



**LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS APLINKOS MINISTERIJA
THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT DECISION ON THE PROPOSED
ACTIVITY – THE CURONIAN NORD OFFSHORE WIND FARM IN THE
LITHUANIAN MARINE TERRITORY OF THE BALTIC SEA**

We hereby inform you that the environmental impact assessment for a proposed project - a major installation for the harnessing of wind power for energy production (a wind farm) proposed by a Lithuanian developer JSC “Ignitis renewables” - Installation and operation of the Curonian Nord offshore wind farm has been concluded following the decision adopted by the Environmental Protection Agency (dated 26 June 2026, No (30-2)-A4E-7223).

As required by Article 6(2) of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and provisions of national legislation of the Republic of Lithuania, please find enclosed the EIA decision, which includes the reasons and considerations on which it was based. Please note that the decision also includes conditions of implementation of the proposed economic activity related to the conducted environmental impact assessment, which are obligatory for the developer and information about transboundary consultations.

The final Environmental Impact Assessment Report (in English) and its annexes, on which the decision was based is available online¹ and will be available till 31 December 2026.

Please note that some of the accompanying annexes are in English; however, documents concerning internal public disclosure procedures and documents relating exclusively to national procedures for the disclosure and coordination of environmental impact assessment documentation have not been translated, as they are not relevant in the context of the transboundary EIA.

We would like to thank you for successful and constructive consultations and assure that the Republic of Lithuania will continue its contribution towards open and transparent transboundary EIAs.

ENCLOSED. Decision on the Environmental Impact of the Development of the “Curonian Nord” Offshore Wind Farm and Installation of the Electricity Export Cable for Offshore Wind Farm “Area D”, Lithuania, No. (30-2)-A4E-7223 of 26 June 2026, in English, 23 pages.

Vice-minister

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¹ https://ftp.corpi.lt/rosita/CN_EIA_ENG%20version%20Approved_2026-06-26/

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DECISION

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

2026- No. (30-2)-A4E-7223

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3. Name of the Proposed Activity and Legal Basis for the Environmental Impact Assessment

The proposed activity (hereinafter – the Project) comprises:

- 1) Development of the "Curonian Nord" offshore wind farm in Lithuania;
- 2) Installation of the offshore electricity transmission cable for wind farm "Area D".

The Environmental Impact Assessment (hereinafter – EIA) of the Project has been carried out in accordance with: the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment of Proposed Economic Activities (consolidated version valid until 31 October 2025), specifically pursuant to Article 3(1)(1), i.e. the Project falls under the activity listed in Annex 1, sub-paragraph 3.10.1: construction of wind farms in the territorial sea of the Republic of Lithuania and/or in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Lithuania in the Baltic Sea.

4. Location of the Proposed Activity

The Project is located within the territory approved by Resolution No. 171 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania dated 15 March 2023 "On the designation of areas in the territorial sea of the Republic of Lithuania and/or the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Lithuania in the Baltic Sea where tenders for the development and operation of renewable energy power plants may be organised without support measures, and the establishment of the maximum permitted generation capacity and minimum installed capacity of such power plants."

The offshore wind farm will be developed in the northern part of the Lithuanian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Baltic Sea, at a distance of approximately 36.8 km from the coastline.

Main characteristics of the wind farm area:

- Total area: 119.5 km²
- Water depth: 27–49 m
- Minimum distance to shore / Palanga city: 36.8 km
- Minimum distance to Klaipėda Seaport: 50.3 km

According to the Engineering Infrastructure Development Plan for the project of national importance “Preparation of territories required for the connection of power plants using renewable energy sources, planned to be developed in parts of the territorial sea of the Republic of Lithuania and/or the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Lithuania in the Baltic Sea, to the electricity transmission networks”, approved by Resolution No. 28 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania of 21 January 2026 (Engineering Infrastructure Development Plan), the grid connection route is planned from wind farm “Area D” to the 330 kV Darbėnai substation located in Kretinga district municipality, Darbėnai eldership, Žyneliai village 9.

5. Description of the Proposed Activity

The Environmental Impact Assessment Report assesses two proposed activities:

- 1) The Curonian Nord offshore wind farm (hereinafter – the CN OWF) with all associated components – an offshore transformer substation (hereinafter – the OSS) and electricity transmission cables both offshore and onshore up to the 330 kV substation planned in Darbėnai;
- 2) The electricity transmission cable, both offshore and onshore, connecting the planned offshore wind farm “Area D” (hereinafter – the “Area D” OWF) with the 330 kV Darbėnai substation.

Alternatives considered:

The following alternatives are considered in the Report:

- The “zero” alternative, i.e. the non-implementation of the activity, represents the existing situation and environmental conditions where the Project is not implemented. In such a case, changes in the environmental status of the Baltic Sea area belonging to Lithuania would not be associated with the development of the proposed activity;
- Alternative 1 – the maximum development alternative of the offshore wind farm: wind turbines are installed across the entire area designated for the wind farm, applying geometric layout principles. Under this alternative, up to 68 offshore wind turbines may be installed;
- Alternative 2 – the optimal development alternative of the offshore wind farm: wind turbines are installed within the designated area, maintaining a 2 km offset from the boundaries of the Natura 2000 site “Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau”, and arranged taking into account seabed habitats. Under this alternative, up to 55 offshore wind turbines may be installed.

For the transmission of electricity generated by the offshore wind farms to onshore electricity networks, the Engineering Infrastructure Development Plan foresees the use of connection corridors:

- in the marine area – route alternatives B1 and A1,
- in the onshore area – route alternatives C1 and C2.

For the connection of Area A, where the development of CN OWF is assessed, the B1–C2 corridor alternative is selected, while for the Area D OWF, the A1–C1 corridor alternative is selected. Other connection route alternatives are not considered further in the EIA Report.

The CN and “Area D” OWFs will be connected to the existing electricity transmission network – the 330 kV Darbėnai substation located in Kretinga district municipality, Darbėnai eldership, Žyneliai village 9. The length of the CN OWF export cable onshore (from the landfall point) is approximately 13.5 km, of which approximately 3.2 km is within Palanga municipality, and the remaining approximately 10.3 km is within Kretinga district municipality. Accordingly, the length of the “Area D” OWF export cable on land is approximately 13.6 km, of which approximately 3.5 km is within Palanga municipality, and the remaining approximately 10.1 km is within Kretinga district municipality.

The models of offshore wind turbines assessed for the planned OWF have the following indicative design parameters:

- capacity of 20 MW or more,
- tower height (above mean sea level) up to 170 m,
- total height (above mean sea level) up to 350 m,
- rotor diameter up to 300 m,
- minimum clearance from the lowest blade tip to mean sea level – 20 m.

The maximum permitted generation capacity of the planned OWF will be 700 MW, while the installed capacity will be 580 MW or more.

The main stages of installation of the offshore wind farm are: installation of foundations, installation of wind turbines, installation of inter-array electrical cables within the OWF, installation of the OSS, installation of electrical transmission cables at sea and on land, installation of the onshore transformer substation and connection of the OWF to the electricity transmission system.

The main installation works of the “Area D” OWF cables will be carried out in the same way as the installation of the Curonian Nord OWF cables.

The installation of wind turbine foundations consists of transportation of the foundations and their installation at the designated location. Possible foundation types include monopile foundations, jacket (frame) foundations, gravity foundations. The specific type of foundation will be selected by the developer based on geotechnical investigations during the preparation of the technical design of the Curonian Nord OWF.

The OSS is planned to be located in the central part of the Curonian Nord OWF area. The exact location will be determined during the electrical system design phase, after defining the optimal configuration of wind farm components and having established the wind turbine layout plan and the route of the transmission cable. For the installation of the OSS the foundation is installed first, the platform (topside) is transported from an onshore manufacturing site and mounted onto the installed foundation.

Wind turbines will be interconnected and connected to the OSS by cables laid on or within the seabed. Prior to cable laying, seabed preparation works will be carried out: the route will be cleared using special equipment (Pre-lay Grapple Run) – this involves dragging equipment across the seabed to hook and remove debris (e.g. old cables or fishing nets), if necessary, boulders are moved using ploughing and grabbing operations. Boulders with a diameter of 0.3 m or more will be relocated outside the planned cable route into adjacent areas. Inter-array cables connecting wind turbines and the OSS are typically buried to a depth of 0.3–1.2 m below the seabed. Depending on seabed conditions, cables may remain unburied. In such cases, cables are protected by covering them with rocks, gravel bags, concrete mattresses. The estimated duration for installation of Curonian Nord inter-array cables is approximately 6 months, excluding downtime due to weather or other disruptions.

Electricity from the OSS will be transmitted via two high-voltage (220 kV) alternating current submarine cables. These cables will be connected via transition joints to two high-voltage (220 kV) onshore transmission cables. Submarine export cables will be installed in parallel within defined cable corridors. Generated electricity will be transmitted to the transmission system operated by AB “Litgrid” via cable lines, step-up transformers, substations. This network includes submarine and underground cables, voltage transformation equipment, substations.

For cable installation at the Lithuanian coastline (landfall), a trenchless installation method is planned. This method will be used at the Būtingė geomorphological reserve (coastal zone), crossings of the Šventoji River and its valley, crossings of linear infrastructure (oil pipelines and national roads), where necessary.

Approximately 4 km from the Darbėnai substation, a new 220/330 kV substation (Pelėkiai) will be constructed for each connection. Location: Pelėkiai, Darbėnai eldership, Kretinga district municipality, land parcel cad. No. 5647/0004:256. The Pelėkiai substation is expected to occupy an area of up to 10 hectares.

The operation phase includes generation of electricity, transmission to the grid, maintenance, repair and inspection of wind turbines. Maintenance activities may be carried out using specialised vessels capable of approaching and mooring at wind turbines, enabling safe transfer of personnel to the turbine platforms. For major repairs (e.g. replacement of blades or entire turbines) larger service vessels will be used.

At the end of the operational lifetime offshore infrastructure will be removed, equipment will be dismantled and disposed of. Main components to be removed include: wind turbines, foundations (partially or fully), transition pieces, submarine cables (inter-array and export), meteorological masts, offshore substation, onshore facilities. All components will be transported to shore and delivered for reuse, recycling, disposal.

Information on Products, Energy, Raw Materials and Chemicals

Wind farm construction will use new, certified components complying with EU requirements. Wind energy installations use lubrication oils, transformer oils, cooling fluids. Although these materials may contain hazardous components, none of them are classified as hazardous to the aquatic environment under their intended use conditions.

Information on Waste Generation and Management

Waste may be generated during construction, operation, decommissioning. All waste generated during wind farm construction, cable installation, operation will be handed over to authorised waste management companies. During decommissioning dismantled equipment and components will be transported by vessel to ports, storage facilities, recycling sites, or licensed waste management companies authorised to handle such waste.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on water

The impact of the installation of the offshore wind farm on the hydrodynamic situation will largely depend on the type and size of the planned wind turbine foundations. Monopile structures, whose foundation diameter may reach up to 10–12 m and which are located at distances of more than 1,000 m from each other, generally do not have a significant effect on changes in the water current regime. Since the OWF area is planned at depths greater than 28 m, far from the coast and in a stable geological environment (not on the mobile sandy seabed typical of the coastal zone, but on a solid moraine base or a stable mixture of gravelly and coarse sand formed in previous geological periods), the impact on the hydrodynamic environment is negligible.

