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Denmark has decided to establish two energy islands and wind farms in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea



DLA PIPER DENMARK

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# Denmark has decided to establish two energy islands and wind farms in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea

Denmark has decided to establish the world's first offshore wind energy island and wind farms in the North Sea and another wind energy island on the island of Bornholm and wind farms in the Baltic Sea. The total cost of constructing the energy island and the wind farms in the North Sea is estimated to be DKK 210 billion (EUR 28 billion, USD 34 billion).



Illustrative image of a possible design of the planned new energy island in the North Sea to be established as an artificial island about 80 kilometres west of the town Thorsminde on the west coast of the peninsula Jutland in Denmark. One of the nearby wind farms to be established is showed behind the island in the background. Illustrative image: Danish Energy Agency (https://ens.dk/en).

### Summary

Denmark has decided to establish the world's first offshore wind energy island and hub as an artificial island in the North Sea. It will be located about 80 kilometres west of the town Thorsminde on west coast of the peninsula Jutland in Denmark. It will serve as a physical energy hub for nearby offshore wind farms and house electrotechnical facilities for routing electricity from the wind turbines into the electricity grids. It will collect the green electricity from the wind farms and distribute the electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries.

The wind farms will have a total capacity of 3 gigawatt (GW) and around 200 wind turbines in the first phase of the project, and potentially up to 10 GW and around 660 wind turbines in the planned final phase. The first phase, which comprises the island and wind farms with a capacity of 3 GW, is planned to be completed in 2030 or, if this is not possible, then 2033. The planned final phase, which comprises additional wind farms with a capacity of 7 GW, is planned to be completed thereafter and as soon as possible at a time which is currently not determined but is at the latest planned to be sometime before 2050.

The total cost of constructing the island, the wind farms with a capacity of 10 GW and the related infrastructure is estimated to be around DKK 210 billion (EUR 28 billion, USD 34 billion). This is roughly equivalent to five times the total cost of constructing the Danish Great Belt Bridge across the Great Belt between the two islands Funen and Zealand. The energy island will be the largest ever construction project in Denmark.

Denmark has also decided to establish another offshore wind energy island and hub on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea. Bornholm is south of Sweden and north of Germany. It will serve as a physical energy hub for nearby offshore wind farms with a total capacity of 2 GW and around 133 wind turbines. It will house electrotechnical facilities for routing electricity from the wind turbines into the electricity grids. It will collect the green electricity from the wind farms and distribute the electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries. It is planned to be completed in 2030 or, if this is not possible, then 2033 or as soon as possible thereafter.

## Denmark is a leading country for offshore wind energy exploitation, production of wind turbines and other wind farms plants and facilities, making of offshore wind farms and related activities and services

Denmark has a long history as a leading country for offshore wind exploitation and farms. Denmark established the first offshore wind farm in the world in 1991 and continues to establish and plan more wind farms. The first offshore wind farm in 1991 had a capacity of 5 megawatt (MW). Denmark now has an offshore wind farm capacity of 1,700 MW and is developing and planning more continuously.

Denmark also is home to some of the world's most advanced and experienced wind energy and offshore companies. They have benefitted from Denmark's large offshore areas with shallow waters which are great locations for exploitation of wind energy in offshore wind farms. The offshore wind energy companies also have benefitted from the many Danish companies which are working with all matters in relation to wind energy and related offshore activities. These companies produce wind turbines and all related facilities, plants and equipment. They also establish and operate wind farms, perform all related activities and provide all related services.

# Danish Parliament's agreement of 22 June 2020 on establishment of two offshore wind energy islands and hubs – one as an artificial island in the North Sea and another on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea

On 22 June 2020, a broad majority of the parties of the Danish Parliament made an agreement to commence the planning and development of two new Danish offshore wind energy islands and hubs. One of them is a new artificial island which is to be established in the North Sea and serve as a physical energy hub for nearby offshore wind farms with a total electricity production capacity of 3 gigawatt (GW) and potentially up to 10 GW in the future. The other energy island is to be established on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea and serve as a physical energy hub for nearby offshore wind farms with a total capacity of 2 GW.

