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Naval and Marine Approvals

In European Union

According to EU law, offshore wind farm development must satisfy two assessment processes: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of the EIA process is to ensure that all the likely effects of a development are fully understood and taken into account before a development is permitted to go ahead [1].

All countries within EU need to undertake an EIA, before consent can be given to an offshore wind farm. The only difference between the countries is the national guidance. The national guidance is non-mandatory, however, failure to comply with the principles of the guidance may result in delaying the application process.

The marine safety assessment are normally carried out as a part of an EIA. The assessment focuses on the likelihood and consequences of ship impact on the offshore wind farm. The major hazards are commercial ships deviating from normal routes, vessels sailing through wind farms, fishing vessels sailing close to the wind farm or entering shipping routes in order to avoid proposed sites.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process of evaluation of environmental effects during the preparation of policies, plans, programs and legislation. The below table shows the requirements for marine studies in some of the countries of the EU.

Table 1: National requirements for marine safety and emergency studies[1]

Denmark	United Kingdom	Germany	Netherlands
No national guidance specific to wind farms	Methodology for assessing the marine navigational safety and emergency response risks of offshore renewable energy installations	Studies must be performed in order to produce the required protection and safety concept	Assessment framework for defining safe distances between shipping lanes and offshore wind farms

In India

NIWE is the central authority which will be responsible for the approval of clearances required by the developer or in some cases may only facilitate the requirement of approvals by the developer from the concerned authority.

Offshore Wind Energy Steering Committee (OWESC) under the chairmanship of Secretary, MNRE will look after the offshore wind energy development in the country by providing policy guidance and will oversee the execution and effective implementation of offshore wind. The Ministry of Shipping in case of major ports and State Governments or State Maritime Board in case of minor ports may provide access to port with sufficient infrastructural facilities for development of offshore wind farm.

Site studies and surveys are also critical from naval operation's point of view. Therefore, private players would need to submit the detailed information as per the formats and guidelines for clearance from the Ministry of Defense. The project developer would have to take prior permission from the Ministry of Defense before commencing any activity in the EEZ [2].

The below table provides an overview of clearances required in agreement with the National Offshore Wind Energy Policy [2]. The clearances are not listed in chronological order and it is understood that a separate guide will be developed to facilitate developers. A more comprehensive overview is introduced of all clearances/approvals/NOC needed for the development of an offshore wind farm in India by the "Consent Register" developed by FOWPI in connection with the Environmental scoping report [3].

Table 2: Clearance/NOC required as per National Offshore Wind Energy Policy-2015

Sr. No.	Ministry/Department	Stage-1 Clearances	Stage-2 Clearances	Who will take Approval
1.	Ministry of Environment and Forests	In principle Clearance	EIA and CRZ Clearance.	NIWE
2.	Ministry of Defense	In principle Clearance	Clearance related to defense and security aspects. Relates to the planning and policy aspects of defence/security covering territorial waters, the EEZ and other maritime zones of the country.	NIWE
3.	Ministry of External Affairs	In principle Clearance	Clearance for development within the maritime zones of India.	NIWE
4.	Ministry of Home	In principle Clearance	Clearance regarding deployment of foreign nationals. Relates to the foreign manpower required to develop the offshore wind farm during construction and operation phase.	NIWE
5.	Ministry of Civil Aviation	No Clearance needed at this stage	Clearance for construction near aviation radars/aerodromes. No clearance required for other locations. Relates to wind farm constructions in a distance range from aviation radars that may introduce less accuracy, blind spots or false alarms.	Developer. NIWE will facilitate only.

Sr. No.	Ministry/Department	Stage-1 Clearances	Stage-2 Clearances	Who will take Approval
6.	Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas	No Clearance needed at this stage	Clearance for installations proposed in oil and gas blocks. NOC required for construction outside these blocks.	Developer. NIWE will facilitate only.
7.	Ministry of Shipping	No Clearance needed at this stage	Clearance for projects near major ports. NOC to operate away from shipping lanes.	Developer. NIWE will facilitate only.
8.	Department of Space	In principle Clearance	Clearance for minimum safety distance to be maintained from Dept. of Space installations.	NIWE
9.	Department of Telecommunication	No Clearance needed at this stage	NOC to operate outside subsea communication cable zones.	Developer. NIWE will facilitate only.
10.	Ministry of Mines	No Clearance needed at this stage	NOC to operate outside mining zones.	Developer. NIWE will facilitate only.

Abbreviations used in the above table: NOC – No Objection Certificate; EIA – Environment Impact Assessment; CRZ – Coastal Regulation Zone

For more information, refer the following informative links/material:

1. Summary Report on North Seas Regulation and Standards by DNVGL. (<http://www.dma.dk/Documents/Publikationer/ReportOnNorthSeaRegulationAndStandards.pdf>)
2. National Offshore Wind Energy Policy-2015. (<http://mnre.gov.in/file-manager/UserFiles/National-Offshore-Wind-Energy-Policy.pdf>)
3. "FOWPI – Environmental scoping report and consent register", I12644/0443131, October 2018. (http://www.fowpi.in/uploads/download_document/fowpi_environmental_scoping_report_and_consent_register_v1_ilovepdf_compressed_1593274251.pdf)

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Nodal Ministry for Offshore Wind Energy

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