

Minutes of the 1st Thematic Working Group Environment and Society of the Baltic InteGrid project

February 28th, 2017, Warsaw, Poland

Venue: Marriott Hotel, Al. Jerozolimskie 65/79, 00-697 Warsaw

Host: Foundation for Sustainable Energy (PP2)

Materials: Presentations, materials on TWG discussion

Participants:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Mariusz Wójcik | FNEZ |
| 2. Magdalena Karlikowska | FNEZ |
| 3. Donata Farys | FNEZ |
| 4. Andreas Möser | Lund University |
| 5. Anika Nicolaas Ponder | Institute for Climate Protection, Energy and
Mobility |
| 6. Pierre Ståhl | Energy Agency for Southeast Sweden |
| 7. Agnieszka Cwilewicz | Maritime Office in Gdynia |
| 8. Anna Stelmaszyk-Świerczyńska | Maritime Office in Gdynia |
| 9. Diana Dziaduch | Maritime Institute in Gdańsk |
| 10. Łukasz Szydłowski | Maritime Institute in Gdańsk |
| 11. Joanna Pardus | Maritime Institute in Gdańsk |
| 12. Wojciech Kozon | PGE Energia Odnawialna S.A. |
| 13. Thilo Krupp | Stiftung Offshore Windenergie |
| 14. Iwona Psuty | National Marine Fisheries Research Institute |
| 15. Bernd Von Wieding | Baltic Trade and Invest Sp. z o. o. |
| 16. Magdalena Kamińska | Chief Inspectorate of Environmental
Protection |
| 17. Roman Jurak | General Command of Polish Navy |

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

1. Draft initial results of the Thematic Working Group Spatial Planning indicating potential routes of Baltic Offshore Grid were presented by Maritime Institute in Gdańsk. They will be further developed within the project, but some potential corridors can be distinguished already at this point.
2. Methodology for analysis of environmental and social impacts was presented to participants. The methodology will be used for impact analysis of the Baltic Offshore Grid which will be a part of the Impact Mitigation Strategy document (output of Baltic InteGrid Project).

3. Impact Mitigation Strategy of the Baltic Offshore Grid will provide guidelines to environmental surveys and social analyses for linear infrastructure in the Baltic Sea. Based on the analysis of potential impacts it will indicate which environmental receptors (e.g. sea mammals, fish, benthos etc.) or social receptors (e.g. navy, fishermen, tourists etc.) should be monitored/analyzed in detail due to potential significant impacts.
4. During discussion, main environmental impacts of offshore grid mentioned were related to the construction and operation stage (e.g. ground work, cable laying, horizontal drilling within landfall, anchoring of ships, ship activities) and main social impacts were related to construction stage (obstacles for navigation, visual impact of overhead lines).
5. Representative of Polish Navy indicated that more information is needed, especially in terms of international experience, regarding mitigation measures for placement of linear infrastructure within military areas e.g. burial depth, additional protection etc. Such information should be included in the Impact Mitigation Strategy.
6. Lack of public acceptance may be the reason for protracted procedures or even cancelation of investments. Communication strategy and dialogue between investor and stakeholders, based on expert knowledge, is therefore key to execution of infrastructural projects.

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE SEMINAR

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Mariusz Wójcik (PP 2) welcomed all project partners and guests and described a plan of the TWG Environment and Society. A brief introduction round followed.

Anika Nicolaas Ponder (LP) gave a presentation about the BIG project, aims of the project, actual status and introduction to the Thematic Working Group.

Joanna Pardus (PP7) gave a presentation about the status of the Baltic Offshore Grid and spatial and environmental conditions of the Baltic Sea. The presentation included results of the Thematic Working Group Spatial Planning and Baltic Offshore Grid routes indicated by project partners (PP2, PP5, PP7, PP8, PP9, PP10, PP11, PP13). For the first time a proposition of the Baltic Offshore Grid potential variants was shown. No detailed analytical work was yet done at this point.

Next part of the THG was divided into three parts:

1. Environmental impacts of the Baltic Offshore Grid – presentation, workshop and discussion
2. Social impacts of the Baltic Offshore Grid – presentation and discussion
3. Public communication – presentation, workshop and discussion

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Magdalena Karlikowska (PP2) gave a presentation about the Impact Mitigation Strategy of the Baltic Offshore Grid and described aim of the document and methodology. It was underlined that the Impact Mitigation Strategy will cover analysis of the environmental and social impacts but not assessment like in the EIA reports. The reason of this approach is that in order to perform an EIA, detailed information about the sensitivity of environmental and social receptors is required e.g. obtained through environmental surveys. Such information will not be available at this stage. The analysis will be based on the experts' experience, literature and publicly available information about the environment of the Baltic Sea.

