Notification in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) concerning the Eesti Energia AS offshore windfarm project in the Gulf of Riga

As the Party of origin, Estonia is hereby sending a notification in accordance with Article 3 of the Espoo Convention of the project plan by the developer, Eesti Energia AS, to encumber the Gulf of Riga with an offshore windfarm.

Description of the project

The developer plans to construct an offshore windfarm consisting of 160 wind turbines with a total capacity up to 1000 MW. The project includes offshore substations and cables connected to the substations, an electricity transmission system up to the land-based connection point and a wind measurement mast. The offshore cable line is planned from the offshore wind farm to Pärnu County, Häädemeeste local government. The offshore windfarm is planned 2.6 nautical miles from the Latvian coast. A schematic map illustrating the location of the project can be found in Annex 1.

The proposed activity potentially results in significant environmental impact which may be transboundary. Therefore, the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority has asked the Ministry of the Environment to notify the potential affected Parties.

EIA procedure

The decision-maker (i.e. issuer of development consent) is the Government of the Republic of Estonia. On February 27, 2010 the developer submitted five applications for supericies licence to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications (i.e. authority carrying out the proceedings regarding the application). After an amendment in the respective legislation, proceedings regarding this application have been transferred to the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority. The amended applications for supericies licence were submitted to the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority on August 30, 2010 and June 30, 2015 (Annex 2). Pursuant to the Water Act, supericies licence is the right to encumber a delimited part of a public water body with construction works that are permanently connected to the bottom of the water body and are not permanently connected to the shore, for a specified term. The developer is continuing with one application (Annex 2) and is applying for the supericies licence for 50 years.

According to the Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act (hereinafter the Act), the decision-maker will make a decision to initiate or refuse to initiate environmental impact assessment (EIA) on the basis of an application for development consent. The Government of the Republic of Estonia initiated EIA of project on December 19, 2019, order no 311 (Annex 3).
In this particular case, a specification stipulated in the Act must be followed. Therefore, in terms of the EIA procedure of the project, the version of the Act that was in force at the time of submission of the application for development consent must be applied. Please be informed that compared to the present EIA procedure some important differences exist in the former redaction of the Act.

According to respective former redaction of the Act, after the initiation of EIA the expert or, an expert group under the supervision of the expert, will, jointly with the developer, prepare an EIA programme (scoping document). The decision-maker will organize the publication of the EIA programme (i.e. public display and public hearing). After the publication stage and taking account of results of the publication, the developer submits the programme to the supervisor of EIA for making the decision to approve or refuse approval of the EIA programme.

On the basis of the approved EIA programme, the EIA report is prepared. The EIA report stage includes similar proceedings as described as regards the EIA programme stage.

Upon making a decision to grant or refuse to grant development consent, the decision-maker will take account of the results of EIA and the environmental requirements appended to the report. This also includes, where relevant, the results of transboundary consultations.

If the affected Party intends to participate in the EIA procedure, the draft EIA programme and report are forwarded to the affected state. Consultations are commenced concerning environmental impact resulting from the proposed activity and environmental measures to be taken.

**Answer to the notification**

Kindly send the answer to this notification to the Ministry of the Environment (keskkonnaministeerium@envir.ee) by March 27, 2020 at the latest, and:

- acknowledge the receipt of the notification;
- indicate whether your country intends to participate in the transboundary EIA procedure;
- provide possible comments concerning the scope for the assessment of the environmental impacts of the project affecting your country.

**Contacts information**

Developer: Eesti Energia AS – Mr Oliver Zereen, info@energia.ee.

Decision-maker: Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority (i.e. authority carrying out the proceedings regarding the application) – Mrs Liis Piper, liis.piper@ittia.ee.

Supervisor of EIA and transboundary EIA procedure: Ministry of the Environment of Estonia – Mr Rainer Persidski, rainer.persidski@envir.ee.

Sincerely Yours,

[Signature]

Kaupo Heinma
Point of Contact for the Espoo Convention

**Enclosures:**

Annex 1 – map of the location of the proposed project
Annex 2 – application of the developer
Annex 3 – EIA initiation decision
List of recipients (Points of Contact):

Finland: Ms Seija Rantakallio, seija.rantakallio@ym.fi
Latvia: Ms Sandija Balka, sandija.balka@varam.gov.lv
Lithuania: Mr Vitalijus Auglys, vitalijus.auglys@am.lt
Sweden: Mr. Richard Kristoffersson, richard.kristoffersson@swedishepa.se

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