

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE
CURONIAN NORD OFFSHORE WIND FARM AND INSTALLATION OF THE
ELECTRICITY EXPORT CABLE FOR OFFSHORE WIND FARM "AREA D",
LITHUANIA**

MINUTES OF PUBLIC TRANSBOUNDARY CONSULTATION

21 November 2025, 14:00-15:30

Remote online meeting via Zoom Meetings

Official language of the meeting: English (consecutive translation into Latvian)

Agenda

- 14:00:14:03 Opening of the consultations.
Lithuania: Senior Advisor of Pollution Prevention Policy Group, the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania on environmental impact assessment issues Mrs. Beata Vilimaitė Šilobritienė.
Latvia: Ms. Ilze Lielvalode, Latvia's State Environment Service representative for this transboundary assessment, presented the national procedures.
- 14:03-15:15 Presentation of the project and its Environmental Impact Assessment (hereinafter referred to as EIA).

Project Manager responsible for the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment documents for the proposed economic activity: Mrs. Rosita Milerienė, Public Institution Coastal Research and Planning Institute (hereinafter referred to as CORPI).

Project Manager responsible for site investigations (offshore studies, seabed and subsurface, habitats, and risk assessment) for the Environmental Impact Assessment documents: Mr. Nerijus Blažauskas, CORPI.

CORPI Experts:
- Julius Morkūnas (ornithology)
 - Robertas Staponkus (mammals, fish and fisheries)
 - Arūnas Balčiūnas (visual impact)
- 15:15-15:25 Session of questions and answers
- 15:30 Closing of the consultations
Lithuania: Senior Advisor of Pollution Prevention Policy Group, the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania on environmental impact assessment issues, Mrs. Beata Vilimaitė Šilobritienė.

Participants

From the **Lithuanian** side: representatives of the Organizer of the proposed economic activity – UAB „Ignitis renewables“, representatives of the Environmental Impact Assessment drafter – Public Institution Coastal Research and Planning Institute; representatives of the coordinating authority – Mrs. Beata Vilimaitė Šilobritienė, Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, representatives from the State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania.

From the **Latvian** side: Latvia's State Environment Service representative, Ms. Ilze Lielvalode; other representatives of institutions and (or) the interested public.

Proceedings of the meeting

1. Technical information and opening of the consultations

The meeting was officially opened by Ms. Beata Vilimaitė-Šilobritienė, a representative of the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania. The remote transboundary consultations meeting (further referred as Meeting) started with introductions and explanations of procedural matters, including the use of artificial intelligence for note-taking, as well as a presentation of general technical information and the participants from the Lithuanian side. She briefly presented the purpose of the Meeting – to inform the public about the Offshore Wind Farm project to be developed in the Baltic Sea.

2. Presentation of the project and its EIA

The presentation was opened by the Project Manager responsible for the EIA documents. She provided an overview of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the development of the Curonian Nord Offshore Wind Park and the installation of the electricity export cable for Offshore Wind Park “Area D,” Lithuania. The presentation covered the main EIA procedures, project area selection according to Lithuania's General Plan, transmission infrastructure corridors, geographic and administrative context, key wind park parameters, and power transmission solutions.

The EIA, prepared by CORPI with input from 23 local and international experts, assessed potential environmental impacts on seabed habitats, bird populations, bats, marine mammals, fish, fisheries, and other ecological components. Two alternatives were evaluated:

68 turbines – optimized for economic efficiency

55 turbines – environmentally preferred, minimizing impacts on Natura 2000 sites and other sensitive areas.

The assessment concluded that impacts on seabed habitats remain within allowable limits, with additional mitigation measures proposed for sensitive areas. The discussion also addressed the project's location, connection to the coastline, and potential transboundary effects on neighbouring countries.

The CORPI Project Manager for site investigations, presented detailed assessments of environmental components, including: water, ambient air and climate, seabed and soil, landscape, biodiversity (nationally protected and Natura 2000 areas), seabed habitats, cultural heritage, public health, material assets, EIA methods, shipping, national and international defense considerations. He also presented the analysis of alternatives, which indicated that the second alternative – placing turbines further from sensitive areas – was the most environmentally friendly while still meeting energy production goals.

Other CORPI experts presented results on bird migration, marine mammals, fish, and landscape impacts. The assessment showed that while the wind farm may affect certain bird species and marine mammals during construction and operation, mitigation measures such as noise reduction, gradual turbine start-up, monitoring systems, and buffers from protected areas can minimize these effects. The wind farm's location was found to have a low visual

impact, and although it may affect local fisheries, fishing activity in the area has already significantly declined.

Birds and bats: two-year monitoring program included winter aerial surveys, spring–autumn ship surveys, radar monitoring, and onshore bat detectors. Offshore bird migration was minimal; night migration occurred at varying heights. Key species observed included gulls, sea ducks, and long-tailed ducks. Offshore bat activity was low (~20 passes per night) versus over 1,000 coastal passes at Palanga. Mitigation measures include a 2 km buffer from protected areas, avoiding construction during wintering periods, gradual turbine start-up, and video monitoring of birds during operation

Marine mammals, fish, and fisheries: grey seals and a few harbour seals were recorded mainly at the northern edge of the planned wind farm. Noise impact modeling indicated that mitigation measures (gradual ramp-up, bubble curtains, hydro sound dampers) effectively minimize effects on marine mammals and sensitive fish species. Fisheries, primarily gillnetting, have declined since 2017, with Latvian vessels as main users. Two conductive corridors intersect fishing zone No. 29, but with mitigation, impacts in Latvian waters are not significant.

Landscape: the offshore area is 37–38 km from both Lithuanian and Latvian coastlines, within a pre-planned renewable energy zone. Visual assessments from national observation points (Lithuania) and Pape Beach (Latvia) using WindPro 3.3 showed vertical viewing angles of ~0.43–0.47°, well below the 5.7° significance threshold. Visual impact is therefore not significant.

The presentation was concluded by Project Manager, who outlined the next steps of the EIA process: submission of the report for approval to Lithuania’s EIA authorities, transboundary consultations with participating countries (Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Poland) coordinated by the Lithuanian Ministry of Environment, and final approval by the Lithuanian Environmental Agency.

3. Session of questions and answers

The Q&A session started after the presentations of the proposed economic activity and the EIA Report. Information on the questions and answers is presented below:

1. Do you plan to prepare visualization of the wind park in different weather conditions and time?

Answer - Yes, visualizations are done and included in Annex 4. They cover worst-case scenarios and best viewing conditions from four coastal locations.

2. Why is the summary in Latvian while the report is in English?

Answer - full report is in English; summary in Latvian was provided to facilitate transboundary consultations, as the project may affect Latvia.

3. Can visualizations be opened now or only via the annex?

Answer - they are in Annex 4 and online; participants can access them via the provided links.

4. Were different turbine types (15 MW, 20+ MW) visualized?

Answer - only worst-case scenario considered, based on the largest turbines (350 m tall); smaller turbines will have less impact.

5. Can the wind park be seen from the shore, and will tourism be allowed?

Answer - visibility is limited due to distance and weather; in perfect conditions, turbines will be visible. Supervised tourist excursions are possible under developer oversight, similar to Denmark.

4. Closing of the consultations

With no further questions, the Meeting was officially closed by a representative of the Lithuanian Ministry of the Environment. She presented further procedures of the consultations, she also mentioned that the interested public can still submit questions or comments to the competent authorities.

Latvia's State Environment Service said questions or comments can be submitted until 12 December.