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Response to notification in accordance with Article 3 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, regarding installation and operation of Saare-Liivi 5 offshore wind farm in the Gulf of Riga, Estonia

BirdLife Sweden has been offered to comment on the EIA program regarding the proposed wind farm Saare-Liivi 5 establishment in the Gulf of Riga, Estonia. The Gulf of Riga is a famous wintering area for e.g. many sea ducks and millions of birds cross over the Baltic Sea, which means exceptional caution needs to be taken when planning a wind farm in the specific region. As birds do not know national borders, the potential effects on birds are indeed transboundary and it is therefore natural for Sweden to participate in the environmental impact assessment procedures as a potentially affected country.

Avoiding important feeding areas for sea ducks should be an easy task for the offshore wind company and permitting authorities, but as a bird conservation organization we can never approve any offshore windfarm that does not also take appropriate measures to avoid "mass collision events". Hence, BirdLife Sweden strongly emphasizes development and implementation of techniques that combine weather/radar data and instantaneous shut-down of wind turbines when high-risk conditions occur.

As we have already pointed out the most important features necessary to include in the EIA, BirdLife Sweden will await the outcome of planned investigations before evaluating further possible impacts from the project.

In addition to what BirdLife Sweden has already expressed in the process, we feel obliged to stress the importance of taking into serious consideration the opinion of BirdLife Estonia, being the expert organization of Estonian avifauna.



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