



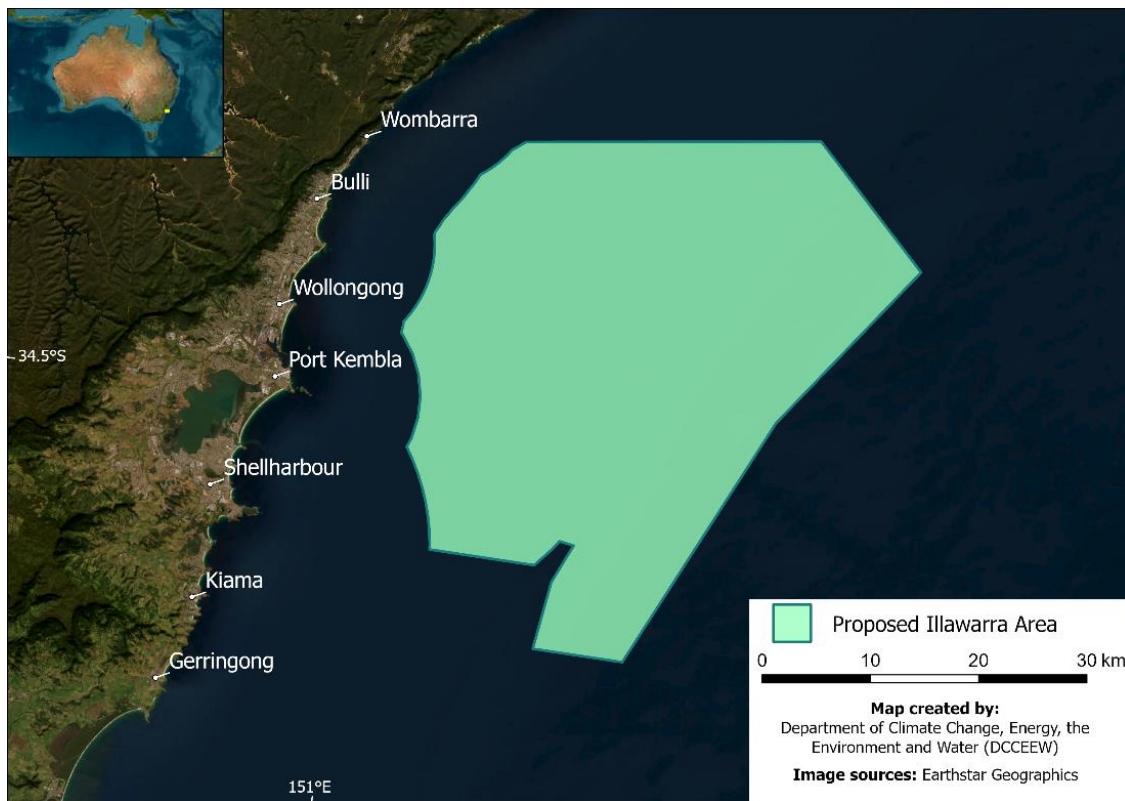
Frequently Asked Questions – Proposed offshore renewable energy area in Pacific Ocean off Illawarra region, NSW

What is being proposed?

The area in the Pacific Ocean off the Illawarra region of NSW has been identified as a potential site for zoning for future offshore wind development in Australian Commonwealth waters.

Where is the Illawarra?

The proposed area is in the Pacific Ocean off the Illawarra, NSW and extends from Wombarra in the north to Kiama in the South.



How can I have my say?

This is your first opportunity to provide feedback.

We want your feedback on the proposal and how offshore wind projects could share the area with other marine users and interests. We encourage your feedback through a submission through our [Have Your Say](#) web portal.

Is this the only chance to have my say?

No. This is your first opportunity to provide feedback.

Proposing an area is a first step to hear about who is using the wider marine area, before developers can seek licences over smaller areas within any area declared by the Minister. As part of testing the feasibility of project proposals, licence holders will need to consult with the local community and



marine users. The Australian Government is currently developing regulations that will set out the details and requirements of management plans to be developed in the feasibility stage, including the requirement for licence holders to undertake further consultation.

Why is offshore wind being considered?

The Australian Government has set a target of net zero emissions by 2050. Offshore wind projects within the Illawarra region can help the Australian Government meet these targets.

How will this benefit the local community?

Offshore wind projects in the Illawarra can help decarbonise the economy with year-round clean energy generation and drive regional jobs growth, with a need for skills in engineering and construction, as well strong transferable skills from other sectors including high-voltage electrical, logistics and offshore work.

How are First Nations groups being engaged with?

