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Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context regarding proposed activity PLLC “*Aušrinis*” park of up to 6 wind turbines at Biržai district municipality, Parovėjos ward, Padvariečiai, Leitiškiai, Jasiškiai villages

The Environment State Bureau (hereinafter – the Bureau), acting as a Point of Contact of Latvia regarding Notification in accordance with Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (hereafter – the Convention) and the competent authority on the environmental impact assessment (hereinafter – the EIA) in Latvia, would like to thank the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania for information sent concerning the notification of the proposed activity PLLC “*Aušrinis*” park of up to 6 wind turbines at Biržai district municipality, Parovėjos ward, Padvariečiai, Leitiškiai, Jasiškiai villages (hereinafter – the Project) with reference to Article 3 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (hereinafter – the Espoo Convention).

The Bureau hereby acknowledges the receipt of the notification and prepared documentation.

Please be informed that the Bureau published received information regarding Project on Bureau's webpage¹ on 1st of February 2023 and send information directly to the involved authorities. The Bureau received opinions and comments regarding the Project and its potential transboundary impacts within the scope of competence from the Ministry of the Climate and

¹<https://www.vpvb.gov.lv/lv/parrobezu-ietekmes-uz-vidi-novertejumu-projekti/veja-parku-izbuve-lietuvas-republikas-teritorija-zarasu-un-birzu-rajonu-pasvaldibas>.

Energy of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Latvia, the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia, the Nature Conservation Agency, the State Environmental Service, the Zemgale planning region and the Bauska Municipality.

The Bureau suggests adding below mentioned information to the Project's screening documentation that in more detail characterizes the border area:

1. According to the in-force Bauskas (Vecumnieku) municipal spatial plan the permitted dominant functional zones of the permitted usage on the mentioned Impact area are *Rural Territory (L)* and *Forest Territory (M)*. The Usage of the functional zone *Rural Territory (L)* permits as well as:
 - a. Residential building and land use – Country estate building as one of general use (according to the Annex 3 of the Cabinet Regulation No 240 “*General Regulations for the Planning, Use and Building of the Territory*” (30.04.2013.) (hereafter – the Regulation No 240) – it means Separate building in a rural area consisting of one or several individual residential buildings with household buildings and subsidiary buildings necessary for household or economic activity).
 - b. Public building and land use as an addition use, including Buildings of tourism and recreational establishments, Building of cultural institutions, Sport building etc.

In this case the Bureau draws your attention that according to the Screening Summary, nearest homestead is located 1,54 km from the wind turbine VE1 and 2,01 km from wind turbine VE3. Mentioned permitted usage of the functional zone *Rural Territory (L)* allows residential and public buildings closer to the border. According to the Article 163.2. of the Regulation No 240 in planning the deployment of wind power plants and wind parks, it must be ensured that the distance from the nearest planned wind turbines with a capacity exceeding 2 MW and wind park to residential and public buildings shall be at least 800 m. In addition to the provided information in the Screening Summary the Bureau identified that distance from nearest wind turbines VE1 and VE3 is accordingly approximately 1,24 km and 1,80 km from the border. In addition to the provided information regarding noise limits, the Bureau informs that according to the Annex 2 of the Cabinet Regulation No 16 “*Procedures for Noise Assessment and Management*” (07.01.2014.) the noise limit for residential area of individual houses ((mansions, small floors or single houses), child institutions, medical treatment, health and social care institutions) is L_{day} (7:00 – 19:00) 55 dB(A), $L_{evening}$ 19:00 – 23:00 50 dB(A) and L_{night} 23:00 – 7:00 45 dB(A).

2. The Natura 2000 territory “*Skaistkalnes karsta kritenes*”² (sitecode – LV0402200, type – B) is directly adjacent to the border of the Republic of Lithuania. The Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* has been observed in the territory of the Republic of Latvia approximately 660 m from the national border (species observation status – potential nesting). The Nature Conservation Agency stated that there is not expected potential negative effect on the habitats of European Union importance in the territory of the Republic of Latvia.

The Nature Conservation Agency and the State Environmental Service provided the following proposals to be considered when carrying out the screening:

1. The Nature Conservation Agency pointed that special attention should be paid to how the

²<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/334009-noteikumi-par-aizsargajamiem-geologiskajiem-un-geomorfologiskajiem-dabas-pieminekliem>

wind park will affect migrating and nesting birds, including large birds of prey, and bats in the environmental impact assessment process. In addition to the planned bird and bat monitoring program and remote telemetry studies, the Nature Conservation Agency recommends installing the bird deterrent systems at wind turbines to prevent death of the birds, especially large birds of prey. It is also recommended to consider the possibility of painting one blade of the wind turbine black to increase the chances of birds noticing the wind turbines and avoiding them.

2. The State Environmental Service also pointed out the need to pay particular attention to the study of migratory routes for birds and bats, as well as to find the best/greenest technical solutions (alternatives) for minimizing negative impacts and possible accident risks for further planning and evaluation.

In addition, most of the involved authorities, as well as the Bauskas Municipality asked to provide information on the results of the screening of the Project, including assessment of the transboundary impacts, if identified.

In the view of the above mentioned the Bureau informs that Latvia does not intend to participate in the environmental impact assessment procedure in accordance with the Convention as an affected party. Nevertheless, we would be grateful for an opportunity to observe the process and to receive information about the results of the screening. We draw your attention to the mentioned proposals and national regulatory requirements to be considered in the screening of the Project.

Yours sincerely,

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Director of Environment State Bureau of the Republic of Latvia

**Document is sign with secure electronical signature*

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