessary that would prevent any unwanted future effects of offshore wind.