Dharawal, Yuin and the First Nations Australians of NSW have significant interests in the marine region, as part of their cultural heritage. There are no Native Title claims that overlap the proposed offshore area. Engagement with local Aboriginal corporations is an important part of the declaraton process, to ensure decisions are made that support First Nations Australians interests. We encourage First Nations groups to make a submission through our [Have Your Say](#) portal.

How will the environment be protected?

We have consulted with government agencies responsible for the protection of the environment. Developers must receive approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* for any project proposed in an area that is declared. This will include an assessment of the relevant impacts and proposed avoidance, management, and mitigation to demonstrate that acceptable environmental outcomes can be achieved and ensure minimal impact on the marine environment. For more information on how the environment will be protected, please see *Marine Users, Interests, and the Environment – Illawarra Region*.

We have recently published guidance material on how we would expect offshore wind developers to consider potential environmental impacts before seeking approvals. This is available on our [website](#).

What sort of projects might be built in the area?

Currently, development interest is mostly focused on potential offshore wind projects. This could change in the future as more renewable energy generation technologies come to market. Future licences could be granted for offshore solar, wave or tidal energy, or other forms of energy generation from renewable sources.

Will I still be able to access the area?

Yes, in line with rules that manage safe navigation in the maritime space. The Australian Government will manage the offshore marine environment in a way that recognises all users and balances competing interests. **Future offshore wind projects must work with existing users and interests to ensure the area is shared, while maintaining a safe marine space during construction, operation and maintenance phases.**



Will I be able to fish in the area?

Yes – to the extent possible to ensure a safe marine space. It is Australian Government policy that offshore renewable energy projects will need to share the marine space with existing users.

Restrictions may be placed around specific infrastructure to manage safety. It is expected that project developers will consult with fishers and other impacted users to minimise any disruptions. For detailed information on fishing in the vicinity of the area, please read [Marine Users, Interests, and the Environment – Illawarra Region](#).

How many wind turbines could there be, and will I be able to see them?

Offshore wind turbines will be visible from the shore to differing extents. Their visual effect will depend on their distance to the shore, the height of the turbines, the extent of haze in the atmosphere and the elevation of where from shore they are being viewed. The exact location of projects and number of turbines that may be proposed within a future declared area is yet to be determined.

What happens to the wind turbines once they reach their end of life?

Offshore wind turbines have a specific lifespan. Once they reach the end of this, they are decommissioned. Currently, up to 95% of wind turbines are recyclable, with manufacturers aiming to reach 100% recyclable in the next few years. Each developer must provide a clear plan and financial security set aside for decommissioning, before they are granted a commercial licence – they cannot be granted a commercial licence without these. These arrangements must be set out in their management plan, which is approved by the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator.

What marine users and interests are in the area?

We have undertaken initial consultation with Commonwealth and New South Wales government agencies to identify interests in the vicinity of the area. Examples of marine users and interests in the area include: Defence, Native Title holders, various species of marine animal life, vessel traffic, weather radars, commercial and recreational fishing, owners of existing infrastructure, and tourism industry. For more detailed information, please read [Marine Users, Interests, and the Environment – Illawarra Region](#).

How will this affect shipping and vessel traffic?

We are working with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the Port Authority of New South Wales to determine whether specific areas will need to be identified for vessel traffic to ensure the safe management of shipping in and out of Port Kembla. This consultation will be ongoing throughout the public consultation period.

How will electricity generated in the area be transmitted and used?

Electricity generated by potential offshore wind projects in the area may be transmitted onshore to be fed into the National Electricity Market (NEM) or be used to supply a specific end user, such as heavy industry.

Existing connection infrastructure may have capacity limitations that could put an upper limit on the number of prospective projects. It is the responsibility of prospective developers to understand existing and future capacity requirements and consider the prospective end use of future electricity generated in the area.



Do existing legal requirements continue to apply?

Yes. Prospective developers are responsible for obtaining all relevant approvals under Commonwealth and State government legislation. Developers are required to be aware of all other rights and obligations that may apply to their respective projects. This may include, but is not limited to, [Underwater Cultural Heritage](#), [Biosecurity](#), [Navigation](#), [Immigration](#), [Customs](#), [Native Title](#), [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation](#) and [Air Services](#).

How long will the area be declared for?

When declaring an area suitable for offshore wind development, the Minister is not required to specify for how long the declaration will last. If the declaration instrument does not state an end date, it will remain in force until it is revoked. To revoke the declared area, the Minister must undertake a consultation process and consider the submissions received. If a declaration is revoked, or otherwise ends, any licences that have already been issued will remain; however, they cannot be changed or renewed.