The installation of electricity transmission cables in the marine area may have an impact on wave and current regimes in the shallow coastal zone due to changes in seabed topography during trenching works; however, the seabed will return to its original state relatively quickly. The impact of cable installation on the prevailing wave and current regime is considered to be local and short-term and will not have a significant adverse effect on the overall hydrodynamic situation.

In the marine part, the installation of the OWF and cables are planned in areas not characterised by significant historical chemical contamination; therefore, no significant adverse impact on water due to secondary pollution is anticipated. During cable installation works, increased turbidity is expected only locally, i.e. in the immediate area of cable laying; therefore, the works will not result in significant large-scale changes in turbidity or in the concentration of suspended particles compared to natural conditions in the relevant part of the Baltic Sea.

The cable route of the Curonian Nord OWF onshore, progressing inland from the sea, crosses the following watercourses: Š-2 (right tributary of the Šventoji River), Š-4 (right tributary of the Šventoji River), the Šventoji River, the Kulšė River. The cable route of the “Area D” OWF will cross the same watercourses, except for the last two crossings of the Kulšė River immediately before connection to the Darbėnai substation. Some smaller water bodies (Š-2, Š-4, Kulšė) and drainage ditches will be crossed using the open trench method with submerged cable installation technology (during detailed design, trenchless technologies may be selected). The open trench method may temporarily increase concentrations of suspended solids in the water and locally affect the integrity of the water body bed; however, this impact will be local and short-term. At the crossing of the Šventoji River (and potentially the Kulšė River), trenchless cable installation technology (HDD or similar) is planned in order to avoid direct impacts from excavation works on the river. Taking into account the scope of excavation works, no significant impact on the hydrological and hydrodynamic regimes of water bodies is anticipated.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on ambient air

During the generation of electricity in the offshore wind farm, stationary sources of air pollution and emissions are not expected. The main sources of air pollution during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the OWF will be vehicles and construction machinery. In the open sea, far from the coast and residential or public environments, conditions for the dispersion of pollutants are favourable; therefore, emitted pollutants will be readily dispersed and will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment.

During the installation of the underground electricity transmission cable, a short-term and local impact on ambient air is expected due to construction and maintenance activities (repair, servicing), during which emissions of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter may occur from mobile sources (vehicles and other equipment with internal combustion engines).

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on the seabed

Recent bathymetric measurements have shown that water depth within the planned OWF area ranges from 27.0 m to 49.0 m, while seabed slopes vary from 0° to 20°. In some areas, such as depressions and elevations, slopes may exceed 60°. The seabed topography is relatively complex, formed by glacial and post-glacial hydrodynamic processes. The seabed is characterised by asymmetrical elevations, sand ridges and waves, widespread boulder fields and less frequent flat areas – glacial plains. Detailed seabed investigations within the planned engineering corridor have shown that water depth ranges from 0 m (at the shoreline) to approximately 39 m in the deepest central part.

Analysis of the concentrations of potentially hazardous heavy metals and arsenic in modern seabed sediments within the OWF area and along the cable route has not identified significant contamination. Taking into account seabed structure, surface sediment types and their distribution, as well as associated valuable benthic communities, the EIA Report concludes that impacts on the seabed will be local and relatively minor. Adverse impacts are mainly associated with partial disturbance of the seabed and secondary sedimentation at the locations of turbine foundations and cable routes.

The installation of wind turbines at a distance from the main sediment transport pathways does not significantly affect sediment transport directions. In the Lithuanian coastal zone, the main sediment transport zone extends approximately 1–1.5 km offshore; therefore, turbines located more than 36.8 km offshore will not significantly affect coastal stability or sediment transport.

Before construction, based on detailed geotechnical investigations, the final locations of foundations and cable routes will be specified to ensure that design solutions correspond to the actual geotechnical properties of the seabed.

The Project area overlaps with one potential offshore oil structure. Since offshore oil exploration and extraction are currently not regulated in Lithuania, the overlap of the OWF with the E2 potential oil structure does not create a potential sectoral conflict, as the activities (should opportunities arise for the development of offshore oil exploration and extraction) may be developed alongside one another. Therefore, no adverse impact on natural resources is anticipated.

During installation of high-voltage cables, impacts on the seabed will be local and minimal. Trenches will be excavated to depths of 0.8–2.5 m and widths of 2–3 m. Where cable ploughing is used, impacts will be very short-term, as trenches are simultaneously refilled with the excavated material where possible. Cable covering technologies are used only where trenching is not feasible or is technically or economically impractical.

Onshore, the connection corridor may cross the northern boundary of the Šventoji oil field (No. 2165), but this will not affect oil extraction. Nearby peat (Vanagupė, No. 954) and gravel (No. 2299) deposits are located approximately 5 km away and will not be affected.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on the landscape

The nearest area with a high aesthetic landscape value is the Curonian Spit, located at a distance of more than 50 km from the proposed activity. The visual impact of the proposed activity was assessed based on the vertical and horizontal viewing angle of the wind turbines, assuming a maximum structure height of up to 350 m. It was determined that the viewing angle from the nearest observation points (viewing platforms and coastal beaches) ranges from 0.43 to 0.47° and is considered to be small.

In accordance with Article 49(18) of the Law on Renewable Energy, the impact of the offshore wind farm on the landscape is considered insignificant. Since the Curonian Nord OWF is planned behind the already planned “Area D” OWF, its structures will visually merge with the existing planned objects, forming a common technogenic silhouette. From all observation points selected for the analysis, the horizontal viewing angle of the Curonian Nord OWF will be smaller than that of the already planned “Area D” OWF in the northern part of the Lithuanian Baltic Sea coast and at Pape Beach (Latvia). The greatest perceptual contrast is expected during the tourist season, when observing the sea horizon, especially at sunset, along the section of coastline belonging to Palanga Municipality. Along the remaining Lithuanian Baltic Sea coast, the cumulative visual contrast of offshore wind farms with the landscape will be minimal.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on protected areas and biodiversity

Marine section

The planned OWF area borders, along a 700 m stretch on its eastern side, the Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau Biosphere Polygon and the Natura 2000 sites designated for bird protection (SPA) and habitat protection (SAC) – the Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau. The cable routes at sea inevitably cross this biosphere polygon (crossing length of approximately 15.7 km for Curonian Nord and 16.1 km for Area D).

During the construction phase, impacts on seabed habitats are associated with local disturbance at turbine foundation sites and cable routes, resuspension of sediments caused by trenching and backfilling, possible short-term increases in turbidity. These impacts may temporarily affect benthic organisms (e.g. feeding and respiration), especially filter-feeding molluscs. The affected areas will be localised (limited to the trench width), and the overall impact on natural habitats will not exceed the 1% threshold considered indicative of significant impact.

Cable installation is planned within the Natura 2000 SAC Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau along its northern margin, with a distance of approximately 0.5 km from the cable corridor axis to the northern boundary of the SAC. From the OWF area to the landfall point, cables will cross two circalittoral habitats within the SAC: the reef habitat type 1170 (boulder and biogenic reefs), circalittoral sandy habitats.

Onshore section

The connection corridor in the marine and coastal sections crosses the Būtingė Geomorphological Reserve (the length of the crossing section is approximately 270 m for the Curonian Nord OWF and 160 m for the cables of the “Area D” OWF). In the onshore section, the connection corridor crosses the Šventoji River – a Natura 2000 SAC “Šventoji River” (the length of the crossing section is approximately 12 m for the Curonian Nord OWF cables and approximately 13 m for the cables of the “Area D” OWF). The landfall of the cables (from sea to shore) is planned to be carried out using trenchless cable installation technology (e.g. HDD or an equivalent method), without open excavation of the coastal dunes or the Būtingė Geomorphological Reserve. The construction site for cable installation works will be located outside the boundaries of the reserve. No significant impact on the Būtingė Geomorphological

Reserve is anticipated. It is planned that, at the crossing with the Šventoji River, in order to minimise direct impacts on protected features, the cables will be installed using trenchless cable installation technology.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on fish

The main commercial fish species in the Project area are: Baltic herring, Atlantic cod, European flounder, as well as seasonally abundant species such as bullrout (*Myoxocephalus scorpius*), European smelt (*Osmerus eperlanus*). Noise generated during pile driving may affect fish; therefore, mitigation measures such as reduction of impulsive noise levels, acoustic deterrence will be applied. Following installation, fish are expected to return to feeding areas, and impacts are therefore considered temporary and insignificant.

Excavation and drilling works during the construction phase may cause increased turbidity and elevated concentrations of suspended sediments in the water column. As a result, fish larvae and juveniles may be the most affected, as fish at these stages of development are the most sensitive. Increased turbidity may not only hinder fish feeding within the area, but may also affect fish spawning grounds. However, suspended sediment particles remain in the water column for a relatively short period of time, and their dispersion depends on sediment type, as well as the direction and strength of currents. Taking into account the short duration and localised nature of this adverse impact, and considering that fish spawning grounds are concentrated in the coastal zone where the installation of offshore wind farms is not planned, the EIA Report concludes that this adverse impact will not be significant. Some studies indicate that, during cable installation, increased turbidity may attract potential predators (Baltic cod and flounder), which take advantage of such conditions by preying on aggregations of plankton-feeding fish juveniles.

A portion of the feeding grounds of benthivores fish species, such as Baltic flounder, Atlantic cod and bullrout, will inevitably be lost due to the installation of offshore wind turbine foundations. However, taking into account the relatively small footprint of individual wind turbine foundations and the large distances between individual wind turbines, the localised adverse impact on the feeding resources of benthivores fish will be insignificant. During the operational phase, a positive impact on fish is expected due to the formation of secondary habitats on wind turbine foundations.

For the crossing of the Šventoji River, trenchless cable installation technology will be used, thereby avoiding impacts on the protected features of the Natura 2000 SAC and on fish species inhabiting the river. The electricity cable routes cross a section of the Kulšė River downstream of preserved valuable river stretches; therefore, no significant impact on fish communities is anticipated.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on birds and bats

The Project borders the Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau Biosphere Polygon, designated for the protection of wintering and aggregating seabirds. Significant concentrations of seabirds are recorded in the Lithuanian part of the Baltic Sea, including velvet scoter (*Melanitta fusca*), long-tailed duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), razorbill (*Alca torda*), common guillemot (*Uria aalge*), red-throated diver (*Gavia stellata*), great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), and other species, both in coastal waters and in the open sea.

Following the assessment of individual seabird species (based on studies conducted in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025), the greatest impact was identified for wintering and migrating seabirds forming aggregations at sea. The type of impact is displacement from feeding or resting habitats and their avoidance. The displacement effect is predicted to extend up to 2 km from the offshore wind farm. Given that the planned CN OWF borders a protected area, displacement may result in a significant reduction in populations of protected wintering seabirds within the protected area. In order to reduce the potential impact, offshore wind turbines will not be designed or installed at a distance of less than 2 km from the protected area, in order to minimise disturbance to the most important wintering and feeding habitats of birds.

During the construction phase, vessel traffic in the area will intensify, which may result in disturbance of seabirds; however, this impact will be temporary and localised. Nevertheless, activities will be carefully planned, particularly during the formation period of migratory or wintering seabird aggregations (1 October – 15 April), when bird abundance in the area is highest.

