

Offshore wind is key to deliver Europe's ambition on decarbonisation. A net-zero emissions economy by 2050 relies on renewables, which includes between 240 GW and 450 GW of offshore wind, according to the European Commission.

Delivering offshore wind needs two things: **higher national ambition** and **international cooperation**, especially in the North Sea. The latter is essential to the **cost-efficient expansion of offshore wind**.

The European wind industry strongly supports the renewal of the Political Declaration of North Seas Countries Energy Cooperation beyond 2019. We recognise the progress made so far and call for the **cooperation to be intensified**. Governments should collaborate even more with each other on offshore wind. And they should strengthen the cooperation with the wind industry and other sea users.

The collaboration should be strategic. The volume targets and the policies to achieve them should be spelt out in the National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) for 2030. And the Political Declaration should shift the focus from cost reduction, already achieved by industry ahead of time, to a more **action-based approach**. It should prioritise:

1. Access to sites and site development:
  - **Regional screening and Maritime Spatial Planning** across national sea borders, to identify potential sites for 450 GW of offshore wind;
  - **Cumulative and cross-border environmental impact assessments**;
  - **A common approach to planning and permitting** factoring the potential risks and benefits to biodiversity;
  - **New solutions for site development**, including multiple uses and co-existence with other sector's interests, and
  - **A larger role for developers in site development** within the zones assigned by Member States in their Maritime Spatial Plans.
2. Developing and optimising grids by:
  - **Opening the development of transmission assets (to shore) to offshore wind developers**;
  - **Developing framework for hybrid projects** connecting more than one market;
  - **Defining onshore optimum locations** for the import of power, reducing the number of landing points.
3. Development of the onshore grid from the coast to consumers:
  - **Coordinating the development of new lines and reinforcing existing ones**;
  - **Communicating the societal value of grid expansion**: climate mitigation, cost efficiency and energy security;
  - **Promoting sector coupling and electrification** through incentives for electro-intensive industry to locate near 'landing points' or other large consumption centres, and
  - **Making full use of available** funding mechanisms (e.g.: PCIs).
4. Technical standards:
  - Aligning **technical standards** to reduce costs, increase safety and maximise skill transferability. This should include vessels and crew requirements, aviation and naval lighting and marking, health and safety and project certification;
  - **Coordinating the national implementation of those standards**;
  - **Aligning with other international initiatives and projects**, where possible.

The wind industry looks forward to a closer dialogue with governments in all of this to develop the work programme for the next phase of collaboration. Delivering 450 GW of offshore wind by 2050 is feasible.