

OCEaN German Working Group

# Six recommendations for a nature-friendly development of offshore wind energy



## INTRODUCTION

Decisions taken at the beginning of the upcoming legislative period in Germany and at European level are essential for achieving our climate targets. The development of offshore wind energy in the North Sea and Baltic Sea and its connection to the grid will play a decisive role for renewable energy generation in Germany. This development must take place in harmony with nature.

We, a coalition of wind farm operators, transmission system operators, environmental and climate protection NGOs, call on the German coalition partners to include the following important measures in the coalition agreement in order to be able to achieve climate neutrality in Germany by 2045 and implement the European Climate Law and Europe-wide climate neutrality by 2050.

The following recommendations represent the positions of the above signatories and do not necessarily reflect the views of all organisations working together in OCEaN.

Please find the complete recommendations (in German) [here](#).

To learn more about the work of OCEaN please see: <https://offshore-coalition.eu/>

- 1. In marine spatial designation, priority must be given to climate and nature conservation, and compensation must be ensured.** Human activities and nature conservation must be planned with due consideration for each other and in consideration of the entire marine ecosystem. Climate and nature conservation obligations must be prioritised when designating marine areas and impacts of other marine activities must be reduced. Keeping clear of marine protected areas (MPAs) and the use of compensatory measures will contribute to this. This will prevent conflicts later on and have an accelerating effect.
- 2. To mitigate spatial conflicts, a stakeholder dialogue on co-usage should be initiated.** Co-usage can help solve planning conflicts when human activities are combined, to avoid disruptions of the marine environment.
- 3. Expand and consistently use transparent and effective European cooperation.** We urgently need an overall spatial planning concept for the North Sea and the Baltic Sea as well as transparent participation opportunities in existing international cooperation fora. Offshore wind farms and the connecting infrastructure must be planned in a future-oriented manner, embedded in a European, cross-border strategy that also takes onshore grid expansion into account.
- 4. Optimisation of the regulatory framework to achieve climate neutrality targets and enable innovation.** A reliable and stable investment framework and a suitable incentive system need to be part of the regulation of offshore wind farms and connected grid infrastructure. Both need to promote timely and forward-looking investment and work across borders.
- 5. Provide and use publicly accessible data as a starting point for planning.** To ensure that the planning process for the North Sea and Baltic Sea is rooted in a broad knowledge base, a forum should be initiated that identifies knowledge gaps, commissions studies and enables joint data usage. As the level of knowledge grows, the design of infrastructure must also be continuously improved.
- 6. Use concrete measures to accelerate and improve processes.** This includes improving cooperation between the German Federal Government and the German States as well as the joint planning of grid development onshore and offshore. Moreover, sufficient staff must be available in planning and permitting authorities.