During the cable installation and decommissioning phases, potential impacts on seabirds may occur due to disturbance and displacement. Both impacts will be localised and temporary (ceasing after completion of works) and are not expected to have a significant effect on wintering seabird populations. The main anticipated sources of disturbance are: increased vessel traffic, noise and vibrations, which may temporarily displace fish populations from the area, which constitute the main food source for piscivorous birds; resuspension of seabed sediments, increasing water turbidity and hindering feeding conditions for piscivorous birds. Displacement may be caused by the destruction of benthic communities along cable routes, which may reduce feeding habitats for birds feeding on benthic organisms. Although the significance of impacts on long-tailed duck, velvet scoter, razorbill, common guillemot and both diver species is assessed as low, activities will be carefully planned during the migration and wintering aggregation period (1 October – 15 April), when bird abundance in the area may be highest.

Intensive bat migration occurs along the coast, close to the shoreline. As distance from the coast increases, bat activity decreases significantly, and at a distance of approximately 5–7 km offshore, the number of bat detections accounts for less than 10% of those

recorded above the sea near the coast. Therefore, the likelihood that intensive bat migration will occur within the Project area is very low, and the planned Curonian Nord OWF will not have a significant impact on bats.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on marine mammals

During the warm season, mammals in the Project area were monitored together with bird surveys from vessels, while during the cold season they were monitored from aircraft, as well as from stations installed at sea for monitoring sounds emitted by marine mammals. A total of 12 seals were recorded during the surveys; all seal observations were concentrated in adjacent areas to the west and south of the Project area, and only a single grey seal was observed within the Project area itself. Six detections of harbour porpoises were recorded within the study area. The Project area may be important for harbour porpoises as a feeding area during the period from November to March.

During the construction phase, the greatest impact on marine mammals may occur due to underwater noise generated during pile driving of turbine foundations. This impact may be particularly significant in winter, when, due to natural conditions, underwater noise propagates most effectively; therefore, impact mitigation measures are foreseen.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on vegetation

In areas not covered by forest, the cable corridors both before and beyond the Būtingė and Laukžemė forests cross land designated for agricultural use. In the areas up to Būtingė Forest, meadow habitats are present, formed in moist and wet sites, as well as stands of reeds and tall sedges. In the areas beyond Laukžemė Forest, arable land with monoculture crops predominates.

In the Darbėnai forestry district, the cable routes cross two habitats of type 2180 Wooded coastal dunes. The Curonian Nord OWF cable route crosses the first habitat over a section of 48 m, with preliminary felling volumes of 0.0958 ha. The "Area D" OWF cable route crosses the first habitat over a section of 55 m, with preliminary felling volumes of 0.1094 ha. The CN OWF route crosses the second habitat of type 2180 Wooded coastal dunes over a section of 103 m, with felling volumes of 0.1049 ha, while the "Area D" OWF route crosses this habitat over a section of 108 m, with preliminary felling volumes of 0.2161 ha. In the stands of both habitats, over-mature and middle-aged pine stands and maturing spruce stands predominate.

The planned cable corridor crosses the Būtingė and Laukžemė forests. According to the construction technology, a 20.0 m wide working corridor is required on land for the installation of one cable line. Prior to laying the cable routes in forest areas, within the boundaries of the infrastructure corridors, forest land will be converted into other land uses and forest will be felled. In the coastal zone and within the Būtingė Geomorphological Reserve, forest land within the infrastructure corridor will be converted into other land uses without tree felling.

The planned Curonian Nord OWF cable corridor crosses:

- in Palanga forestry district – Group IIB recreational forests (felling volumes: 2.3643 ha);
- in Darbėnai forestry district – Group III protective forests (felling volumes: 1.2503 ha);
- in Darbėnai forestry district – Group IV commercial forests (felling volumes: 7.7161 ha).

The planned "Area D" OWF cable corridor crosses:

- in Palanga forestry district – Group IIB recreational forests (felling volumes: 2.2851 ha);
- in Darbėnai forestry district – Group III protective forests (felling volumes: 1.2180 ha);
- in Darbėnai forestry district – Group IV commercial forests (felling volumes: 7.7617 ha).

The cable routes pass through the Šventoji River and the surrounding Group III protective forests of the Natura 2000 SAC "Šventoji River". In this area, the Curonian Nord OWF cable corridor crosses Group III forest over a section of approximately 560 m, with felling volumes of 1.1268 ha, while the "Area D" OWF cable corridor crosses approximately 550 m, with felling volumes of 1.0943 ha.

The Curonian Nord OWF cable corridor crosses a protected green area located beyond Laukžemė Forest (a mixed stand) over an area of 0.0762 ha, while the "Area D" OWF connection corridor crosses it over an area of 0.0637 ha. The Curonian Nord OWF cable corridor also crosses a protected green area near Miško Street (a group of mature lime trees) over an area of 0.0121 ha, while the "Area D" wind farm connection corridor crosses it over an area of 0.0119 ha.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on immovable cultural heritage assets

There are no registered cultural heritage assets within the planned Curonian Nord OWF area or within the territory of the cable corridor. The nearest registered object is the sunken vessel "L-1" (38466) in the Baltic Sea, located approximately 1.9 km from the connection corridor. The vessel "L-1" is protected, and a 500 m protection zone has been established around it.

During seabed investigations carried out within the Project area, only one object potentially having archaeological or cultural value was identified – a sunken vessel to which the authors of the initial investigations assigned identification number 231123. Following an archaeological expert assessment, it was established that the sunken object (No. 231123) does not have archaeological value; however, it represents a significant obstacle to the installation of foundation structures in its vicinity. Other identified objects consist of natural features, including individual boulders and boulder fields, seabed morphological structures, trawl marks, and isolated debris of various origin, which have no historical or cultural significance and do not pose any significant threat to the implementation of the Project within the survey area. In addition, several anthropogenic objects were identified – remnants of ropes, which are not of substantial importance to the investigation, as well as potentially one explosive object, which is recommended to be inspected using the means available to the navy.

Onshore, the connection cable routes do not cross registered cultural heritage assets; however, in three cases they pass in close proximity: Laukžemė Burial Ground II (unique object code 37960) is approached at a distance of approximately 3 m; the Lithuanian State Border Marker (unique object code 30785) is located approximately 313 m away; and Būtingė Discovery Site 7 (an unregistered object) is located approximately 356 m to the south of the planned “Area D” wind farm cable connection route. No works are planned as part of the proposed activity that could physically damage the valuable properties of cultural heritage objects or interfere with their visibility.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on public health

The residential and public-use areas located closest to the Baltic Sea are within the territories of Klaipėda City Municipality, Klaipėda District Municipality and Palanga City Municipality. The minimum distance from the Curonian Nord OWF to Palanga City Municipality is approximately 36.8 km. Due to the installation of offshore wind turbines and the construction of cable corridors in the marine part of the territory, and considering that any increase in air pollutant concentrations and noise levels will be localised and temporary, no impact on human health due to physical pollution is anticipated.

The nearest residential area is located at a distance of 55–732 m from the planned onshore cable corridor and at a distance of 117–293 m from the boundary of the planned transformer substation land plot. The nearest planned residential area intended for a farmer’s homestead is located 38 m to the north of the boundary of the planned cable corridor. The nearest public-use facility – the Parish of St Andrew the Apostle in Laukžemė – is located 812 m from the connection corridor.

The installation of underground electricity cable using open trench excavation may result in a temporary, short-term increase in air pollution. The impact is assessed as local, short-term and insignificant. Due to the use of construction machinery and equipment at the work site (including earthworks, transportation, construction and other machinery), a temporary and local increase in noise levels may occur. This increase in noise will be short-term (approximately 3 months), episodic (occurring only during works), and will not have a significant impact on public health.

According to the modelling results provided, the predicted noise level generated by the two planned transformer substations at existing and planned residential areas may reach 33–49 dBA and may exceed the maximum permissible noise limits established in Lithuanian Hygiene Standard HN 33:2011 for residential and public environment during the night-time period. Taking into account the planned noise mitigation measures, the noise level generated by the transformer substations at residential buildings and planned residential environments may reach 33–43 dBA and will not exceed the maximum permissible noise limits established in Lithuanian Hygiene Standard HN 33:2011 for residential and public buildings’ environments at any time of day.

Information on the impact of the proposed activity on material assets

The offshore wind turbine installation area does not fall within established international shipping routes, port roadsteads or anchorage areas, or marine spoil disposal areas. The nearest international shipping corridor is located approximately 340 m from the eastern boundary of the Curonian Nord OWF area. The planned cable corridor crosses the telecommunications cables of AB “TeliaSonera” from the northern side. The planned electricity transmission cable corridor crosses existing shipping routes; however, no additional restrictions or conflicts during the operation of the cables are anticipated as a result. Part of the Curonian Nord OWF area falls within a hazardous marine area – a former minefield zone. The implementation of economic activities in these areas is possible; however, prior to the implementation of technical design solutions, seabed investigations must be carried out in order to identify and, where necessary, neutralise hazardous objects.

According to the classification of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the Lithuanian marine area falls within ICES fishing area 26, statistical rectangles 40H10, 40G9 and 39H10, where fishing is carried out using trawling and static nets. The planned Curonian Nord OWF area will occupy approximately 1.66% of ICES statistical rectangle 40H0 and approximately 1.82% of rectangle 41H0. A certain economic impact of the implementation of the proposed activity on the fishing sector may arise due to fishing restrictions that will be applied within the Curonian Nord OWF area. Following the installation of the Curonian Nord OWF, fishing using active fishing gear (e.g. trawling) will become impossible due to the risk of damaging electricity transmission cables

located on or within the seabed. Meanwhile, fishing using passive gear may take place only subject to agreement between the developer and the fishing community. The Project area occupies offshore fishing grounds that are not allocated to individual companies; therefore, once restrictions are introduced during the construction and operation of the Curonian Nord OWF, fishing may continue in adjacent areas and fishermen will not incur losses. The area of the Curonian Nord OWF is 119.5 km², i.e. only a few hundredths of a percent of the total area of quota-managed resources; therefore, restrictions on fishing within the Curonian Nord OWF area do not significantly reduce fishing opportunities in the open Baltic Sea.

In the coastal zone, the cable corridor crosses coastal fishing sector No. 29. Due to the planned restrictions (prohibitions) on coastal fishing during cable installation works and during operation at cable locations within coastal fishing bars, losses will be compensated to users of fish resources in accordance with Article 7(1)(3) of the Law on Fisheries.

Information on the risk of the proposed activity due to extreme events and situations

The hazards posed to people and the social environment during the implementation of the Project in the marine area are associated with the rotating blades of offshore wind turbines, taking into account the possibility of partial or complete blade throw, tower collapse, and the effects of electrical voltage on maintenance personnel. Collision risks arise for aircraft and vessels operating in the vicinity of offshore wind turbines at sea. The hazards to the natural environment arising from emergency situations in the marine area may be associated with minor oil leaks from turbine rotors, fuel leaks from vessels, and oil leaks from OSS.

The probability of collision involving vessels underway with engines running is directly proportional to the intensity of navigation in the vicinity of the planned offshore wind farms. The boundary of the shipping corridor is located approximately 340 m from the boundary of the proposed Curonian Nord OWF. The distance from the area of most intensive navigation to the Curonian Nord OWF area is approximately 3.8 km. In order to reduce potential collisions between vessels and offshore wind turbines, or to avoid damage to cables, the developer will establish conditions governing vessel access to the wind farm area and navigation within or in the vicinity of the wind farm.

Each offshore wind turbine will be equipped with automatic control systems, braking systems, lightning protection systems, warning lighting systems. The offshore wind turbines will also be equipped with storm control mechanisms, and periodic technical inspections of the wind turbines will be carried out. Fires in offshore wind turbines are rare, and their consequences do not have the potential to spread to surrounding structures or neighbouring wind turbines.

