



SWEDISH
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION
AGENCY

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Swedish reply to the notification pursuant of Art. 3 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) regarding the planned offshore wind farm “Stormskär and Väderskär” within Finland’s exclusive economic zone

The Environment Institute (SYKE) notified the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) on the 19th of June 2023 about the planned development and operation of the offshore wind farm (OWF) *Stormskär and Väderskär*, located in the Bothnian Sea within the territorial waters of Åland.

The developer, *Ilmatar Offshore AB*, states that the proposed OWF *Stormskär* will include a maximum of 131 wind turbines with a maximum height of 400 meters and the project area *Väderskär* a maximum of 31 wind turbines.

Consultation in Sweden

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency is the responsible authority for submitting and receiving notifications and otherwise fulfilling obligations for environmental impact assessments in a transboundary context (Espoo Convention) in Sweden, according to the Environmental Assessment Regulation (SFS 2017:966). The notification and the consultation documents have been circulated for consideration by SEPA to relevant government agencies, municipalities as well as environmental organizations and effected public.

The consultation period lasted from the 26th of June until September 14, 2023.

SEPA hereby acknowledges having received the notification and would like to inform Finland that Sweden intends to participate in the upcoming Espoo process.

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Remarks received during the consultation

A summary of the statements received is included below, please note that the summary is written on behalf of the SEPA and not for the body to which the proposal is referred for consideration.

All statements are enclosed in full to this letter.

The ***Swedish Geotechnical Institute (SGI)*** stresses that environmental-geotechnical risks such as sediment transport, turbidity, aggradation and the formation and dispersion of contaminated sediments should be assessed at an early stage.

Swedish Pelagic Federation assess that the planned Stormskär and Väderskär wind farms potentially could have negative consequences on fish stocks fished by Swedish professional fishermen through underwater noise, vibrations, changed currents or electromagnetic fields around cables. They also highlight the lack of knowledge regarding the potential impacts.

The Swedish Fishermen's Producer Organization states that in the writings in the notification, important aspects of fish stocks and fishing will be highlighted in the environmental impact statement. However, they stress that the planned project can have a significant impact on different types of fish stocks in the area that needs to be considered in the development of the EIA.

The Swedish Transport Administration stress the need to take the maritime traffic routs in consideration, but otherwise states no comments.

The Swedish Maritime Administration states that transport has a very important function for industry both in northern Sweden and in Finland. Shipping is international and the proposed location of the park is considered to affect the route choice of sea traffic. They also leave the general remark that wind farms contribute to an increased risk for maritime traffic. Consequences for people, the environment and property can be significant in the event of an accident. If the parks are realized, the space for maritime traffic will be reduced and traffic will be concentrated, which will increase the risks. Extended routes also lead to increased emissions when fuel consumption increases. They list in their comments what they say needs to be addressed in the upcoming EIA.

The County Administrative board of Uppsala has in prior consultations in the area identified several aspects that are important to clearly highlight in an environmental impact statement and highlights three of these in their statement, effects on fish stock, effects on birds and householding with produced electricity.

BirdLife Sverige sees a potentially large risk with the planned expansion of wind power in the Baltic Sea is that large numbers of night-migrating birds in certain weather conditions (especially in fog/darkness) collide with windfarms and other projects in the area. They therefor highlight the need of studies on the potential (and later actual) impact on the mass migration of birds that is taking place across the Baltic Sea.

The County Administrative Board of Stockholm would like to inform that there are studies that show disturbances from underwater noise in, for example, organisms such as the blue mussel and encourages further research into this in the upcoming EIA.

Tierp Municipality would like to state that the planned wind power project can be assumed to have significant environmental consequences for Sweden and there is a need for Sweden to continue participating in the environmental impact assessment. They point out the need for cumulative assessment with other planned projects in the area, assessing the effect on bats and birds, and also on fish stocks in the area also including the potential of more fishing in the limited areas in the Baltic Sea from other states.

The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute highlights the need for assessing the cumulative effects as there are multiple OWF projects in the whole of the Bothnian Sea that could lead to effects such as mixing in the surface layer of the ocean which could lead to effects on the biological production that happens there. They are asking for multilateral cooperation sea council that could assess all activities at sea.

Norrtälje Municipality states that the investigations that the consultation document describes that the environmental impact statement (EIA) will contain are deemed sufficient to identify any effects on the municipality's interests, within and outside the municipality's geographical boundaries.

Östhammars Municipality believes that there are reasons for Sweden to continue participating in the process to produce an environmental impact assessment for the project. This is based on the proximity to Swedish waters, as well as the fact that there are proposals for the establishment of other offshore wind power in Swedish waters, where the cumulative effects and consequences of all projects are important to monitor. The municipality assess that the possible establishment of one or more offshore wind farms will have consequences for bird life, fish stocks, shipping and the landscape.

Other respondents stated no comments.

This decision has been made digitally and therefore lacks signatures.

For the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

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Cc

Sandra Jalalian and Astrid Öfverholm at the Swedish Ministry of Climate and Enterprise

Enclosed, statements made in Swedish by:

Swedish Geotechnical Institute (SGI)
Swedish Pelagic Federation
The Swedish Fishermen's Producer Organization
The Swedish Transport Administration
The Swedish Maritime Administration
The County Administrative board of Uppsala
BirdLife Sverige
The County Administrative Board of Stockholm
Tierp Municipality
The Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute
Norrtälje Municipality
Östhammars Municipality