

# Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW Environment Effects Statement (EES)

Scoping Requirements FAQs June 2025

## 1. What is the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project?

The Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project is proposed to connect future offshore wind energy generation off the coast of Gippsland to the existing Victorian electricity grid. The transmission line is proposed to connect to a new onshore connection hub near Giffard and a substation near the Loy Yang Power Station in the Latrobe Valley. The project does not include any offshore infrastructure. The proposed project consists of the following proposed components and activities:

- Development, construction and operation of approximately 55 km of new 500 kV overhead, double circuit transmission line, supported by a series of above-ground towers.
- An onshore connection hub, including high voltage substation plant and equipment, with transformers, synchronous condensers and switchgear. This would provide future offshore wind energy facilities with a shared connection point that is part of the Declared Shared Network.
- A grid connection substation near the Loy Yang Power Station. This may comprise of new bays installed within the existing switchyard at the existing Declared Shared Network at Loy Yang Power Station to allow connection of the new high voltage circuits.

## 2. What is the purpose of the EES scoping requirements?

VicGrid (the proponent), which is an administrative office of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), is preparing an environment effects statement (EES) for the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project, on behalf of the Victorian Government.


The scoping requirements set out the matters to be investigated and documented within the EES. The EES will include a description of the proposed project, rigorous assessment of its potential effects on the environment and approaches to manage those effects.

The EES scoping requirements for the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project have been issued by the Minister for Planning and are available on the Planning website:

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/gippsland-offshore-wind-transmission-2-gw-project>

## 3. Did the public have an opportunity to comment on the scoping requirements?

Yes. Draft scoping requirements for the EES were exhibited on the Engage Victoria website from 20 March to 10 April. Notice of the draft scoping requirements' exhibition was advertised in national, metropolitan and local newspapers.



---

A total of 60 submissions were received during the public exhibition period, including from individuals and other stakeholders.

Submissions received have been provided to VicGrid, where permission was given, to inform the ongoing development of the EES.

## **4. What issues were raised in public submissions on the draft scoping requirements?**

Issues raised by submitters included concerns about:

- general matters relating to priority investigation areas such as biodiversity values, aboriginal cultural heritage, and landscape and visual amenity;
- avoidance and mitigation of impacts across all aspects covered by the scoping requirements;
- project-based decisions/practices, which included project viability, project costs and construction methods (i.e. undergrounding);
- impacts to land use and agricultural practices, forestry operations and tourism;
- the local road network and potential disruption to local communities;
- the need for effective landowner engagement and consultation practices, including with the Traditional Owner groups; and
- a need for the EES to clearly articulate the Project's benefits.

## **5. What revisions have been made to the draft scoping requirements in response to public submissions?**

The changes made to finalise the scoping requirements were minor and largely involved the inclusion of specific aspects such as consideration of:

- Potential impacts on forestry, including direct and indirect effects on the productivity of forestry operations, interference with access and growth and production cycles, and biosecurity.
- Potential impacts of exposure to electromagnetic or other radiation emissions from project construction or operations on animal life. This is in addition to the existing requirements to assess radiation effects on public health.
- Alternative construction methods. The project is defined in the public works order (declared under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*) as a '*double-circuit, high-voltage alternating current overhead transmission line*'. The scoping requirements were updated to include consideration of partial undergrounding of the transmission line as an alternative construction method (where feasible).

Most of the other relevant concerns raised in the submissions were considered to be adequately covered by existing requirements. For example, concerns regarding biodiversity values, notably conservation of significant species and habitat, are covered by the requirements of section 4.2, which require the proponent to assess the direct and indirect effects of the project on native vegetation, listed ecological communities, and listed threatened, migratory and other protected flora and fauna species.

The scoping requirements also prioritise the assessment of aboriginal cultural heritage (section 4.3), landscape and visual (section 4.4), and land use and socio-economic (section 4.5) values and requires the proponent to avoid and mitigate impacts. The proponent is also required to undertake effective engagement throughout the EES process with the public and stakeholders, including with the Traditional Owner Groups (sections 2.2.2., 2.2.3 and 4.3).



---

## 6. What happens now the Minister has issued the final scoping requirements?

VicGrid will address the matters set out in the scoping requirements through investigating environmental impacts, gathering information and preparing EES documents, in consultation with the Department of Transport and Planning and a technical reference group. The technical reference group is comprised of representatives from government agencies, regional authorities, municipal councils and registered Aboriginal parties (RAPs) with a statutory or policy interest in the project and its effects.

VicGrid will also engage the public and stakeholders about the environmental effects of the project and its investigations and provide opportunities for input and feedback to inform the EES. VicGrid's EES consultation plan can be viewed at:

<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/gippsland-offshore-wind-transmission-2-gw-project>

When the EES has been completed in accordance with the scoping requirements, the Minister for Planning will authorise the EES for exhibition and public comment, typically for a period of 30 business days.

The Minister will appoint an inquiry under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* to consider the EES and submissions received. The inquiry may hold a formal hearing where the proponent and submitters can speak and present expert witnesses to inform a report to the Minister. The Minister will then make an assessment of the project's environmental effects.

After the Minister has made an assessment, the inquiry report and the Minister's assessment will be published on the Planning website.

The Minister's assessment will be considered by statutory decision-makers responsible for the project's approvals.

## 7. What about the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act?

The project was also referred to the Australian Government under the Commonwealth's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The delegate for the former Minister for the Environment determined in November 2024 that the project is a 'controlled action' requiring assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. The provisions for the Australian Government's controlled action decision under the EPBC Act are:

- listed threatened species and communities (sections 18 & 18A); and
- listed migratory species (sections 20 & 20A).

The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act through the Bilateral (Assessment) Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria. The EES for the project will be undertaken in accordance with the bilateral agreement; there will be no separate assessment by the Commonwealth. The Victorian Minister's assessment will be provided to the Commonwealth to inform their decision about the approval required for the project under the EPBC Act. The final EES scoping requirements identify matters relating to the EPBC controlled action decision, so that the EES can appropriately address these matters of national environmental significance that need to be assessed.

## 8. When does VicGrid expect to publicly exhibit its EES?

The EES is expected to be on public exhibition in 2026. During this period, the public can make submissions on the EES.



---

## 9. Why is an EES required for the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project?

In September 2024, the Minister for Planning declared the Gippsland Offshore Wind Transmission 2 GW project to be 'public works' under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* and determined that an EES is required for the project. This is because the project has the potential for a range of significant effects relating to:

- biodiversity and ecological values including native vegetation, listed flora, fauna and communities through loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitat, collision with transmission lines, or other ecological effects;
- Aboriginal cultural heritage and historic heritage values;
- landscape values and amenity;
- surface water environments including waterways and wetlands; and
- socio-economic values and land uses, including agriculture, forestry and local communities.

The project also has the potential for cumulative adverse effects on the above-mentioned values from the combination of proposed works, and other existing and publicly known proposed projects within the region.

An EES is the most comprehensive and robust assessment process available in Victoria. The EES will provide an integrated and transparent examination of the proposed project and its environmental effects.