When planning works on land within the connection corridors: works involving the crossing of the protection zone of the main oil pipeline will be coordinated at the design stage with AB "Orlen Lietuva", and works involving the crossing of the protection zone of the 110 kV overhead line and the connection of transformer substations will be coordinated with AB "Litgrid". Works will be carried out in accordance with construction regulations and occupational safety requirements, thereby reducing potential risks to a minimum during both the construction and operation phases.

6. Measures to Avoid, Reduce, Compensate or Restore Significant Adverse Environmental Impacts

6.1. Prior to the Commencement of Activities

Offshore wind farm and offshore cable installation

6.1.1. In order to ensure that the offshore wind farm does not cause a significant adverse impact on the Natura 2000 site, on seabed habitats important for bird feeding, and to reduce disturbance to wintering birds, the locations of offshore wind turbines shall be set back by at least 2 km from the boundary of the protected area – the Natura 2000 SPA and SAC "Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau".

6.1.2. Within the Curonian Nord OWF area, in the zone identified as the most valuable reef habitat (1170) (north-eastern part of the development area), as shown in Figure 5.4.20 of the EIA Report, it is planned not to locate offshore wind turbines or OSS in areas of highly sensitive seabed habitats. Where maximising the use of the Project area is required, additional seabed investigations will be carried out prior to planning the construction of offshore wind turbines, in order to specify the distribution of valuable seabed habitats and to proactively avoid development within these areas.

6.1.3. Taking into account that the shipwreck No. 231123 identified within the Project area constitutes an obstacle to the planned design solutions, it is planned to establish a minimum 50 m protection zone (buffer) around the wreck, measured from the outermost points identified based on sonar surveys. This will enable the safe planning of offshore wind turbines layout and cable infrastructure routing, and will also protect the wreck itself from accidental damage. No works will be carried out at the locations of sunken vessels or unexplored finds.

6.1.4. Prior to commencing detailed design works for offshore wind turbines and cable routes, the Project developer will organise unexploded ordnance (UXO) investigations, which will allow the identification of historical cable locations of unknown origin and associated risks.

6.1.5. It is recommended not to plan cable routes in areas of seabed characterised by large-amplitude relief variations (e.g. steep escarpments/slopes or deep seabed depressions); alternatively, in order to avoid potential damage to the electricity transmission system, partial seabed levelling measures shall be foreseen in the cable route locations.

6.1.6. During seabed preparation for cable installation, boulders shall be relocated to adjacent areas outside the preparation corridor. Where technically feasible and environmentally proportionate, disturbance of the seabed caused by cable installation shall be minimised.

6.1.7. Prior to the commencement of construction works, a monitoring programme shall be prepared and agreed, establishing the monitoring plan and its scope. The monitoring programme for birds and bats shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements of Description of detailed criteria for significant adverse impacts of wind turbines on birds and bats, requirements for the application of measures for the prevention and mitigation of significant adverse impacts on birds and bats, and requirements for studies, approved by Order No. D1-406 of the Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 12 December 2023 “On the approval of the Description of detailed criteria for significant adverse impacts of wind turbines on birds and bats, requirements for the application of measures for the prevention and mitigation of significant adverse impacts on birds and bats, and requirements for studies” (the Description).

Onshore section

6.1.8. In order to reduce impacts on meadow habitats, prior to the commencement of cable installation works it will be verified that no invasive plant species are present within the construction area. If invasive species are identified, an invasive species eradication plan will be prepared, and measures will be implemented to prevent the spread of these species from the construction area into adjacent territories.

6.1.9. Prior to the commencement of cable installation works, it will be investigated whether nests of western marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) or Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*) are present within or in the immediate vicinity of the planned works area. These surveys will be carried out by a qualified ornithologist. If a marsh harrier nest is identified, works shall not be carried out between 1 April and 31 August, and in the case of a Montagu's harrier nest – between 15 April and 31 August. These restrictions shall apply within a 500 m radius from the nest.

6.1.10. On land, within forest areas where forest clearance is planned, prior to any felling activities, the identification of breeding bat roosting sites will be repeated (as bats may have occupied new locations since the initial assessment was carried out). Where breeding sites are identified, they will be preserved, or tree trunks with cavities, hollows and roosting features will be relocated to adjacent forest areas in such a way that the conservation status of species listed in the Habitats Directive is not adversely affected. Such relocation will be carried out outside the bat breeding and migration period, i.e. from late November to early April. All works shall be carried out in a manner that ensures no adverse impact on species listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive.

6.2. During the Activity

Offshore wind farm and offshore cable installation

6.2.1. In order to reduce impacts on wintering birds, the noisiest offshore wind turbine installation works (pile driving) and decommissioning works shall not be carried out during the period of formation of bird migration or wintering aggregations (1 October–15 April). If pile driving works (or decommissioning works) cannot be postponed and must be carried out during the period of wintering aggregation formation, then, in order to reduce disturbance to wintering seabirds, the installation of foundations (or decommissioning works) shall be commenced at those offshore wind turbine locations that are furthest from the protected area, while applying appropriate noise mitigation measures: sound attenuation measures shall be used during the works; during this sensitive period, the “soft-start” pile driving method shall be applied, when works are started at the lowest power and gradually increased, creating a progressive rise in sound levels and avoiding a sudden sound pulse. The same approach shall be applied during the marine cable installation and decommissioning phases. These restrictions shall not apply to cable repair and maintenance works.

6.2.2. During the construction phase, in order to reduce disturbance to wintering birds, where works are carried out during the period of bird migration or wintering aggregation formation (1 October–15 April), vessel routes shall be planned so as to avoid the Natura 2000 site. The same requirement shall apply during the marine cable installation and decommissioning phases. These restrictions shall not apply during the operational phase to cable repair and maintenance works.

6.2.3. Cable installation and decommissioning works within the marine protected area and within a 2 km zone from its boundary shall not be carried out during the period of bird migration or wintering aggregation formation (1 October–15 April). In the event of a *force majeure* situation, where vessels are required to complete already commenced cable installation works during this sensitive period, a qualified ornithologist shall be engaged, and the formation of wintering bird aggregations within the Project works area shall be

monitored during the execution of works. Where necessary, mitigation measures shall be implemented (works shall be carried out at night, during hours of darkness when birds are not feeding), in order to avoid significant adverse impacts on wintering bird species.

6.2.4. During the construction and operation of the offshore wind farm, unnecessary artificial lighting is planned to be reduced in order to avoid potential collisions with offshore wind turbines by birds migrating at night, which are attracted to and disoriented by artificial lights. Possible measures include reducing the level and intensity of lighting, or other measures such as adjustment of the light spectrum, use of deflectors, modification of lighting patterns, and application of lighting control systems. These measures shall be selected taking into account the need to maintain an appropriate level of maritime and air navigation safety, while also ensuring occupational safety and smooth operation.

6.2.5. In order to better understand and analyse the movement of seabirds within the planned offshore wind farm and the marine protected area, it is recommended that GPS/GSM transmitters be fitted to seabirds before construction, during construction and during operation of the offshore wind farm: 40 seabirds before construction, 40 seabirds during construction, and 40 seabirds after construction during operation of the offshore wind farm. Transmitters should be fitted to birds at the beginning of the wintering season in order to collect the maximum amount of data. This would make it possible to carry out a comparative analysis of bird behaviour before the presence of the offshore wind turbines, the impact on birds during construction, and the impact on birds during operation.

6.2.6. In order to reduce the cumulative impact of activities on seabirds, compensation for the adverse impacts of other activities is encouraged, for example by reducing impacts in fisheries through the reduction of seabird bycatch. Seabird bycatch may be reduced by selecting fishing gear that is safer for seabirds, contributing financially to the implementation of seabird-safe fishing measures, financing safer fishing practices, and supporting the temporary cessation of fishing in areas of particular importance for seabirds. Another compensation measure is the implementation of nature conservation measures within the marine protected area and the financing of applied scientific research in seabird wintering and breeding areas.

6.2.7. During the operational phase of the offshore wind farm, if a significant adverse impact is identified which was not foreseen during the Environmental Impact Assessment, additional mitigation measures shall be implemented, selected according to the nature of the impact. Following the implementation of additional measures, their effectiveness shall be monitored until it is confirmed that the additional measures applied to avoid significant impacts are effective. If the impact remains significant after all mitigation measures have been tested, the offshore wind turbines causing the impact shall not be operated during the period when they may cause a significant impact on biodiversity. The impact, namely displacement from the protected area, shall be considered significant where the abundance of protected birds within the Natura 2000 SPA – the number and/or density of individuals of protected bird species in the monitored area – decreases by more than 20% compared with the natural long-term (10-year) population fluctuation, based on long-term survey data collected under the State Environmental Monitoring Programme.

6.2.8. During operation of the offshore wind farm, radar and/or video monitoring systems capable of accurately recording and archiving data during bird migration periods shall be installed in the northern and south-western parts of the offshore wind farm.

6.2.9. The possibility to monitor bat migration during construction and operation of the Curonian Nord OWF shall be ensured. Monitoring shall be carried out using ultrasonic detectors installed on vessels during construction and on the wind turbines and OSS during operation of the Curonian Nord OWF. During construction, detectors shall be installed on at least two vessels involved in the construction of the Curonian Nord OWF from April to October. The data collected during construction shall be assessed when preparing the monitoring programme for operation of the Curonian Nord OWF. The surveys shall determine the species composition and environmental conditions – wind speed, wind direction, temperature and precipitation – under which bat activity was recorded in the open sea.

6.2.10. Where there is a likelihood that the wind farm may attract bats, bat activity monitoring is planned. Throughout the potential bat activity period, from April to the end of October, bat activity shall be recorded using ultrasonic and visual equipment, where possible. Detectors shall be installed around the perimeter of the entire Curonian Nord OWF, with at least two detectors in the first rows of offshore wind turbines oriented towards the north, west and south, as well as one detector in the centre of the Curonian Nord OWF and one on the OSS. Recording using ultrasonic microphones shall be carried out in the rotor-swept zone from the beginning of April to the end of October. At the same time, one ultrasonic detector shall be installed on the coast near Būtingė and one near Palanga, to collect data on bat activity in the coastal zone. This will make it possible to compare bat activity at sea and on land. During the measurements, information on wind speed, wind direction and temperature shall be collected both offshore and onshore.

6.2.11. In order to reduce impacts on marine mammals and fish, noise mitigation measures and acoustic deterrent measures will be applied before the commencement of construction works, for example before pile driving:

6.2.11.1. Acoustic deterrence of animals: 1) the use of additional acoustic deterrent devices, by means of which marine mammals are deterred from the pile-driving zone; 2) a soft start to pile driving, i.e. during pile driving the impact energy is increased gradually, thereby deterring animals while at the same time avoiding sudden, highly harmful noise pulses that could cause injury.

6.2.11.2. Technical measures for attenuating emitted impulsive noise, for example: bubble curtains (double big bubble curtain; DBBC), installed around the pile-driving location (this measure may reduce the distance of extreme impact on harbour porpoises by up to 90%); an underwater sound attenuation system (hydro sound damper; HSD), using bubble curtains and special foam or plastic elements that absorb and scatter sound waves, thereby effectively reducing the propagation of noise in water; an HSD system enclosing the pile, which usually consists of elastic elements, such as foam or plastic cylinders, arranged around the pile or its foundation.

