

# Offshore Wind Farm Development in Norway

The flowchart describes how the development of offshore wind farms is regulated in the Norwegian exclusive economic zone and in the territorial sea. The process is described chronologically from top to bottom where the blue boxes denote procedures which are regulated by law or otherwise, and the yellow denote procedures and their policies which are yet to be determined.

The flowchart is primarily based on procedures regulated under the Offshore Energy Act from 2010 and the Offshore Energy Act Regulations from 2020. Alongside these, the flowchart also relies on guidance notes and policies which have been adopted for the development of Sørvest F (Sørlige Nordsjø II), Vestavind F (Utsira Nord) and Vestavind B. This also includes on-going consultations for policies which are yet to be adopted. The latter applies to the boxes in yellow.

The regulation and policies applicable to offshore wind farm development in Norway is constantly changing and it is therefore stressed that the flowchart should be read keeping in mind that the regulatory hemisphere may have changed since the creation of the chart as per the 29.10.2024.

20 January 2025

**Identification of Marine Areas**  
The Water Resources and Energy Directorate is tasked by the Ministry of Energy to identify marine areas suited for offshore wind development.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment**  
Having identified a marine area suited for offshore wind farm development, the State must assess the plan to develop areas for its likely significant effects.

**No Strategic Environmental Assessment**  
The State can, in exceptional circumstances, exempt itself from conducting strategic environmental assessments.

**Opening of Areas**  
The State must 'open' areas before conditioning them for further development.

**No Opening of Areas**  
The State can, in exceptional circumstances, elect areas for development without 'opening' them.

**Tender Procedure**  
The State can arrange a tender procedure where developers are competitively assessed for their technical and financial capacity to develop a project area.

**No Tender**  
The State can award exclusive rights to development within proposed areas, with or without strategic environmental assessments and 'opening' of areas, without engaging developers in competitive tenders.

Principal route for designating and maturing project areas for offshore wind farm

Exemptive route reminiscent of an 'open door' for pilot, electrification and/or other multi-use projects.

**Qualitative Assessment**  
The qualitative assessment describes a points-based system where developers are assessed based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria. This is principally used for floating offshore wind projects in Sørvest F (Utsira Nord) and Sørvest B.

**Monetary Auction**  
Monetary auctions, with preceding pre-qualification, are principally used for bottom-fixed projects foreseen to be developed in the Sørvest areas in the North Sea (including Sørlige Nordsjø II).

**Monetary Auction for State Aid**  
The developer can apply for State aid which either will be given in the form of a Contract for Difference scheme or alternatively through other investment support schemes.

**Environmental Impact Assessment**  
The developer must, having gained exclusive rights to mature a project area, assess the likely significant environmental effects from the proposed development.

**Concession Application**  
The developer must draft an application for a Concession which describes the principal details concerning the development.

**Plan for Operation and Development Application**  
The developer must draft an application for a Plan for Operation and Development which describes the specific details of the planned development, including a plan for decommissioning.

**Lost the Auction?**  
The developer can apply for extended timetables with respect licensing requirements and submit bids for State aid at a subsequent auction.

**Decision-Making**  
Both the Ministry of Energy and the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate will exercise discretionary decision-making in consideration of the applications.

**Development and Operation Lifecycle**  
After having developed the offshore wind farm in accordance with conditions stipulated by the licensing authorities, the project can operate up to 30 years.

**Decommissioning**  
Having reached the end of its operational lifecycle, the offshore wind farm must be decommissioned by the developer