The two wind energy islands will collect green electricity from the wind farms and distribute the electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries. The energy islands will house electrotechnical facilities for routing electricity from the wind turbines into the electricity grids.

The two energy islands will serve as hubs for electricity generation from surrounding offshore wind farms, which will be connected, and for distribution of power to and between Denmark and neighbouring countries. The energy islands will also allow for the connection and use of various offshore technical equipment for electricity generation. This may for example be facilities for energy storage, hydrogen or electrolysis plants, or plants using other technologies for energy conversion. They may include use of Power-to-X (PtX) technologies and performance of activities in relation thereto.



Illustrative map showing the locations of Denmark's two planned energy islands. The yellow dot to the left on the map shows the location of the energy island in the North Sea to be established as an artificial island about 80 kilometres west of the town Thorsminde on the peninsula Jutland. The other yellow dot to the right on the map shows the location of the energy island in the Baltic Sea to be established on the Danish island Bornholm. Illustrative map: Energinet, the Danish transmission system operator (TSO), (https:// en.energinet.dk/). See also the illustrative maps of the energy islands below.

# Danish Parliament's additional agreement of 4 February 2021 on ownership and construction of the two offshore wind energy islands (energy hubs)

On 4 February 2021, a broad majority of the parties of the Danish Parliament made an additional agreement to the agreement of 22 June 2020 to commence the planning and development of the two new Danish offshore wind energy islands mentioned above. The additional agreement is on ownership and construction of the two offshore wind energy islands. Denmark has thereby taken another significant step in its green transition.

# Energy island in the North Sea – energy island on artificial island and nearby winds farms in the North Sea

With the agreement of 4 February 2021, Denmark has decided to establish the world's first offshore wind energy island and hub in the North Sea. The energy island will be an artificially constructed island in the North Sea about 80 kilometres west of the town Thorsminde on the west coast of the peninsula Jutland in Denmark. The energy island's wind farms will be located in offshore areas near the energy island. See the illustrative map below.



*Illustrative map showing the locations for the planned new artificial energy island and nearby wind farms in the North Sea about 80 kilometres (not 60 kilometres as stated on the map) west of the town Thorsminde on the west coast of the peninsula Jutland in Denmark. Illustrative map: Energinet, the Danish transmission system operator (TSO), (https://en.energinet.dk/).* 

The energy island and hub will serve as an offshore power plant which has electrotechnical facilities for routing electricity from the wind turbines into the electricity grids. It will collect green electricity from wind farms with wind turbines near the island and distribute the electricity to consumers in countries bordering or near the North Sea.

The energy island in the North Sea will be constructed as an offshore artificial island. The artificial island may for example be, and will probably be, of the following two types of constructions:

- A concrete and sand caisson island made of outer parts made of concrete caissons filled with sand and concrete elements as top constructions and inner parts made of sand filling. See for example the illustrative images of the energy island in the North Sea shown above on the front page and below.
- An offshore steel platform island made of a central main offshore steel platform and some decentral supplementary offshore steel platforms.

On behalf of the Danish Energy Agency, the Danish consulting firm COWI has made two reports in Danish on matters relating to the two energy islands. The first is a screening report on offshore areas which may be used for offshore wind farms with direct connections to land areas (May 2020). The second is a cost benefit analysis report on energy islands in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea (January 2021).

The energy island in the North Sea is expected to have a total area of at least 120,000 square meters, which is equivalent to 18 soccer football fields, in the first phase, and 460,000 square meters, which is equivalent to 64 soccer football fields, in the planned final phase.



Illustrative image showing a possible design of the planned new artificial energy island in the North Sea. Illustrative image: Danish Energy Agency (https://ens.dk/en).

In its first phase, the energy island in the North Sea will have a total capacity of 3 gigawatt (GW), and around 200 wind turbines, and thereby produce enough offshore wind energy to provide 3 million European households with green energy. In its planned final phase, the energy island will have a total capacity of 10 GW, and around 660 wind turbines, and thereby produce enough offshore wind energy to provide 10 million European households with green energy.