6.2.12. Where possible, foundation installation works should be planned so that piles are not driven during the winter season, when the likelihood of encountering harbour porpoises in the waters of the Lithuanian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is highest. During pile driving, together with other acoustic deterrent and noise mitigation measures, a marine mammal observer will be engaged in order to monitor, before the commencement of works and during the works, whether animals have left the impact zone.

6.2.13. Pile-driving works in the Curonian Nord OWF are planned to be organised so that only one pile is driven at any one time. If the construction process were to take place simultaneously in several offshore wind farms, piles would not be driven on the same days when similar works are being carried out in "Area D" and/or in other offshore wind farm areas.

6.2.14. In order to reduce potential impacts on marine mammals, it is recommended, where possible, that during construction in the period from November to April, only commonly used shipping routes and designated navigation corridors are used for vessel traffic to and from the Project area. This would allow noise to be concentrated in a specific area and reduce potential disturbance to marine mammal feeding. These restrictions shall not apply to cable repair and maintenance works.

6.2.15. In order to ensure that the area of the Natura 2000 reef habitat (1170) and natural hydrodynamic processes remain unchanged, boulders that are displaced or overturned by a small distance during cable laying – with the maximum trench width being 3 m – shall be left within the same environment, i.e. they shall not be removed from their natural area of formation. Other coarse clastic material, such as gravel and pebbles, which also forms part of the reef habitat, shall be used to backfill the trenches in which the cable has been laid.

6.2.16. During the construction phase, the width of the electricity transmission cable installation corridor will be specified and, where crossing reef habitat (1170) within the SAC territory, shall be limited to no more than 27 m, in order to ensure that the threshold for significant adverse impact (1%) is not exceeded.

6.2.17. Where plates are used for cable protection and are intended to function as artificial reefs, they shall have the following characteristics: size not less than 1 × 1 m; porosity of 30–50%; pore size of 2–5 mm; material: limestone, or alternative materials/properties with scientifically proven ecological effectiveness. This is because a porous and calcium-enriched structure attract mussel larvae and accelerate mussel colonisation and growth.

6.2.18. In order to avoid excessive fragmentation of seabed sediments and the formation of new lithological types as a result of secondary sedimentation in disturbed seabed areas, the original material excavated from the cable trenches shall be used as far as possible for backfilling those trenches, provided that this is allowed by the construction technology.

6.2.19. In order to reduce the potential risk to foundations and cables arising from seabed scour, it is proposed that the lithological conditions of surface sediments be carefully assessed and, where necessary, additional scour protection around foundation piles should be applied during construction.

6.2.20. In order to reduce potential impacts on the landscape, it is planned that offshore wind turbines will be painted in light colours that create minimal colour contrast, avoiding white, which would create greater contrast. A special paint composition will be used to prevent glare and reflections from the structures.

6.2.21. From the commencement of operation of the offshore wind farm, monitoring shall be carried out. During monitoring, not only the impact of the Project on biodiversity will be assessed, but also the effectiveness of impact mitigation measures.

Onshore section

6.2.22. For the landfall of the cable from sea to shore and for the crossing of the Šventoji River, trenchless cable installation technology is planned, which eliminates impacts on the Būtingė Geomorphological Reserve and the Šventoji River.

6.2.23. In order to reduce impacts on the Group III protective forest growing along the banks of the Šventoji River and on the Šventoji River itself, where trenchless cable installation technology is applied at the crossing with the Šventoji River, it is planned that the

technological sites for the start and end of drilling works will be set back beyond the boundary of the riverbank protection strip. The works shall also be planned so that these sites are designed as far as possible from the riverbank and, where feasible, outside the river protection zone.

6.2.24. Where cables are laid across the Kulšė River using the open trench method, sediment dispersion reduction measures shall be applied during the works in order to reduce the entry of sediments generated by the works into the Šventoji River. Such measures may include sediment retention screens or other technologies that reduce sediment wash-out and water turbidity.

6.2.25. Cable installation works in the Šventoji River and its tributaries shall not be carried out during the periods most sensitive for migratory fish: for salmonid fish – from 15 September to 15 January; for river lamprey – from 1 April to 15 May.

6.2.26. In order to avoid disturbance and displacement of birds, as well as potential impacts on bird breeding, feeding and resting habitats, onshore preparatory infrastructure works for cable installation, such as access roads, in the section from the sea to the forest, shall be carried out from November to February inclusive. All tree and shrub felling works shall not be carried out during the bird breeding period, from March to July inclusive. If excavation works must be carried out from March to July inclusive, prior to the commencement of excavation works, a thorough inspection shall be carried out to determine whether there are any breeding birds in the areas of earth excavation and soil storage. These surveys shall be carried out by a suitably qualified ornithologist.

6.2.27. In order to reduce the likelihood of potential harm to bats on land and at sea, and to compensate for possible bat mortality or the destruction of daytime roosting habitats, the developer shall install temporary roosting sites specifically intended for bats along the coast, where migrating bats may safely rest overnight. Such roosting sites shall be installed in at least 10 locations important for bat foraging, from the Latvian coast to Klaipėda. In the forest where felling is planned due to cable installation, 10 bat boxes and cavities suitable for breeding and daytime roosting by different bat species shall be installed in adjacent land plots.

6.2.28. At construction sites in the onshore section, within the cable installation works area and within the transformer substation area, the top fertile soil layer shall be removed prior to earth excavation works and stored separately. After completion of excavation works, this soil shall be reused for land restoration. If earth excavation works are carried out from March to July, before the excavated soil is deposited, checks shall be carried out to determine whether there are any juvenile mammals, reptiles or amphibians in the excavated soil storage area. Excavated soil shall be pushed slowly so that animals present in the meadow have time to escape. Imported soil shall not be used for land restoration; instead, the preserved local soil shall be used. When restoring damaged vegetation cover, seed mixtures that are not characteristic of the vegetation previously growing in the area shall not be used. The area shall be left to regenerate naturally.

6.2.29. During cable installation works in the vicinity of cultural heritage assets – Laukžemė Burial Ground II and Būtingė Discovery Site 7 – archaeological investigations shall be carried out.

6.2.30. During cable installation works involving excavation, if archaeological finds or valuable properties of an immovable object are discovered, the managers or persons carrying out the works shall notify the Municipal Heritage Protection Division thereof. The Municipal Heritage Protection Division shall inform the Department of Cultural Heritage, in accordance with the provisions of Article 9(3) of the Law on the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage.

6.2.31. In order to avoid potential impacts of noise on the residential environment, noise mitigation measures shall be implemented for the two planned transformer substations, for example the installation of noise barriers consisting of 9 wall panels arranged adjacent to each power transformer and shunt reactor. The length of each barrier would be approximately 35–40 m, and the height 6 m. The sound absorption performance of the noise barriers $DL_{\alpha, dB}$ (in accordance with LST EN 1793-1:2017) shall be not less than 8 dBA. During the design phase of the structure, following recalculations of predicted noise levels, the number of installations, their layout and noise characteristics may be specified. Noise mitigation measures shall be selected to ensure compliance with the maximum permissible noise levels established in Lithuanian Hygiene Standard HN 33:2011 for residential and public-use buildings during all periods of the day.

6.2.32. During cable installation works, efforts shall be made to minimise the number of trees to be felled, and construction works shall be planned in such a way as to preserve mature trees wherever possible, without compromising technical and safety requirements. Existing trees shall be protected against damage during construction works.

6.2.33. During the construction of the offshore wind farm, cable installation and operation of the Project, all waste generated shall be transferred to waste management operators.

6.3. Decommissioning Phase

Offshore wind farm and offshore cable installation

6.3.1. During the decommissioning of offshore wind turbines or cables, in order to reduce noise impacts on marine mammals, the following measures shall be applied: gradual increase of noise levels (soft-start); acoustic deterrent devices for marine mammals (Acoustic Deterrent Devices, hereinafter – ADD); application of monopile foundation cutting technologies, etc. In the event that harbour porpoises are detected in the area during the period from November to April, decommissioning works shall be suspended for one week from the last detection of harbour porpoises, or underwater noise mitigation measures shall be applied.

6.3.2. During monitoring of fish and benthic communities in the operational phase, if it is determined that the formed secondary habitats have a significant positive impact, then during the decommissioning of offshore wind turbines, monopiles shall be partially removed by cutting them at a height of 1–2 m, or compensatory measures shall be applied, such as the installation of artificial habitats of an equivalent area using 0.1–1 m boulders near the decommissioned offshore wind turbines. The habitats shall be installed at a distance of not more than 50 m from the decommissioned offshore wind turbines and shall be established no later than two years after decommissioning. The specific measures shall be determined and selected during the planning stage of OWF decommissioning.

6.3.3. After the decommissioning of the offshore wind farm, the majority of wind farm components shall be reused where possible, and where this is not feasible, they shall be recycled or disposed of at designated disposal sites in accordance with the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania. During the preparation of the OWF decommissioning project, a waste management plan for the generated waste shall be developed.

Onshore section

6.3.4. Cable decommissioning shall be carried out without disturbing the bed of the Šventoji River, in the same manner as during installation.

Other planned mitigation measures and more detailed information on their application are provided in Tables 7.4.1 and 7.4.2 of the EIA Report.

7. Brief Description of Environmental Monitoring Measures (if applicable)

The application of monitoring measures is considered appropriate for the implementation of the Project. The outline of the monitoring programme is presented in Chapter 8 of the EIA Report.

The monitoring programme shall be prepared and agreed with the competent authority prior to the commencement of construction of the Curonian Nord OWF and shall include monitoring of impacts on the seabed, water quality and living environment arising from the installation of offshore wind turbines, OSS, and cable installation. When preparing the monitoring programme and selecting monitoring methods, the guidelines of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM) shall be taken into account.

The monitoring of the onshore connection of the planned “Area D” OWF to the electricity transmission network shall be integrated into the monitoring programme of the “Area D” OWF.

Underwater noise monitoring. Underwater noise monitoring shall be carried out during the construction phase when offshore wind turbine foundations are installed. The purpose of the monitoring is to monitor the generated noise in order to control adverse impacts on marine organisms (marine mammals and fish), and to assess and control the effectiveness of applied noise mitigation measures.

Water monitoring. In order to properly select technological solutions for the development of the offshore wind farm and to assess the impact of the planned offshore wind turbine structures on the hydrodynamic environment, it is appropriate to provide for current measurements in the vicinity of the planned Curonian Nord OWF before construction works commence (for baseline conditions) and after the completion of construction works. During the installation of the Curonian Nord OWF, increased vessel traffic may result in a local and temporary impact on water quality due to additional pollution by chemical substances (heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons). In order to assess compliance of pollutant concentrations with good environmental status values, it is appropriate to include pollutant analyses in the environmental monitoring programme, providing for measurements: prior to construction works (baseline concentrations), during construction works (foundation installation, cable laying), after completion of construction works (3–6 months after completion).

Seabed monitoring. Detailed seabed investigations shall be carried out prior to construction of the offshore wind farm – in the specific cable routes and foundation installation locations. During operation, the developer shall carry out planned inspections of foundation structures and cable routes to ensure that: there are no physical damages, cables have not become exposed or otherwise physically affected (e.g. by anchors, trawling). Therefore, no additional seabed monitoring measures are required; however, seabed investigations (along with other environmental components) shall be carried out both before and after decommissioning of the offshore wind farm. It is recommended to carry out complete seabed morphology surveys and side-scan sonar investigations along installed/removed cable routes and separately at each foundation location.