Particular steps of the analysis were described:

- Project description – bounding conditions envelope concept,
- Definition of environmental receptors,
- Definition of emissions and sources of emissions,
- Impact identification – matrix of interaction between emissions and impacts,
- Impact classification – identification of impacts nature (positive, negative), type (direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative), scale (local, regional, national, international), duration (temporary, short-term, medium-term, long-term), intensity (low, medium, high, very high), reversibility (reversible, irreversible).
- Impact analysis and identification of impact size (negligible, little, moderate, high).

Analysis conducted in the Impact Mitigation Strategy will allow to identify key receptors and provide guidelines for environmental surveys, which should be conducted at EIA stage.

Workshop:

During workshop participants were able to acquaint themselves with the methodology for environmental assessment. They were given the task to choose (based on their knowledge and opinion) and characterize (using presented methodology) key impacts on the environmental receptors during planning, construction and exploitation stages (both onshore and offshore). A group representing the planning stage indicated that impacts on fauna caused by noise emissions and the displacement and change of habitats related to ship activities during sampling are the most significant impacts at this stage but the final size of impacts in both cases is negligible.

The group representing construction stage indicated impact on fauna caused by noise emissions during construction activities (including piling of foundations for potential substations) – final size of impact was characterized as little or negligible.

The group representing operation phase chose collision risk during maintenance with the final size of impact being moderate.

Discussion:

- a map showing potential cable connections was presented as a point for discussion - they presented a wide catalogue of options and not concrete cases,
- emission of electromagnetic fields and collision risk that could be caused by overhead power lines (a part of onshore infrastructure) are also significant onshore impacts,
- horizontal drilling was indicated as one of the most significant impact on the coastal

- environment but also social conditions,
- proper schedule of maintenance works could minimise impacts,
 - one of mitigation measures mentioned were bubble curtains which can reduce noise emissions during piling,
 - regulation of noise in Germany state the max. emission is 160 dB in the distance of 700 m away from construction work.

SOCIAL IMPACTS

Mariusz Wójcik (PP2) gave a presentation regarding potential social and economic impacts caused by Baltic Offshore Grid. The potential receptors, emissions and impacts were described and presented, a discussion followed.

Discussion:

- social conflict and protests are one of the main reason of blocking development of investments,
- there may be a potential conflict between the military areas and offshore infrastructure. Main issue raised was the risk of damaging civil infrastructure by anchoring or other military activities. The primary mitigation measures should be to avoid military areas, however such areas cover a big part of the sea, especially in Poland. Therefore, the representative of the Polish Navy indicated that more information is needed, especially international experience, regarding mitigation measures for placement of linear infrastructure within military areas e.g. burial depth, additional protection etc. He also declared support in identification of impact on military areas.
- the cable infrastructure could cause impact on navigation system – it is important to consult the project with all interested sides.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Thilo Krupp (PP7) presented experience of Germany projects regarding public communication and acceptance during implementation of offshore projects.

After that Mariusz Wójcik (PP2) told about FNEZ's experience in impact mitigation strategy based on conducted in 2015 communication and public education campaign for Offshore Wind Farm Baltic Middle III.

In both cases German and Polish conclusions were very similar:

- proper preparation and execution of a communication strategy is key to public acceptance,
- lack of public acceptance comes from lack of information; therefore it is necessary to educate and inform the public about the project,
- it is important to listen to concerns, take them seriously and respond to them
- possibilities of public participation should be pointed out at very beginning of the project.

Workshop and discussion:

During workshop participant were to present communication strategies including: goals, key arguments, potential proponents and opponents. for different stakeholders: investor, mayors, external expert, fisheries organizations.

Conclusions from discussion:

- The most important part to reach public acceptance is to prepare a communication strategy and stay in close cooperation with all interested stakeholders of the project.
- The discussion and information meeting about the project and possible impacts should start at an early stage of the project.
- It is necessary to remember that different stakeholders have different goals, which should be taken into account e.g. fishermen wish to maintain status-quo whereas the local authorities wish to bring new investments but also answer to their voters.