The first phase, which comprises the island and wind farms with a capacity of 3 GW, is planned to be completed in 2030 or, if this is not possible, then 2033. The planned final phase, which comprises additional wind farms with a capacity of 7 GW, is planned to be completed thereafter and as soon as possible at a time which is currently not determined but is at the latest planned to be sometime before 2050. The energy island in the North Sea will provide electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries bordering or near the North Sea. The energy island in the North Sea will be connected with a subsea electricity cable, with a length of about 80 kilometres, to the town Thorsminde on the west coast of the peninsula Jutland in Denmark. Through the cable to Jutland, the energy island in the North Sea will be connected to the electricity transmission systems of Denmark and indirectly connected to the electricity transmission systems of Denmark's neighbouring countries. The energy island in the North Sea may also be directly connected by subsea electricity cables to other countries bordering or near the North Sea, including Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK), Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium.



*Illustrative image showing a part of a possible design of the planned new artificial energy island in the North Sea. Illustrative map: Danish Energy Agency* (https://ens.dk/en).

The total cost of constructing the island, the wind farms with a capacity of 10 GW and the related infrastructure is estimated to be around DKK 210 billion (EUR 28 billion, USD 34 billion). This is roughly equivalent to five times the total cost of constructing the Danish Great Belt Bridge across the Great Belt between the two islands Funen and Zealand. The energy island will be the largest ever construction project in Denmark.

The energy island in the North Sea will strengthen the integration of Europe's power grids and increase renewable electricity production necessary for a climate neutral Europe.

The energy island will produce very large quantities of green electricity made by offshore wind energy. The energy island is one of Denmark's flagship projects for the green transition in Europe.

The project for the construction and operation of the energy island in the North Sea will be a public private partnership between the Danish state and private companies. The state will own the majority of the island (at least 51%). Private companies will be crucial for the project to fulfil its potentials regarding innovation, flexibility, cost-effectiveness and business potentials. The energy island in the North Sea will offer the best opportunities to expand the project, for example by building a harbour and facilities for storage and conversion of green electricity from the nearby offshore wind farms. The long-term ambition is to be able to store green electricity on the island, convert it to liquid green fuel, and send it through subsea pipelines to Denmark and its neighbouring countries.

Provisions on the ownership of the energy island in the North Sea will be set in an executive order for a tender for private partnerships to be opened. The executive order will be issued by the Danish Government. The aim is to make the island a reality as soon as possible.

## Comments from the Danish Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities, Dan Jørgensen, on the additional agreement of 4 February 2021 and the energy island in the North Sea

The Danish Minister for Climate, Energy and Utilities, Dan Jørgensen, has published some press statements with comments on the additional agreement of 4 February 2021 and the energy island in the North Sea. Among others, the minister stated:

"We are at the dawn of a new era for energy. Last year, Denmark set a cutoff date for fossil fuel extraction. Today we are taking a decisive step toward a clean energy future. The EU has set a goal to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 and the Commission has set a target of 300 GW offshore wind energy in order to attain this goal. By constructing the world's first energy hub with a potential capacity of 10 GW, Denmark significantly contributes to this ambitious target. Not only by dramatically expanding renewable energy production, but also by supplying our European neighbours with an abundance of renewable energy."

"This is truly a great moment for Denmark and for the global green transition. This decision marks the start of a new era of sustainable energy production in Denmark and the world and it links very ambitious climate goals with growth and green jobs. The energy hub in the North Sea will be the largest construction project in Danish history. It will make a big contribution to the realization of the enormous potential for European offshore wind, and I am excited for our future collaboration with other European countries."

# *Energy island in the Baltic Sea* - energy island on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea and nearby wind farms

Denmark has also decided to establish another offshore wind energy island and hub on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea. It will serve as a physical energy hub for nearby offshore wind farms with a total capacity of 2 GW and around 133 wind turbines. It will house electrotechnical facilities for routing electricity from the wind turbines into the electricity grids. It will collect the green electricity from the wind farms and distribute the electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries. The energy island is planned to be completed in 2030 or, if this is not possible, then 2033 or as soon as possible thereafter.