During the installation of the Curonian Nord OWF, increased vessel traffic may result in a local and temporary impact on seabed sediment quality due to accidental contamination by chemical substances (heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons). In order to assess potential changes in the geochemical situation and to ensure compliance of seabed sediment quality with good environmental status values, it is appropriate to provide for periodic pollutant monitoring throughout the operational phase (every 6–12 months, or less frequently if no significant contamination is detected), as well as immediately after decommissioning of the Curonian Nord OWF. Sampling locations shall be planned near installed/removed cable routes and at each foundation location.

Seabed habitat (reef) monitoring. During the operational phase of the Project, seabed habitat monitoring shall be carried out within the Project area – at offshore wind turbine foundation locations and scour protection areas, within the OSS zone, along inter-array cable routes and within electricity transmission cable corridors. Monitoring shall cover circalittoral habitats, including circalittoral boulder fields and biogenic reef habitats corresponding to the EU habitat type 1170 (Reefs), as well as associated benthic communities and changes in the physical structure of habitats.

Within the sections of electricity transmission cable corridors located in the Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau Natura 2000 SAC, monitoring shall be targeted, allowing assessment of potential changes in reef (1170) habitat structure, functions and recovery following construction works, distinguishing Project-related impacts from the natural spatial and seasonal variability of benthic communities.

Zoobenthos monitoring. Monitoring of zoobenthos habitats during the construction of the Curonian Nord OWF shall be carried out immediately after the installation of offshore wind turbines in order to assess the impact of construction on different habitats (infauna and epibenthos).

Seabird and bat monitoring. Counts of migrating, resting and feeding birds shall be carried out within the Curonian Nord OWF area and within 2–4 km beyond its boundaries. Acoustic detectors shall be used to collect bat monitoring data within the offshore wind farm area and in adjacent territories, including the coastal zone.

Marine mammal monitoring. At different stages of Project implementation, monitoring shall cover: seals and harbour porpoises, in order to determine species occurrence and distribution; potential diversity of seal species in the Project area and adjacent territories; total and relative abundance of these mammals within the Project area; habitat use by seals and harbour porpoises in the Project area and adjacent territories; levels of anthropogenic noise within the Project area.

Fish monitoring. At different stages of Project implementation, monitoring shall cover: total and relative abundance of different fish species; structure of fish communities; presence, distribution and species diversity of fish within the Project area and adjacent territories; distribution and condition of seabed habitats within the Project area, including the formation of secondary habitats on offshore wind turbines foundations potentially important for fish feeding; noise levels within the Project area; concentrations of pollutants in fish occurring within the Project area; monitoring of invasive species.

8. Summary of the conclusions of the EIA Entities

8.1. The Administration of Palanga City Municipality, by letter No. (4.48 Mr) D3-5627 dated 5 December 2025, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.2. The Mayor of Neringa Municipality, by letter No. V15-3739 dated 2 December 2025, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.3. The Mayor of Kretinga District Municipality, by letter No. (4.1.17 Mr) D3-750 dated 29 January 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.4. The Mayor of Klaipėda District Municipality, by letter No. T17-568 (5.1.23 Mr) dated 23 April 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.5. The Mayor of Klaipėda City Municipality, by letter No. (4.137E)-R2-751 dated 20 March 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.6. The Klaipėda Fire and Rescue Board of the Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior, by letter No. 9.4-3-3949 /2025(11.3.135 E) dated 8 December 2025, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.7. The Klaipėda Department of the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health, by letters No. (3-11 14.3.3 Mr)2-49842 dated 12 December 2025 and No. (3-11 14.3.3 Mr)2-21237 dated 18 May 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.8. The Klaipėda Territorial Division of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, by letter No. (9.38-KI E)2KI-51 dated 2 February 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.9. The Lithuanian Geological Survey under the Ministry of the Environment, by letter No. 1.7-209 dated 14 January 2026, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.10. AB Klaipėda State Seaport Authority, by letter No. UD-10.1.5E-2026 dated 11 December 2025, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.11. The Fisheries Service under the Ministry of Agriculture, by letter No. 2E/2025-710 dated 23 December 2025, approved the Project in part, indicating that the cumulative impact of offshore wind farms on fish and underwater fauna should be assessed in the Report.

8.12. The State Forest Service, by letter No. R2-5975 dated 9 December 2025, approved the EIA Report and the Proposed Economic Activity.

8.13. The State Service for Protected Areas under the Ministry of the Environment (hereinafter – SSPA), by letter No. V3-258 dated 12 February 2026 approved the installation of the electricity transmission cable for the “Area D” OWF, subject to the condition set out in paragraph 5 of the submitted conclusion, and did not approve the development alternatives of the Curonian Nord OWF in Lithuania assessed in the EIA Report.

The Environmental Protection Agency (hereinafter – the Agency), in accordance with Article 12(8) of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, invited participants of the EIA process to take part in a remote meeting to discuss the conclusions of EIA authorities prior to adopting a decision on the environmental impact of the Project. The meeting took place on 22 April 2026 remotely. During the meeting, the reasons for the conclusions of the EIA authorities and possible aspects for refinement and supplementation of the Report were discussed. Following the meeting, the minutes of the meeting (Protocol No. A7-9 dated 18 May 2026) were prepared.

9. Public Information and Participation

The notification of the commencement of the EIA was received on 17 July 2025 and published on the Agency’s website on 22 July 2025.

Information on public consultation of the EIA Report was published on the Agency’s website (13 October 2025), on the notice board and website of the Kretinga District Municipality Administration (13 October 2025), on the notice board of the Darbėnai Eldership of Kretinga District Municipality (10 October 2025), on the Palanga City Municipality website (10 October 2025), on the website of the Klaipėda District Municipality Administration (13 October 2025), on the notice board and website of the Klaipėda City Municipality Administration (13 October 2025), on the notice board and website of the Neringa Municipality Administration (15 October 2025), in the Palanga newspaper “Palangos tiltas” (10 October 2025), in the Klaipėda newspaper “Vakarų ekspresas” (10 October 2025), in the Klaipėda District newspaper “Banga” (10 October 2025), in the Kretinga District newspaper “Pajūrio naujienos” (10 October 2025), and on the website of the preparer of the EIA documentation, the Public Institution Coastal Research and Planning Institute (<http://corpi.lt/>) (10 October 2025).

Prior to the commencement of the public meeting, comments from the interested public regarding the EIA Report were received. The registration form for comments from the interested public and the evaluation of such comments are presented in Annex 12 of the EIA Report. The comments were taken into account in the EIA Report, taken into account in part, or rejected with reasons provided.

The public consultation meeting regarding the EIA Report took place in the hall of the Palanga Resort Museum (Villa “Anapilis”), at the address Birutės al. 34A, Palanga, on 11 November 2025 at 14:00, and was also broadcast via an online live video stream. The public meeting was attended, both in person and remotely, by representatives of the EIA documentation preparer, representatives of the Project developer, representatives of the Ministry of the Environment, the Klaipėda City Municipality Administration, the Kretinga District Municipality Administration, the Palanga City Municipality Administration, residents of Palanga City, Šventoji and Monciškės, guests from Latvia, and members of the press. A total of 116 participants attended the meeting (51 in person and 65 remotely).

The Agency published information about the received EIA Report for the public on its website aaa.lrv.lt on 26 March 2026. Within the prescribed period, the Agency did not receive any comments from the interested public regarding the EIA Report or the environmental impact of the proposed activity.

10. Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment (if applicable)

The distance from the boundary of the Curonian Nord OWF area to the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Latvia is approximately 0.9 km, to the EEZ of Sweden – approximately 69 km, and to the EEZ of the Russian Federation – approximately 35.8 km.

The Ministry of Environment, in accordance with Article 3(3) of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, notified Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Poland of the Project on 4 September 2024. On 25 October 2024, the Ministry of Environment informed that Latvia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Germany had expressed their intention to participate in the transboundary environmental impact assessment procedures and had submitted comments and proposals.

The preparer of the EIA documentation examined the comments and proposals submitted by the countries participating in the transboundary environmental impact assessment procedures, assessed them and, where possible, took them into account. Documentation of the transboundary consultations, as well as a summary of the comments received, is presented in Annex 11 of the EIA Report.

11. Conditions for the Implementation of the Proposed Activity Related to the Completed Environmental Impact Assessment

11.1. Prior to the commencement of activities:

11.1.1. In accordance with the conclusion submitted by the Mayor of Klaipėda City Municipality (letter No. (4.137E)-R2-751 dated 20 March 2026), a transport study of the port in Klaipėda City servicing the offshore wind farm shall be prepared. The study shall assess: transport routes; the technical condition and load-bearing capacity of roads; impacts on the environment of Klaipėda City; and shall define impact mitigation measures. Only conventional auxiliary and service equipment required for construction works shall be transported by land transport (excluding wind turbine components, such as blades, tower sections, generators, etc.).

11.2. During the implementation of activities:

11.2.1. In accordance with the conclusion provided by the Klaipėda Department of the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health (letter No. (3-11 14.3.3 Mr)2-49842 dated 12 December 2025), cable installation works shall be carried out only during daytime and evening periods. Noise attenuation barriers shall also be installed adjacent to transformer substation equipment to ensure that noise levels in the residential environment do not exceed the limits established in Lithuanian Hygiene Standard HN 33:2011.

11.2.2. The conditions and measures specified in the conclusion submitted by the Klaipėda Territorial Division of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture (letter No. (9.38-KI E)2KI-51 dated 2 February 2026) must be implemented in order to avoid, reduce, compensate, and restore any potential significant adverse impacts.

11.2.3. The conditions and measures specified in the conclusion submitted by the Lithuanian Geological Survey under the Ministry of the Environment (letter No. 1.7-209 dated 14 January 2026) must be implemented in order to avoid, reduce, compensate, and restore any potential significant adverse impacts.

11.2.4. With regard to the installation of the electricity transmission cable for the “Area D” OWF, the conditions set out in paragraph 5 and the measures specified in paragraph 7 of the conclusion submitted by the State Service for Protected Areas (letter No. V3-258 dated 12 February 2026) shall be taken into account in order to avoid, reduce, compensate, and restore any potential significant adverse impacts.

11.3. If, during the implementation of the activities, it becomes evident that the environmental impact is greater than that indicated in the EIA Report or exceeds the limits established by legislation, the developer shall be required to immediately apply additional environmental mitigation measures; or reduce the scale of the activity; or cease the activity.

11.4. The operator of the proposed activity shall, at its own expense, implement and carry out the measures specified in the EIA Report and in Section 6 of this decision in order to avoid, reduce, compensate for negative environmental impacts, or eliminate their consequences.

12. Reasons for the Decision on the Environmental Impact of the Proposed Activity

12.1. The following EIA authorities that examined the EIA Report and provided their conclusions: the Mayors of Klaipėda City, Kretinga District, Klaipėda District and Neringa municipal administrations, the Palanga City Municipality Administration, the territorial division of the National Public Health Centre under the Ministry of Health, the territorial division of the Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, the territorial division of the Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of the Interior, the State Forest Service, the Lithuanian Geological Survey under the Ministry of the Environment, AB Klaipėda State Seaport Authority, and the Fisheries Service under the Ministry of Agriculture, approved the Report and the proposed activity.

