



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels
MARE/CV

Subject: Recommendations of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council concerning the development of offshore windfarms and fisheries

Dear Mr Jarek Zieliński,

We would like to thank you for sharing the recommendations of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) concerning the development of offshore windfarms and fisheries interactions.

We would also like to praise the work of BSAC Ecosystem Based Management Working Group. The two workshops organised in October 2022 and February 2023 enabled thorough discussions and sharing of knowledge between fishers, scientists and public authorities. The large attendance from BSAC members, Member States and Commission services have clearly shown strong interest and openness to dialogue from all parties.

This is well reflected in your documented analysis and recommendations.

I share your views that renewable energy from the seas can be a main pillar of the EU clean energy transition. The Commission is aware of the increased level of political support and ambition for offshore wind in the Baltic Sea and the objectives of the 2022 Marienborg Declaration ⁽¹⁾ of deploying at least 19.6 GW of offshore wind capacity in the Baltic Sea region by 2030.

There is a need to better understand the effects of large-scale offshore wind deployment on the marine environment and existing activities at sea, such as fisheries. Cooperation between Member States, regional organisations, scientists, stakeholders is extending in this area. As announced in the EU offshore renewable energy strategy, the Commission research and innovation programme Horizon Europe has addressed these issues with a dedicated support for [wind energy in the natural and social environment](#). Three projects ([Wind In My Backyard](#), [JustWind4All](#), [WENDY](#)) started at the beginning of 2023. The Commission is also supporting projects on cross-border cooperation for maritime spatial

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.regeringen.dk/media/11544/the-marienborg-declaration-300822.pdf>

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planning. The [eMSP North Sea-Baltic Sea](#) project is particularly relevant in this context as an interface between science and policy and the development of a community of practice.

The Commission will support a non-recurrent request to ICES on these interactions, taking advantage of several working groups of ICES involved in offshore renewables analysis. This request builds upon the study contracted by the Commission on [overview of the effects of offshore wind farms on fisheries and aquaculture](#) published in 2021.

I agree that consultation and dialogue with the general public, local communities and stakeholders are crucial. It is a legal requirement and a way to anticipate and address possible tensions.

I welcome your interest to get involved in discussion platforms such as the [European Blue Forum](#). I had the pleasure to launch it officially in May 2023 and encourage you to register to the forum, be informed and involved in future events.

Member States and the Commission have strengthened cooperation at sea basin level for planning future offshore wind and related grid connection as well as on interactions with the marine environment and human activities at sea. A number of regional organisations such as the Baltic energy market interconnection plan, HELCOM or HELCOM-VASAB working group on maritime spatial planning aim at developing an integrated sea basin approach and increasing sharing of knowledge and expertise.

We agree that discussion on planning, co-existence and, whenever possible, multi-use of the marine space between offshore wind farms and fisheries should take place at early/design stage. There are already good examples of multi-use between offshore wind and aquaculture in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands where seaweed and molluscs are being grown successfully.

A number of Member States allow certain fishing activities to take place within the perimeter of offshore wind farms and support tests in real sea conditions. With increased experience and technological innovation such as increasing wind turbine sizes and associated spacing requirements, co-existence between offshore and fisheries are likely to evolve.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck via the functional mailbox of the Advisory Councils MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours faithfully,

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