The energy island in the Baltic Sea will be located north of the town Hasle which is north of the city Rønne (Roenne) on the Danish island Bornholm which is in the Baltic Sea south of Sweden and north of Germany. The energy island in the Baltic Sea will have nearby wind farms which will be located in offshore areas about 20 kilometres southwest and 25 kilometres south of the city Rønne. See the illustrative map below.

On behalf of the Danish Energy Agency, the Danish consulting firm COWI has made two reports in Danish on matters relating to the two energy islands. The first is a screening report on offshore areas which may be used for offshore wind farms with direct connections to land areas (May 2020). The second is a cost benefit analysis report on energy islands in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea (January 2021).

The energy island in the Baltic Sea will provide electricity to Denmark and its neighbouring countries bordering or near the Baltic Sea. The energy island's nearby wind farms will be connected with two subsea electricity cables, with lengths of about 20 and 25 kilometres, to the energy island. The energy island with its electrotechnical facilities on Bornholm will be connected to the electricity transmission system of the island Bornholm and, through other subsea electricity cables, to the transmission systems of the Danish island Zealand. Through the transmission systems of the Danish island Zealand, the energy island on Bornholm may also be indirectly connected to the transmission systems of the other parts of Denmark and Denmark's neighbouring countries. The energy island on Bornholm may also be directly connected by subsea electricity cables to other countries bordering or near the Baltic Sea, including Sweden, Germany and Poland.



*Illustrative map showing the energy island in the Baltic Sea on the Danish island Bornholm. Illustrative map: Energinet, the Danish transmission system operator (TSO), (https://en.energinet.dk/).* 

### Locations, reservations and preliminary investigations of areas for establishment of energy islands and their energy hubs and wind farms

As mentioned above, a broad majority of the parties of the Danish Parliament on 22 June 2020 made an agreement to commence the planning and development of the two new Danish offshore wind energy islands, the energy island in the North Sea and the energy island in the Baltic Sea. The broad majority of the parties also on 4 February 2021 made an additional agreement to the agreement of 22 June 2020 to commence the planning and development of the two new energy islands. The additional agreement is on ownership and construction of the two offshore wind energy islands.

The main agreement of 22 June 2020 and the additional agreement of 4 February 2021 also contain terms on the locations, reservations and preliminary investigations of the areas for the establishment of the two energy islands.

The illustrative maps above also show the areas reserved for the energy islands and their wind farms and the areas in which screenings have been made and in which preliminary investigations are to be performed by Energinet. Energinet is the Danish electricity transmission system operator (TSO) (grid operator).

The preliminary investigations are the first steps towards the realization of the energy islands and include geophysical studies (for example sonar studies where the seabed is screened), geotechnical studies (for example drillings into the seabed) and environmental studies (for example studies in relation to fish, birds and benthic animals).

Some background reports on possible locations have been made by consultants. These reports include several screening reports for locations for an offshore wind energy island in the North Sea and an offshore wind energy farm in the Baltic Sea, a geological expert assessment of the possible location of an energy island in a relatively shallow area in the North Sea, and visualizations of offshore wind farms in the Baltic Sea. Such reports have been made to investigate possible locations only. The reports do not determine, state or show the final locations of wind farms or islands.

# Inter-connections to the energy islands and agreements in relation thereto between Denmark and some of its neighbouring countries and between their electricity transmission system operators (grid operators)

As mentioned above, the energy islands will either be in Denmark, as regards the energy island in the Baltic Sea, or be connected to mainland Denmark by high-voltage electricity cables, as regards the energy island in the North Sea. The energy islands will also be connected by high-voltage electricity cables (electricity interconnectors) to Denmark's neighbouring countries. The electricity produced in the offshore wind farms will be collected in the energy islands and transmitted to and distributed in the electricity grids of Denmark and the other neighbouring countries. Denmark is planning to construct and use hybrid interconnectors which connect each energy island with both Denmark and one or more other countries and which can be used to transmit (transport) electricity from the offshore wind farms to the different countries and also to transmit (transport) electricity between two countries through the interconnectors and the energy hub on the energy island.

