

PROJECT INFORMATION

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Development of a concept for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regarding offshore wind parks in the Baltic States



Wind turbine
(Picture: BMU/ Thomas Härtrich)

Background

The use of offshore wind energy plays an important role in the utilization of renewable energies. In the North Sea and the western part of the Baltic Sea wind parks already exist and further parks are in planning. In the eastern part of the Baltic Sea, however, wind parks do not yet exist. Standards for the analysis of environmental safety, for carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and for examining the compatibility of wind parks according to the FFH Directive have not been implemented. In the Baltic States there is no spatial planning for the marine areas, neither general planning for designating areas suitable for offshore wind parks. The designation of areas for marine reserves according to Natura 2000 is still ongoing. Since the first requests from developers to establish offshore wind parks already reached the three countries, tension exists between the protection of marine areas and nature and other potential use. In order to guarantee the protection of ecologically important marine areas it is essential to set standards.

Project

The goal of the project is to advise Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian environmental authorities on developing a concept for carrying out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for offshore wind parks.

A manual will be written, adapted to the individual basic conditions of the target country, describing the essential procedural steps and content of tests. Part of the manual will include a methodical research concept of the marine environment, which will be based on the German standardised research concept for offshore energy wind parks. The manual will be tested during the first EIA in the region, where an Estonian plan for establishing a wind park will serve as an example. The manual will be further developed according to practical experience gained in Estonia.

The exchange between German and local experts is designed to prepare the project partner for conducting future assessments. In order to foster an intensive exchange of experiences and ensure continual feedback regarding local conditions, different events in the Baltic States are planned.

- Programme: Advising-assistance programme of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
- Project number: 380 01 173
- Region: Baltic States
- Duration: 11/2007 – 10/2009
- Project Management: Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt)
- Local project partner: Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF); www.bef.lv
- Project partner in Germany: Institut für angewandte Ökologie (IfaÖ); www.ifaoe.de