

Attachment 2

For Public Notice via Internet

**REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*
(REFERRAL NUMBER 2022-R10)**

Proponent

Greater Gippsland OWP Project Pty Ltd

Project

Greater Gippsland Offshore Wind Project

Description

The proposed Greater Gippsland Offshore Wind Project is comprised of an offshore wind farm and supporting transmission infrastructure located onshore and offshore, in the south-west Gippsland region. The referral covers the offshore components within Victorian state waters and onshore components of the project including the two subsea export cables, an underground cable from the shore to the landing point, a new onshore substation, and the supporting transmission infrastructure. The offshore wind turbines would be located in Commonwealth waters and do not form part of this referral, however would include up to 139 turbines and two to four offshore substations located approximately 10 - 43 km off the coastline between Seaspray and Woodside Beach.

The project has an anticipated operational life of indicatively 40 years with a construction period of approximately 2 years and is anticipated to generate and supply up to 2.085 GW of renewable electricity into the National Energy Market.

The onshore project area would be located predominantly on agricultural land and plantations within the lands of the Gunaikurnai People. Several small settlement areas are located in proximity to the proposed transmission routes.

Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is required for the Greater Gippsland Offshore Wind Project, specifically the works proposed within Victorian jurisdiction, as described in the referral accepted on 14 December 2022.

Reasons

- The project has the potential for a range of significant and complex effects that require rigorous assessment. In particular, the project as proposed could have significant effects on:
 - i. threatened terrestrial and aquatic species and communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
 - ii. ecological values of the area's terrestrial environments, including habitats, ecological communities and native vegetation, particularly within State Parks and nature conservation reserves;
 - iii. marine and freshwater environments, including Ramsar wetlands and creeks;
 - iv. aboriginal cultural heritage; and
 - v. landscape and visual amenity.

- There is uncertainty about the extent and magnitude of potential effects related to historic heritage, traffic, soils, groundwater, amenity and socioeconomic values that also require further assessment.
- The project has potential for cumulative adverse effects on local and regional environmental values in the context of other existing and proposed projects within the region.
- An EES is warranted to enable an integrated assessment of the environmental effects of the project and to inform decision-making for required approvals. The EES will evaluate feasible, relevant alternatives, the effectiveness of proposed mitigation and offsetting measures, including opportunities to avoid or minimise potential significant effects through alternative layouts, designs and other mitigation measures.

Date 27/06/2023