12.2. SSPA in its letter No. V3-258 dated 12 February 2026 (hereinafter – the Conclusion), concluded that it approves the installation of the electricity transmission cable for the “Area D” OWF, subject to the condition set out in paragraph 5 of the Conclusion, and does

not approve the development of the Curonian Nord OWF in Lithuania. The reasons for non-approval of the development of the Curonian Nord OWF provided in the Conclusion are as follows:

- Due to a significant adverse impact on wild bird species protected under the Law on Protected Animal, Plant and Fungus Species, the Law on Protected Areas, the Law on Wildlife, the Description, including (red-throated diver, black-throated diver, razorbill, common guillemot, velvet scoter, long-tailed duck), as well as due to significant adverse cumulative impacts together with already planned offshore wind farms;
- A significant portion of the Project area is occupied by circalittoral boulder field and biogenic reef habitat, which is the habitat of European Community importance 1170 Reefs, forming a continuous massif and a unified marine ecosystem with the protected reefs of the Natura 2000 SAC Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau. This is the seabed habitat richest in biodiversity and of the greatest importance for its protection within the marine part of the Lithuanian territory. Therefore, the Curonian Nord OWF location alternative on the circalittoral boulder field and biogenic reef, when three similar-sized areas intended for wind energy development (B, C and D) remain unused, and for part of area C and area D Environmental Impact Assessments have already been carried out and positive decisions obtained, is completely unsuitable and unjustified from an environmental perspective in light of the biodiversity protection objectives set for Lithuania.

The Agency, having assessed the reasons provided in the SSPA Conclusion and having examined and evaluated the EIA Report, established that:

- The Curonian Nord OWF area borders the Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau Biosphere Polygon and the Natura 2000 SPA and SAC Klaipėda–Ventspils Plateau along a stretch of approximately 700 m but does not fall within these protected areas. During the EIA, a potential significant impact was identified on protected bird species within these protected areas due to disturbance and displacement from feeding areas or resting habitats and their avoidance. Following the assessment of individual seabird species carried out during the EIA, it was established in the EIA Report that the displacement effect may extend up to 2 km from the offshore wind farm. Taking this into account, a 2 km distance from the boundaries of protected areas to the nearest offshore wind turbine locations will be maintained (second, optimal development alternative), and the installation of offshore wind turbines and cable laying works shall be restricted during the bird wintering and resting period. Therefore, no significant adverse impact is anticipated on protected areas, including Natura 2000 sites and their protected features, and significant adverse impacts on seabed habitats (reefs) and protected bird species due to displacement from protected areas will be avoided.
- The EIA Report states that potential avoidance of the offshore wind farm by birds during operation is considered a partial behavioural change (spatial redistribution) rather than destruction of habitats or loss of their functionality. The planned offshore wind farm does not physically block the area, and within the Project area a reduction in bird density may be observed rather than complete avoidance of the area. Potential avoidance of the area, if identified during monitoring, does not have the potential to reduce wintering bird populations in Lithuanian marine waters.
- Taking into account that the planned Curonian Nord OWF, together with the planned “Area D” OWF and the “AVEC” OWF, will not occupy the seabed habitats most important for feeding of wintering seabirds, and that bird migration in the locations of offshore wind farms was not found to be particularly intensive in the conducted studies, the planned Curonian Nord OWF, together with already planned offshore wind farms in Lithuania and the planned offshore wind farm on the Latvian side, will not cause a significant cumulative impact on birds.
- The EIA Report provides for mitigation and preventive measures to reduce adverse impacts on birds during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. In addition, the EIA Report proposes a compensatory measure addressing the reduction of impacts from other sectors (fisheries) on birds, namely through reducing bycatch, which directly affects populations of seabirds wintering in Lithuanian marine waters. The implementation of this compensatory measure would significantly improve the conservation status of seabirds.
- During the EIA, infralittoral and circalittoral habitats were identified within the Project area of the Curonian Nord OWF, within the electricity transmission cable corridors, and in reference locations. Due to the planned cable installation works within circalittoral reef habitats (type 1170 Reefs), physical damage to the substrate may occur, including displacement of boulders, destruction of mussel colonies, and partial loss of associated species (hydroids, bryozoans, polychaete worms). The communities of *Mytilus edulis trossulus* are the most sensitive to this impact; however, due to their high reproductive potential, natural recovery is expected within 8–12 months after cable installation. The relocation of boulders within the corridor boundaries will ensure that the hard substrate remains within the same ecosystem (biotope boundaries), thereby maintaining its functional continuity. In addition, where plates are used for cable covering, they will perform the function of artificial reefs, thereby improving conditions for the recovery of zoobenthic communities.

- In the EIA Report, the cumulative impact on circalittoral habitats was assessed by distinguishing between two types of physical impact: (1) Physical habitat loss according to criterion D6C4; (2) Physical seabed disturbance according to criterion D6C3.

1) During the EIA, it was established that the maximum calculated cumulative physical habitat loss due to the Project (three offshore wind farms (AVEC-2, “Area D”, Curonian Nord) and their connections (Curonian Nord and “Area D”)) amounts to: circalittoral boulder and biogenic reef habitat – 0.103%; circalittoral coarse sediment habitat – 0.065%; circalittoral sand habitat – 0.018%; circalittoral mud habitat – 0.033%. In all cases, cumulative physical habitat loss does not exceed 2%, i.e. does not exceed the threshold value for good environmental status (GES) established for criterion D6C4 in European Commission communication No. C/2024/2078, which is $\leq 2\%$ of the natural area of the relevant seabed habitat type lost.
- 2) The EIA Report identifies the greatest disturbance caused by the Project for: circalittoral boulder and biogenic reef habitat – 1.985%; circalittoral coarse sediment habitat – 1.273%; circalittoral sand habitat – 0.333%; circalittoral mud habitat – 0.506%. The assessment of cumulative seabed disturbance during the EIA included seabed disturbance areas resulting from the construction activities of the Curonian Nord, “Area D” and AVEC-2 offshore wind farms, as well as areas affected by existing economic activities such as dredged material disposal sites and sand extraction areas. The EIA Report states that the highest relative level of physical disturbance was identified in the circalittoral boulder and biogenic reef habitat – 1.016–1.985% of the habitat area. In the circalittoral sand habitat, cumulative physical disturbance would amount to 1.063–1.236%, and in the circalittoral mud habitat – 0.904–1.158%. In these two habitats, a significant proportion of cumulative disturbance is attributable not to offshore wind farm infrastructure but to dredged material disposal sites and sand extraction areas. In the circalittoral coarse sediment habitat, physical disturbance would amount to 0.553–1.273%. Under the D6C3 assessment, a GES value of $< 1\%$ has been established for the indicator of the area of dredged material disposal sites and sand extraction areas, and a value of $< 10\%$ for the indicator of the area affected by bottom trawling. These values are not directly applicable as regulatory thresholds for the physical disturbance caused by offshore wind farm construction works; therefore, the calculated cumulative D6C3 values cannot be interpreted as a direct non-compliance of offshore wind farms with GES. They represent the calculated total extent of physical disturbance to the seabed within individual circalittoral habitats.
- Due to the planned cable installation works, potential damage within the marine work zones of the Curonian Nord OWF and “Area D” corridors were assessed, and approximate areas of adverse impact on the seabed were calculated depending on the width of the work zone. The area of circalittoral reef habitat (1170) that may be subject to adverse impact due to electricity transmission cable installation within the Natura 2000 SAC shall not exceed 1% of the natural distribution of this habitat (i.e. 0.663 km²). The EIA Report demonstrates that, within the SAC boundaries, by applying a corridor width of 27 m, the total impact of the Curonian Nord and “Area D” projects will amount to approximately 0.95% of the reef habitat (1170) and will not reach the established threshold of 1% of habitat area for significant adverse impact.
- Where the mitigation measures for reducing significant adverse impacts on birds and seabed habitats specified in the EIA Report and in Section 6 of this decision are applied during the Project, these measures will be sufficient to reduce potential significant adverse impacts to a non-significant level. Upon implementation of the conditions set out in Section 11 of this decision, no significant adverse impact is anticipated on protected areas and their protected features, on birds, or on seabed habitats.

12.3. The implementation of the Curonian Nord OWF under the second (optimal) alternative, i.e. installing no more than 55 offshore wind turbines, avoiding the installation of offshore wind turbines and OSS within the most valuable (most extensive) seabed habitat areas, reducing seabed disturbance caused by cable installation where technically feasible and proportionate from an environmental perspective, and maintaining an approximate 2 km setback from the western boundary of the Natura 2000 SPA, will result in a lower impact on natural values compared to the first (maximum) development alternative, where offshore wind turbines are distributed across the entire Curonian Nord OWF area, while at the same time ensuring the feasibility of achieving renewable energy generation objectives.

12.4. The installation of the Curonian Nord OWF in the Baltic Sea is consistent with the key objectives set out in the National Energy Independence Strategy, approved by Resolution No. XI-2133 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 26 June 2012 “On the approval of the National Energy Independence Strategy”. These objectives and projects aim to increase the domestic generation of electricity from renewable energy sources; reduce dependence on electricity imports. Paragraphs 107–111 of this Strategy provide that Lithuania has the opportunity to utilise its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Baltic Sea for electricity generation through the development of offshore wind farms. In the first phase, by 2030, Lithuania plans to develop two offshore wind farms, with a total capacity of 1.4 GW, which will be connected to the Lithuanian electricity transmission system.

12.5. The planned Curonian Nord OWF area falls within a territory designated as a priority area for the development of renewable energy in the solutions of the Master Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania. For the Project area, the Engineering

Infrastructure Development Plan for the development of the part of the territorial sea of the Republic of Lithuania and/or the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Republic of Lithuania in the Baltic Sea intended for renewable energy development, approved by Order No. 1-377 of the Minister of Energy dated 18 November 2022, has been adopted – the Curonian Nord OWF falls within “Area A”. The transmission of electricity generated by offshore wind farms to onshore electricity networks is planned in accordance with the approved Engineering Infrastructure Development Plan. The Curonian Nord OWF falls within the area specified for organising a tender (tenders) without support schemes for the development and operation of renewable energy installations until 2030 (in accordance with Annex 2 of Resolution No. 171 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania dated 15 March 2023). The proposed activity complies with the solutions of the applicable spatial planning documents.

12.6. In the marine part, the offshore wind farm will not be installed and electricity transmission cables will not be laid within the territories of registered cultural heritage assets. The majority of known sunken objects in Lithuanian waters consist of industrial-type vessels; however, remains of wooden vessels of significant scientific value have also been identified. Based on the locations of registered cultural heritage assets, known sites of sunken vessels and data from surveys conducted, no adverse impact of the Project on cultural heritage assets due to their destruction or deterioration of their valuable properties is anticipated.

In the onshore part, the connection corridor routes will not be laid within the territories of registered cultural heritage assets; however, they will pass in proximity to such areas, and therefore archaeological investigations shall be carried out during the design stage of the connection.

12.7. During the construction of the offshore wind farm, increased turbidity will occur only at the locations of foundation installation and cable laying, and therefore its impact is assessed as local (near-bottom layer) and temporary (only during installation), without significant long-term effects on hydrochemical water parameters or on the overall water quality of the Baltic Sea. The distance from the planned works area to the nearest recreational areas and beaches of Palanga City Municipality is approximately 36.8 km, and therefore significant impacts on the coastal zone of Palanga City will be avoided during the installation and operation of the Curonian Nord OWF.

12.8. The greatest impact on individual fish species may occur only during the installation of offshore wind turbines and during the removal of structures. This impact on fish communities will be temporary and (with the application of noise mitigation measures during pile driving) insignificant. However, some species with a large swim bladder, such as Atlantic cod, due to their sensitivity to noise, may move away from the area. Upon completion of installation (or decommissioning) works, fish will return to feeding areas; therefore, only a temporary impact is expected. The installation of the Curonian Nord OWF may have a positive effect on fish resources. Offshore wind turbine foundations may function as artificial reefs and attract more fish species from adjacent areas to the vicinity of the foundations, while restrictions on fishing may, over time, lead to an increase in fish productivity within the wind farm itself, thereby contributing to the conservation and enhancement of fish stocks.