Denmark has made political and other agreements with several neighbouring countries to begin the joint study and analysis on high-voltage electricity cable connections (interconnectors) and hybrid interconnectors between each energy island and Denmark and one or more neighbouring countries. Some of the agreements also comprise other matters in relation to offshore wind energy and other offshore renewable energy. These agreements currently include the following:

Political agreement between Denmark and Germany regarding both the North Sea and the Baltic Sea.

Political agreement between Denmark and the Netherlands regarding the North Sea.

Political agreement between Denmark and Belgium regarding the North Sea.

Electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) agreement between the Danish TSO Energinet and the German TSO 50Hertz regarding the Baltic Sea.

Electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) agreement between the Danish TSO Energinet and the Belgian TSO Elia on the setting up of a feasibility study working group and the making of a feasibility study on a possible subsea electricity cable between the energy island in the North Sea in Denmark and Belgium.

## Next steps in the projects on the energy islands in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea

The projects on the energy islands in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea will entail very comprehensive, complex and costly work to be performed by the Danish authorities and private coowners and other parties for many years.

The Danish Energy Agency has stated that some of the main next steps in the projects are:

 Energinet, the Danish transmission system operator (TSO), has been instructed to commence preliminary studies on the seabed around the island Bornholm and the area in the North Sea where it has been decided the island and offshore wind farms will be located. These preliminary studies are intended to ensure that both the offshore wind farms and the artificial island are placed in areas that are suited for construction and where they will have the least possible impact on the environment.

- The Danish Energy Agency is also preparing a procurement for the shared ownership of the energy island in the North Sea. The 5 GW of offshore wind farms in the North and Baltic seas will also be put out to tender at a later time.
- Efforts are underway to sign binding agreements with Denmark's neighbours to ensure that Denmark can export the green electricity to other European electricity grids. See the comment on this above.
- Assessments and decisions must be made on where electricity cables from the energy islands shall be connected to land areas and their electricity grids.
- Assessments and decisions must be made on whether and how new technologies such as electricity storage and Powerto-X should be established on or connected to the islands and whether the islands should have their own electricity price zones.

## Danish Energy Agency's market dialogue on procurement framework for private co-ownership of energy island in the North Sea

In March 2021, the Danish Energy Agency commenced a market dialogue on the procurement framework for the private coownership of the energy island in the North Sea.

The energy island will be critical infrastructure for Denmark and the Danish society. It therefore has been decided that the Danish state shall own a majority, that is at least 51%, of the energy island and that one or more private parties, which also each may be a group of private parties, shall own the other part or parts the energy island.

The Danish Energy Agency has published the documents for the market dialogue on its website. The documents include the Danish Energy Agency's discussion paper of March 2021 with the title "Invitation to market dialogue - Regarding the procurement framework for the commercial co-ownership of the Energy Island in the North Sea - Discussion Paper" and a word document with a table containing boxes with the agency's questions in the discussion paper and blank boxes in which respondents can write their responses and comments.

In the discussion paper, the Danish Energy Agency has provided the following general introductory comments to the market dialogue and the following procurement process:

"The Danish Energy Agency (DEA) invites potential tenderers and relevant market operators to participate in the virtual market dialogue on the coming tender regarding the co-ownership of the Energy Island in the North Sea. The DEA is tendering out shared ownership of the Energy Island in the North Sea and plans to launch the tendering process in 2022 and announce a winner in 2023. This market dialogue is the first market dialogue of two market dialogues. After the first market dialogue, the procurement framework will be defined based on relevant feedback from potential tenderers and relevant market operators. The final procurement framework will be subject to political approval. The second dialogue is expected in Q4 2021 specifying in more detail the overall nature and scope of the shared ownership, cf. also section 4.

