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## Request for the extension of EPS Licence: MS EPS 17/2019/1

Dear Rhys,

I am writing in connection with the European Offshore Wind Development Centre (EOWDC) in relation to geophysical survey works during the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) phase.

An EPS licence (licence reference MS EPS 17/2019/0) was granted in July 2019 to permit the disturbance of specified species as a result of geophysical survey work using Subsea Ultra-Short Baseline (USBL), Multibeam Echo Sounder (MBES) and Side-Scan Sonar (SSS) equipment. The licence was extended earlier this year until 21 January 2021.

Vattenfall commissioned a study modelling the underwater noise impacts of USBL's (TNO, 2020). The USBL sections of the Risk Assessment which was prepared for the original application have been updated with the outputs from this study (please note there have been no updates to the assessment of the use of MBES and SSS as no new information has become available regarding this equipment). The findings for USBL use using the outputs of the TNO study were in agreement with those of the original Risk Assessment produced in 2019:

- The potential for auditory injury is considered to be nil/negligible. Therefore neither mitigation nor a licence (to injure) should be required; and
- There is potential for harbour porpoise to respond behaviourally, as there was according to the previous Risk Assessment. Therefore a licence (to disturb) will be required. Because population level effects will be nil/negligible (i.e. not detrimental to the favourable conservation status (FCS) of the species concerned in their natural range), it is considered that a licence (to disturb) can be awarded.

Vattenfall are planning to continue to undertake annual geophysical survey campaigns over the next five years. However the licence will expire on 21 January 2021. Therefore I am writing to request an extension of this licence for a further 5 years to **21 January 2026**.

I can confirm that the annual survey campaigns will be undertaken using the same equipment as the previous campaigns (USBL, MBES and SSS). The other details of the survey specifications i.e. duration of each campaign will also remain the same as those assessed previously. Therefore, it is considered that the environmental risks for the annual survey campaigns remain the same as assessed in the original application.



Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Emma Toogood  
Environmental Specialist

**Reference**

TNO, 2020, Impacts of USBL systems on marine life. Study commissioned by Vattenfall.