When assessing the cumulative impact of offshore wind farms on fish, taking into account that works will be organised so that only one pile is driven at a time, and that the impact zone essentially does not extend beyond the planned offshore wind farm area and its immediate surroundings, it has been determined that the cumulative impact on fish remains localised and concentrated within offshore wind farm areas, without exceeding regional-scale significance thresholds.

12.9. The area designated for the Curonian Nord OWF in the Baltic Sea is located at a considerable distance (36.8 km) from the coastline and from onshore residential and public-use environments and recreational areas; therefore, physical pollution associated with the Project (noise, shadow flicker, infrasound, electromagnetic radiation) that could affect public health is not anticipated. The installation of underground electricity cables using open trench excavation may result in a temporary increase in air pollution and noise; however, this impact is assessed as local, short-term and not significant for public health. Taking into account the noise generated by the two planned transformer substations and the application of mitigation measures, the noise level in residential and public environments will comply with the requirements established in Lithuanian Hygiene Standard HN 33:2011 and will not result in significant impacts on public health or quality of life.

12.10. Although impacts on marine mammals may occur during the installation of offshore wind turbines, particularly during impact pile driving, taking into account that marine mammals are not abundant in the Curonian Nord OWF area, the installation (with the application of mitigation measures) and operation of the Curonian Nord OWF will not result in significant adverse impacts.

12.11. Approximately 25.8593 ha of forest land will be converted into other land uses for the installation of engineering infrastructure, which is consistent with the provisions of the Engineering Infrastructure Development Plan approved for this project of exceptional national importance. Where infrastructure corridors cross the coastal zone and the Būtingė Geomorphological Reserve, trenchless cable installation methods will be used; therefore, within the coastal zone and the Reserve, forest land will be converted into other land uses without felling trees, and no adverse impacts on these protected areas are anticipated.

12.12. Waste generated during the implementation of the Project shall be collected, sorted and transported in a manner that does not cause adverse impacts on public health or the environment. During decommissioning, dismantled technical equipment and individual components shall be transported to storage or recycling facilities designated by the Project developer or delivered to licensed waste management companies authorised to manage such waste.

12.13. Based on the information provided in the EIA Report, and taking into account the mitigation measures specified in the EIA Report and in Section 6 of this decision, as well as compliance with the conditions set out in Section 11 of this decision, the implementation of the Project will not cause significant adverse impacts on water; air; the seabed; material assets; immovable cultural heritage assets; protected areas; biodiversity; landscape; or the interactions between these components. The Project will not result in significant adverse impacts on public health due to biological, chemical or physical factors. No significant adverse impacts on the environment or public health are anticipated as a result of risks associated with extreme events and situations related to the Project.

13. Alternative(s) Approved or Not Approved (if alternatives were examined in the EIA Report)

Approval is granted, in accordance with the analysis of alternatives presented in the EIA Report, for the implementation of the Curonian Nord OWF under the selected second (optimal) alternative, namely: to install no more than 55 offshore wind turbines; not to plan the installation of offshore wind turbines and OSS within the most valuable seabed habitat areas; to reduce seabed disturbance arising from cable installation where technically feasible and proportionate from an environmental perspective; to maintain an approximate 2 km setback from the western boundary of the Natura 2000 SPA; to connect the Curonian Nord OWF to the existing onshore electricity transmission network system at the 330 kV Darbėnai substation, located in Kretinga District Municipality, Darbėnai eldership, using the route analysed in the Report.

Approval is also granted for the connection of the “Area D” OWF to the existing onshore electricity transmission network system at the 330 kV Darbėnai substation, located in Kretinga District Municipality, Darbėnai eldership, using the route analysed in the Report.

14. Nature of the Decision on the Environmental Impact of the Proposed Activity

Having examined and evaluated the EIA Report, the comments received from the interested public, and the assessment of the comments of the interested public, and based on the conclusions of the EIA entities, taking into account the reasons set out above and in accordance with Article 12(1)(2) of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, the following decision is adopted: the proposed activity – the development of the Curonian Nord OWF in Lithuania under the second (optimal) alternative, and the installation of the electricity transmission cable for the “Area D” OWF, subject to the implementation of the measures and conditions set out in Sections 6 and 11 of this decision – complies with the requirements of legislation on environmental protection, public health, protection of immovable cultural heritage, fire safety and civil safety, and will not cause a significant adverse impact on the environment.

15. Basis of the Decision on the Environmental Impact of the Proposed Activity

The decision on the environmental impact of the proposed activity has been adopted on the basis of the submitted EIA Report, which forms an integral part of this decision and is published on the website (<https://aaa.lrv.lt/>) of the Environmental Protection Agency under the following path: Activity areas > Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) > Year 2026 > Information on decisions adopted regarding environmental impact of proposed activities in 2026.

In accordance with Article 12(15) of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, this decision shall be valid for a period of 5 years from the date of its adoption and may be extended for a period not exceeding 5 additional years.

16. Procedure for Appealing the Decision

This decision, within one month from the date of its publication or service, may be appealed, at the choice of the applicant, to the Lithuanian Administrative Disputes Commission (A. Goštauto St. 12-100, LT-01108 Vilnius) or its territorial division: Kaunas Regional Division (Laisvės Ave. 36, LT-44240 Kaunas); Klaipėda Regional Division (J. Janonio St. 24, LT-92251 Klaipėda); Panevėžys Regional Division (Respublikos St. 62, LT-35158 Panevėžys); Šiauliai Regional Division (Dvaro St. 81, LT-76299 Šiauliai), in accordance with the procedure established by the Law on Pre-Trial Administrative Disputes of the Republic of Lithuania, or to the Regional Administrative Court: Vilnius Chamber (Žygimantų St. 2, LT-01102 Vilnius); Kaunas Chamber (A. Mickevičiaus St. 8A, LT-44312 Kaunas); Klaipėda Chamber (Galinio Pylimo St. 9, LT-91230 Klaipėda); Šiauliai Chamber (Dvaro St. 80, LT-76298 Šiauliai); Panevėžys Chamber (Respublikos St. 62, LT-35158 Panevėžys), or via the Lithuanian courts electronic services portal: Access e-Courts portal in accordance with the procedure established by the Law on Administrative Proceedings of the Republic of Lithuania.

DETAILED METADATA	
Document Author(s)	Environmental Protection Agency, legal entity code 188784898, A. Juozapavičiaus St. 9, LT-09311 Vilnius
Document Title	DECISION ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE "CURONIAN NORD" OFFSHORE WIND FARM IN LITHUANIA AND THE INSTALLATION OF THE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION CABLE FOR THE "AREA D" OFFSHORE WIND FARM
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DETALŲS METADUOMENYS	
Dokumento sudarytojas (-ai)	Aplinkos apsaugos agentūra 188784898, A. Juozapavičiaus g. 9, LT-09311 Vilnius
Dokumento pavadinimas (antraštė)	SPRENDIMAS DĖL „CURONIAN NORD“ JŪRINIO VĖJO ELEKTRINIŲ PARKO VYSTYMO LIETUVOJE IR JŪRINIO VĖJO ELEKTRINIŲ PARKO „PLOTAS D“ ELEKTROS PERDAVIMO KABELIO ĮRENGIMO POVEIKIO APLINKAI
Dokumento registracijos data ir numeris	2026-06-26 Nr. (30-2)-A4E-7223
Dokumento gavimo data ir dokumento gavimo registracijos numeris	–
Dokumento specifikacijos identifikavimo žymuo	ADOC-V1.0
Parašo paskirtis	Pasirašymas
Parašą sukūrusio asmens vardas, pavardė ir pareigos	Milda Račienė, Direktorius
Sertifikatas išduotas	MILDA RAČIENĖ, Aplinkos apsaugos agentūra LT
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Informacija apie sertifikavimo paslaugų teikėją	ADIC CA ECC, Asmens dokumentu israsymo centras prie LR VRM LT
Sertifikato galiojimo laikas	2024-06-18 09:50:22 – 2028-06-17 09:50:22
Informacija apie būdus, naudotus metaduomenų vientisumui užtikrinti	"Registravimas" paskirties metaduomenų vientisumas užtikrintas naudojant "RCSC IssuingCA-2, VI Registru Centras - i.k. 124110246 LT" išduotą sertifikatą "DBSIS, Informatikos ir ryšių departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos vidaus reikalų ministerijos, į.k.188774822 LT", sertifikatas galioja nuo 2025-05-16 11:31:08 iki 2028-05-15 11:31:08
Pagrindinio dokumento priedų skaičius	–
Pagrindinio dokumento pridedamų dokumentų skaičius	–
Pridedamo dokumento sudarytojas (-ai)	–
Pridedamo dokumento pavadinimas (antraštė)	–
Pridedamo dokumento registracijos data ir numeris	–
Programinės įrangos, kuria naudojantis sudarytas elektroninis dokumentas, pavadinimas	DBSIS, versija 3.5.90.5
Informacija apie elektroninio dokumento ir elektroninio (-ių) parašo (-ų) tikrinimą (tikrinimo data)	Atitinka specifikacijos keliamus reikalavimus. Visi dokumente esantys elektroniniai parašai galioja (2026-06-26 14:54:56)
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DETALŪS METADUOMENYS

Dokumento sudarytojas (-ai)	Lietuvos Respublikos aplinkos ministerija 188602370, A. Jakšto g. 4, LT-01105 Vilnius
Dokumento pavadinimas (antraštė)	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT DECISION ON THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY – THE CURONIAN NORD OFFSHORE WIND FARM IN THE LITHUANIAN MARINE TERRITORY OF THE BALTIC SEA
Dokumento registracijos data ir numeris	2026-07-13 Nr. D8(E)-2770
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Dokumento specifikacijos identifikavimo žymuo	ADOC-V1.0
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Parašą sukūrusio asmens vardas, pavardė ir pareigos	Akvilė Gargasaitė, Viceministras
Sertifikatas išduotas	AKVILĖ GARGASAITĖ LT
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Informacija apie būdus, naudotus metaduomenų vientisumui užtikrinti	"Registravimas" paskirties metaduomenų vientisumas užtikrintas naudojant "RCSC IssuingCA-2, VI Registru Centras - i.k. 124110246 LT" išduotą sertifikatą "DBSIS, Informatikos ir ryšių departamentas prie Lietuvos Respublikos vidaus reikalų ministerijos, į.k.188774822 LT", sertifikatas galioja nuo 2025-05-16 11:31:08 iki 2028-05-15 11:31:08
Pagrindinio dokumento priedų skaičius	1
Pagrindinio dokumento pridedamų dokumentų skaičius	–
Priedamo dokumento sudarytojas (-ai)	–
Priedamo dokumento pavadinimas (antraštė)	–
Priedamo dokumento registracijos data ir numeris	–
Programinės įrangos, kuria naudojantis sudarytas elektroninis dokumentas, pavadinimas	DBSIS, versija 3.5.90.5
Informacija apie elektroninio dokumento ir elektroninio (-ių) parašo (-ų) tikrinimą (tikrinimo data)	Atitinka specifikacijos keliamus reikalavimus. Visi dokumente esantys elektroniniai parašai galioja (2026-07-13 12:02:26)
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