The first market dialogue will be an opportunity for the market and potential tenderers to discuss the main elements of the tender with the DEA and to provide input and recommendations to the themes in this paper. For each section and theme, there is a set of questions. This paper is thus meant as a discussion paper that introduces the Energy Island Project in terms of the expected time frame, possible business models, construction and technical requirements as well as the possibilities for innovation and commercialisation.

The discussion paper is based on initial investigations and planning assumptions. Whilst the DEA is confident in describing the principal outline of the coming project and processes, it must be recognised that the project remains a work in progress and that changes may occur.

The complete tender conditions will be set out in the tender material, which the DEA expects to publish in Q1 2022 along with the publication of a contract notice in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the EU."

In the discussion paper, the Danish Energy Agency has provided the following indicative timetable for the first market dialogue:

15 March 2021	The "Discussion Paper" will be available on the website of the Danish Energy Agency
16 March 2021 at 12:00 noon	Deadline for requests for participation in a virtual dialogue meeting with the Danish Energy Agency
18 March 2021	The Danish Energy Agency will submit invitations to dialogue meetings to the selected operators
22-26 March 2021	Virtual dialogue meetings with invited participants
6 April 2021	Deadline for submission of written answers and recommendations

### DLA Piper and Global Infrastructure Investor Association (GIIA) report on "Public-private partnerships for infrastructure investment: a global perspective"

On 18 March 2021, DLA Piper International and the Global Infrastructure Investment Association (GIIA) launched their joint global report on "Public-private partnerships for infrastructure investment: a global perspective".

The report is available on the following DLA Piper International website:

https://www.dlapiper.com/en/europe/insights/ publications/2021/03/public-private-partnerships-forinfrastructure-investment/

As countries around the world emerge from the global pandemic, investing in infrastructure is one of the critical measures to reignite their societies and economies and to achieve their environmental and social objectives. However, given the resulting financial pressures, governments alone may not be able to bear the full financial burden. A reappraisal of the role of private sector investment and appropriate funding models nationally and internationally, including public-private partnerships (PPPs) by whatever name, is therefore appropriate and timely.

The global report assesses the case for public-private partnerships (PPPs), backed by multijurisdictional analysis from DLA Piper's projects and infrastructure practitioners and practice groups around the world as well as insight from leading infrastructure investors. The purpose of the report is to stimulate discussion with policy makers about the benefits of PPP models, with examples from Australia, Canada, Colombia, Norway, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, the UK and the US.

The report was produced by DLA Piper in partnership with Global Infrastructure Investor Association (GIIA).

GIIA is a membership body for the world's leading institutional investors. On their behalf, GIIA works with governments and other stakeholders to boost the role of private investment in providing infrastructure that improves national, regional and local economies. See GIIA's website: http://giia.net/

Different models for public-private partnerships (PPPs), and other private sector investment and funding for infrastructure investment, will also be some of the financing and investment models which it is relevant to consider and assess in relation to the two Danish energy islands in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. It may also be appropriate to apply one or more of those models in relation to the financing of and investment in the two energy islands and their nearby wind farms.

As mentioned above, the two energy islands will be critical infrastructure for Denmark and the Danish society. It therefore has been decided that the Danish state shall own a majority, that is at least 51%, of each energy island and that one or more private parties, which also each may be a group of private parties, shall own the other part or parts the energy island. The owners shall operate the energy island jointly. The nearby wind farms shall be owned and operated by one or more private parties.

#### Sources

This newsletter is mainly based on information, press statements, reports, fact sheets, agreements, legal and other documents and 3D digital illustrative images and maps provided in Danish and/or English on the following websites and their subpages: Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities: https://en.kefm.dk/

Danish Energy Agency: https://ens.dk/en

Energinet (the Danish electricity transmission system operator (TSO)): <u>https://en.energinet.dk/</u>

State of Green (a Danish based not-for-profit, public-private partnership promoting and enabling the green transition): https://stateofgreen.com/en/

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