



Vides pārraudzības valsts birojs  
*Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia*

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Rīga

March 27, 2019 No 5-01/270

Ref. to:

February 7, 2020 No 7-12/20/12-2

and

February 7, 2020 No 7-12/20/13-2

**Espoo focal point:**

**Mr. Kaupo Heinma**

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia

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**Regarding notifications on Environmental impact assessment  
of the offshore windfarm projects in the Gulf of Riga  
initiated by Tuuletraal OÜ and Eesti Energia AS**

Environment State Bureau (hereinafter – the Bureau), acting as a competent authority on environmental impact assessment (hereinafter – EIA) in Latvia would like to thank the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia for sending notifications about initiation of two EIA procedures concerning planned offshore windfarm projects in the gulf of Riga that are initiated by the Tuuletraal OÜ and Eesti Energia AS (the project of Tuuletraal OÜ also includes infrastructure for aquaculture).

The Bureau acknowledges receipt of the notification No 7-12/20/12-2 and No 7-12/20/13-2, both dated on February 7, 2020.

Having assessed comments and opinions received from various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Environment and Regional development, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State Environmental Service, Latvian Institute of Aquatic biology, Salacgriva county, Salacgriva port authority and Riga planning region, – the Bureau informs that the Republic of Latvia intends to participate in EIA process of both offshore windfarm projects (Tuuletraal OÜ and Eesti Energia AS).

Concerning the scope of assessment – we have summarized information on the aspects for evaluation that were specifically highlighted by various stakeholders, but we kindly ask you to evaluate all aspects of environment according to the Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment:

1. Navigation safety and possible impacts on the navigation areas and navigation regime, impact on accessibility of Latvian ports and the reserved navigation areas in the Maritime Spatial Plan of the Republic of Latvia.

2. Possible changes in navigation regime and restrictions on navigation during the operation of facilities and in the event of an accident.
3. Intended security and protection areas, planned/potential facility service sites, fuel and other facility supply and resource delivery routes.
4. The danger area in the event of accident, possible accident scenarios, their course and planned countermeasures in the case of human search and rescue operations.
5. Possible impact on the dynamics of sediment flow and the regime of current flow.
6. Possible impacts on underwater habitats, birds and marine fauna.
7. Possible impact on the protected territories of European significance (Natura 2000) – “*Rendu pļavas*” and the marine territory “*Ainaži-Salacgrīva*”.
8. Possible growth of the population of seagrass (increase in nutrient base due to the infrastructure for aquaculture).
9. Cumulative impacts of both projects.

In addition, we shortly give you an overview of the national requirements for EIA procedures in the Republic of Latvia. We would like to draw your attention that Latvian legislation, in particular the Law on Environmental impact assessment, designates at least 30 days long term for the process of public consultation when elaborated EIA report is discussed. The time is being counted from the day a publication is published in a corresponding newspaper (national, regional, local) which will be ensured by the Republic of Latvia after receiving information from the Republic of Estonia. A public hearing meeting of the intended activity shall be held. According to the national legislation, a public hearing meeting shall be held no sooner than 7 days after publication is published and no later than 10 days before the ending of public consultation process. We kindly ask you to prepare EIA summary that reflects information to the extent and scope necessary for the transboundary EIA (including graphical materials and maps in relation to the transboundary impact aspects) in Latvian.

In conclusion we wish all our colleagues in the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Estonia good health, endurance and strength in this difficult time due to the outbreak of coronavirus. In this context we inform, that for a time period through the state of emergency the usual public hearing meetings are replaced with video conferences and video-presentations. Nevertheless, our kind request would be not to organize public hearings at this crucial moment, if possible, because we are all aware of the fact that society is engaged in various other concerns to be able to demonstrate high civic and environmental participation.

We are looking forward to our successful bilateral cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Iveta Jegere

Acting Director of Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

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