

Annex Two

MD-LOT Basking Shark Licence Case Handling Report

Licence Number: 00010426

Licensing Officer: [Redacted]

Site	Eastern Green Link 4 ("EGL4") Cable Corridor
Company	SP Transmission PLC 320 St. Vincent Street Glasgow G2 5AD
Applicant	[Redacted]
Brief Description of Project	Geophysical and Geotechnical Surveys for Electricity Cable Route
Associated Licences	European Protected Species Licence 00010425

Species	Basking Shark (<i>Cetorhinus maximus</i>)
Inshore/Offshore	Inshore/Offshore

TEST 1	Purpose of licence
	preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment
Comments	
<p>The Applicant has supplied the following information:</p> <p>The survey is required to support the installation of a new subsea HVDC cables (EGL 4) that are needed to provide additional network capacity and greater power transfer capability across the Anglo-Scottish border. The cable for the wider EGL4 project cannot be installed without detailed inspection of the seabed in order to assess seabed conditions to finalise routing and allow micro-siting and to ensure the most suitable option is put forward. Therefore a scenario whereby the surveys are not undertaken is not an option in this instance.</p> <p>The associated EGL 4 HVDC cables cannot be installed prior to assessing the seabed in order inform the identification of the final cabling route for which this survey is required. This is to ensure the preservation of the surrounding marine environment. The survey results will inform the applicant of the most appropriate route for cable deployment.</p>	

MD-LOT European Protected Species Licence Case Handling Report

EPS/Basking Shark application for surveys are not in relation to specific government targets or policies however, they contribute to the wider program of works for the EGL 4 HVDC cables to increase transmission and support broader renewables targets.

Applicant is not undertaking a statutory function during the seabed survey

Test 1 satisfied?	YES
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TEST 2	Satisfactory alternatives
Comments	
<p>Regulation 44(3)(a) of the Habitat Regulations 1994 and Regulation 55(7)(a) of the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 requires the Scottish Ministers to be satisfied that there is no satisfactory alternative before an EPS Licence can be issued for the Licensable Operations. For the survey data that is required to be collected to assess seabed conditions the proposed methods and equipment must be used as there are no technological alternatives. No suitable alternatives could be identified by the applicant. By not performing the seabed surveys, the applicant could be endangering marine habitats during cable installation activities if the seabed conditions within the marine installation corridor are unknown.</p> <p>The survey must take place within the marine installation corridor for the planned EGL4 HVDC cables to inform later installation activities. The survey must be completed prior to EGL4 installation which is scheduled to complete 2030/1. The specified equipment and methods are required to collect the necessary data needed to determine seabed conditions.</p>	
Test 2 satisfied?	YES

TEST 3	Favourable Conservation Status ("FCS")
Comments	
<p>NatureScot has concluded in its advice of 25 July 2023 that the activity will have no negative impact on the conservation status of the species in their natural range as the proposed activity is not capable of having an adverse impact on basking sharks.</p>	
Test 3 satisfied?	YES

Date application received: 24/05/2023 **Date variation application received:**

Consultation start date: 23/06/2023

Consultation end date: 21/07/2023

Notes

Date	Text	Created By

Awaiting Information

Start date	End date	Duration (days)	Waiting for	Waiting on Information From

Licence issue date: 12/09/2023

Date report due: 31/07/2024

Reviewed and signed by:

Signed:

[Redacted]

Date: 11 Septemeber 2023