

Australian Government: Senate Enquiry

Offshore wind industry consultation process

28 August 2024

Introduction

This submission is made to the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications in response to the Senate Enquiry into the offshore wind industry consultation process.

About BlueFloat Energy

BlueFloat Energy is a nimble and fast-growing offshore wind developer shaping the global energy transformation by bringing scaled decarbonisation solutions to new markets. As a company, we are at the forefront of the fast-growing global market for offshore wind and have a global team with extensive knowledge and experience in developing fixed and floating offshore wind projects. Our offshore wind development portfolio currently includes projects in ten countries across the globe, with more than 34 GW of planned capacity.

In Australia, BlueFloat Energy is developing projects off the coasts of Victoria and New South Wales.

Our Submission

BlueFloat Energy has been actively discussing offshore wind projects in Australia and engaging with the community and stakeholders for nearly three years. Supporting the legislated process of zone declarations and granting of licences, BlueFloat Energy publicly outlined a number of proposed development sites in south east Australia in 2021 and 2022 and has engaged with community, First Nations groups, government, industry and other stakeholders to highlight the key aspects of offshore wind projects and how an industry could develop with associated social and economic benefits.

The Commonwealth government has undertaken a clear and well structured process of indicating likely areas for offshore wind development, outlining specific site areas for public consultation, declaring final zone areas and undertaking feasibility licence application processes. Websites and social media provided communities and industry with relevant information pertaining to the zone declaration and licencing process. Timelines were clear in regards to how the declaration of zones would be followed by feasibility licence application periods, with commercial licences to be granted following completion of feasibility activities, EPBC Act approvals and Regulator approval of a management plan. The importance of the EPBC environmental approvals process and the requirement for feasibility licence holders to undertake community and First Nations people consultation during the planning and approvals stage was made clear by the government through guidance materials.

Developing an offshore wind industry in Australia is crucial to building out large scale renewable energy as fossil fuel power is replaced to reduce Australia's carbon emissions and assist in meeting emissions reduction targets. Job creation and economic benefits for local, regional and national



industries will ensue as billions of dollars of capital investment is deployed to build large scale, critical electricity generation infrastructure.

BlueFloat Energy is excited to be part of developing an offshore wind industry in Australia and strongly supports the Commonwealth government's efforts engaging widely in providing information and obtaining feedback from public consultation processes.

Nick Sankey
Country Manager, Australia
BlueFloat Energy