European Parliament
2019-2024

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

2019/2158(INI)

COMPROMISE AMENDMENT

Draft opinion
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(PE648.288v01-00)

on the impact on the fishing sector of offshore windfarms and other renewable energy systems
(2019/2158(INI))

COMPROMISE AMENDMENT 1
Covers AMs 1-96

1. Recalls the EU's sustainable commitment ***while fighting against effects of global climate change***, to achieving its ***net*** zero-carbon ***emission*** target by 2050 ***at the latest***, as confirmed in the European Green Deal and the recovery plan; ***takes note of Commission's proposal to increase reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as highlighted in the communication on "Stepping up Europe's 2030 climate ambition"; reminds of Parliament's mandate as adopted during the Plenary vote on Climate Law on the 2030 emission reduction target;***

2. Emphasises that renewable energy ***and energy efficiency are among the key drivers for reaching a net zero emissions economy***; ***highlights that in order to meet 2030 renewable energy target offshore renewable electricity infrastructure capacity and production need to be increased accordingly; underlines that offshore wind energy is one of the most advanced and fast-growing of the emerging and innovative sectors of the economy; highlights that active development and deployment of offshore wind energy, should increase its competitiveness as energy source and thereby contribute to reduced energy prices and increased affordability;***

3. Highlights that an increase in offshore wind energy production is essential for the clean energy transition; stresses that, as ***EU*** offshore wind capacity currently stands at just ***12*** GW ***and needs to be increased to estimated 300*** GW ***to 450 GW*** of capacity by 2050; ***stresses that offshore wind farms for the production of electricity tend to be more efficient than onshore wind farms due to higher wind resources available in offshore areas compared to onshore areas and the possibility of installing generators of bigger size and higher capacity;***

4. Stresses that the decision to find space for ***at least 60 GW of additional offshore wind energy capacity by 2030*** is of the utmost importance ***and should be considered a priority in the upcoming years***; ***takes into account that the development of offshore renewables varies greatly in size and capacities across the different European sea basins, especially since most of the European offshore wind capacity will be concentrated in the North and Baltic seas, where conditions are more favourable; notes that this potential will continue to grow due to technological developments including in the Atlantic Ocean and in the Southern European Seas;***

5. Stresses that floating wind farms technology has the potential to significantly increase the sea space available for offshore wind farms especially in deep sea areas, points out that floating wind farms could generate large amounts of energy due to stronger and more consistent winds, minimise visual impact on European coastlines, provide better accommodation for fishing and shipping lanes, acts as fish aggregating devices, opens opportunities for using areas that were not previously accessible and could contribute to reduce the potential of maritime spatial conflicts in line with the previous assessment of the transparent and integrated spatial management options;

6. Highlights the need to deploy offshore wind in deep waters of the EU (i.e. Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Atlantic Ocean), thus calls on the Commission and Member States to extend research, development and innovation efforts on floating wind farms and to assess the feasibility of establishing an IPCEI for a large-scale project;

7. Recalls that electricity production from offshore renewables also creates an opportunity for renewable hydrogen production as outline in "EU Strategy to harness the potential of offshore renewable energy for a climate neutral future", the "EU Strategy for Energy System Integration strategy" and "A hydrogen strategy for a climate-neutral Europe";

8. Highlights that a strong expansion of offshore wind energy production requires an intelligent approach to ensure its coexistence**,** with the activities that already take place in the affected areas; ***stresses that there are already examples of coexistence between the fishing sector and the offshore wind energy sector, and this experience should be used to find and share the best available practices for multi-use of relevant resources during the entire life cycle of marine infrastructure; highlights that collaboration is critical to the safe coexistence of fishing and wind farm operations: the wind industry, fishermen and local authorities should cooperate in the exchange of data from the fishing industry, of exact location of wind farms, cables and related assets as well as exclusion areas (temporary or permanent) and security zones, including those containing dumped ammunitions;***

9. Underlines that the creation of sustainable new jobs, as well as support for using wind energy for local electricity supply are important predictors for local acceptance of renewable energy projects such as offshore wind farms and related onshore infrastructure, and this variable mediates the relationship between energy security and coastal community acceptance; calls on the Member States to promote the development of offshore wind investments under a scheme which ensures public participation and active engagement;

10. Stresses that the multiple use of sea areas must be considered from the outset ***in a way that balances the interests of the*** offshore wind ***sector,*** the fishing sector ***and the fulfilment of EU energy, climate and biodiversity objectives***; ***emphasises that if designed and built sensibly, offshore windfarms could benefit marine biodiversity and serve as refugia; calls on the Commission and Member States to assess the impact of the offshore wind farms, which are already in operation, on the regeneration of marine habitats and the biodiversity and to create an EU best practice;***

11. Stresses that the energy use of the sea, while ensuring environmental protection and the sustainable development of fisheries and other economic activities, requires joint planning and an assessment of cumulative impacts, including socio-economic and socio-cultural effects; believes that the cooperation across sectors active in the offshore environment and the economy will also be a driver for a just transition; calls on the competent authorities to assess initiatives that activate local economies and economic activities offshore and find synergies between sectors that can be the bedrock of a future-proof economic recovery;

12. Stresses that long-term options for multiple uses of offshore areas must be explored at an earlier stage in order to enable the expansion of offshore wind farms while addressing

their ***direct and indirect*** impact on fisheries; ***stresses that EU regulatory framework should contribute to ensure environmental impacts are monitored and actions are taken to prevent and minimize the impacts; climate, energy, fisheries and marine biodiversity policies should reinforce each other when developing an EU offshore wind strategy;***

13. ***Stresses that space allocation where relevant should be the result of a joint maritime spatial planning (MSP) that involves*** the Commission***,*** Member States and neighbouring countries, with a view to optimising the use of sea space and cross-sector ***and cross-country*** cooperation, and minimising spatial conflicts ***while taking into account mutual respect and good neighbourly relations***; ***stresses that the maritime spatial plans as set out in Directive 2014/89/EU shall be established as soon as possible, and at the latest by 31 March 2021;***

14. Calls on the Commission to carry out an impact assessment to examine the expected economic, social, environmental, ***climate and biodiversity*** impacts of constructing new offshore wind facilities in areas where they are likely to come into conflict with the fishing sector.