



20 new offshore wind development areas identified by NVE in Norway



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An expert directorate group lead by NVE has recommended 20 new areas suitable for development of offshore wind projects in light of the aim to produce 30 GW installed effect of energy/electricity from offshore wind within 2040, and simultaneously to facilitate for new innovation and technology. The areas were presented in a press release on 25 April 2023.

Following the “green light” and start of the public licensing process for Sørlige Nordsjø II (SN II) and Utsira Nord (UN) on 29 March 2023, the 20 newly identified areas substantiate the ambitions of the Government to realize the goal of producing approx. the same GW renewable energy effect as the Norwegian hydropower system produces today.

The proposed areas from NVE totalling approx. 54,000m² are identified as “low risk” on potential interest conflicts (i.a. between aquaculture, fisheries, shipping, environmental interests and petroleum) and considered as technical suitable areas within the North Sea. The areas are up to 13 times larger than required to reach the 30 GW aim, and are spread along the coast from Skagerak in south up to the Barents Sea in north.

Expanded areas within SN II and UN (Sørvest F and Vestavind F) are expected to be announced earlier than the other areas in 2025 due to these areas being overall assessed already as part of the ongoing licensing process

and much knowledge about possibilities and conflicting interests etc within these areas. For the remaining areas, NVE's proposed timeline is short within end of 2025.

Impact assessment

An impact assessment program prepared by NVE will be sent on public consultation for input, followed by a strategic impact assessment, also to be sent on public consultation, prior to NVE, MPE and the Government concluding on which specific areas that shall finally be opened for further development of offshore wind projects. It is expected that some of the areas will be reduced or excluded entirely based on input from the consultation rounds, and also based on further financial impact/consequences (significant investments), establishment of grid system (cables/connections onshore etc), analysis of data and new facts related to the areas.

NVE proposes a reasonable step by step development, to be able to analyze impact and "best practice" development in a sustainable manner prior to subsequent next rounds of award announcements, expected with more regular intervals after 2025, indicated to be 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029 and onwards.

Overall, it is stated that key factors, such as; co-existence between industries, sustainability, environmental qualities/factors and technological innovation will be crucial to consider in the development process of the new areas on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, and to succeed with the aim to actually produce the 30 GW within 2040.

Timeline – awards within 2025

See below a timeline based on NVE's proposed timetable on awards within 2025 (or earlier for SN II and UN)

When?	What?
Q2 2023	Impact assessment program (NVE) – sent on public consultation
Q3 2023	MPE – to decide upon impact assessment program, strategic impact assessment - sent on public consultation
Q4 2023 – Q4 2024	Completion of impact assessments
Q4 2024	Proposal to open new areas – public consultation
Q1 2025	Opening of new areas
Q2 2025	Announcement of competition / licensing process for new areas
Q3/Q4 2025	Final awarding of the new areas

20 areas – expansion of SN II and UN in addition to 18 other areas

For the areas Sørvest F and Vestavind F, being expanded from SN II and UN, the directorate group is of the opinion that the installed capacity can be increased with (i) between 2.7 GW and 8.5 GW for SN II, and (ii) 750 MW for UN.

Due to the comprehensive assessment process to be carried out, NVE has confirmed that the above timeline may be too tight, and some delays may occur.

All areas are subject to the formal requirements and procedures set out in the Offshore Energy Act, Offshore Energy Regulation and the guidelines to the offshore wind regulatory framework, and it must also be considered what is possible to achieve within the proposed timeline.

Please see below the map comprising identified areas by NVE, including floating (13 areas), bottom-fixed/floating areas (4 areas) or only bottom-fixed (3 areas):



We are happy to discuss any queries you may have related to the proposed new areas and the offshore wind licensing process in Norway in general.