

16 June 2026

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

By email: EPBC.Vic.Tas@dcceew.gov.au

Re: Committee for Gippsland submission on the Star of the South Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Star of the South Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Committee for Gippsland (C4G) welcomes the opportunity to comment on this significant project, both at a local and national level. As Gippsland's peak industry body, C4G supports the Star of the South Offshore Wind Project and commends Southerly Ten for the comprehensive environmental assessment undertaken. This submission reflects the project's significant potential to support Gippsland's economy while contributing to Australia's clean energy transition.

About Committee for Gippsland

Committee for Gippsland is Gippsland's peak industry body, representing a broad cross-section of sectors including energy, agriculture, health, education, manufacturing, transport and professional services. We are an independent, apolitical organisation committed to advocating Gippsland's economic development, supporting investment attraction and ensuring regional communities benefit from major projects that deliver long-term employment opportunities and lasting community assets.

Executive summary

C4G supports the Star of the South project and acknowledges the comprehensive assessment undertaken through the EIS process, and previous community and industry engagement. This project represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to leverage Gippsland's world-class Bass Strait wind resource, replace capacity lost from retiring coal-fired power stations, and deliver lasting economic and employment benefits to the region.

C4G particularly notes the project's stated:

- Alignment with Commonwealth and Victorian emissions reduction and renewable energy targets.
- Capacity of up to 2.2 GW, sufficient to power more than 1.2 million homes.
- Potential to reduce emissions by approximately 7 million tonnes of CO₂ annually.
- Forecast creation of around 800 direct local jobs over the life of the project and approximately \$3 billion in direct regional investment.

- Thorough and iterative approach to environmental impact assessment, incorporating extensive field studies, stakeholder consultation and adaptive management frameworks.

1. Regional economic and employment outcomes

The EIS identifies significant economic opportunities for Gippsland. We understand the project is expected to create between 215 and 683 annual full-time construction jobs within Gippsland, together with an additional 76 to 204 indirect jobs across services, trades and logistics. During operation, approximately 200 ongoing Gippsland-based roles are expected to support local businesses and provide long-term career opportunities.

Gippsland has powered Victoria for generations. As coal-fired power stations retire, offshore wind provides the region with a genuine opportunity to maintain its position as Victoria's energy powerhouse while transitioning existing skills into new industries and retaining highly skilled workers, contractors and engineering capability within the region.

C4G has consistently advocated for projects that create sustainable regional employment, strengthen local supply chains and position Gippsland to transition to emerging industries. Star of the South represents a significant opportunity to achieve these objectives.

2. Marine environment, commercial and recreational fishing

The EIS includes detailed assessments of the project's potential effects on the marine environment, including benthic ecology, fish and invertebrates, marine mammals and turtles, seabirds and bats, coastal processes and marine protected areas.

C4G notes and welcomes the comprehensive assessment undertaken and supports the proposed mitigation measures outlined in the EIS.

The commercial and recreational fishing industries are important contributors to Gippsland's economy and community identity. C4G acknowledges the EIS assessment that, with mitigation measures in place, construction and operational impacts on fishing are expected to be negligible to minor, with residual risks assessed as very low to low.

C4G also recognises the important role of Traditional Owners in the stewardship of Country and supports the ongoing engagement commitments outlined in the EIS. Meaningful partnership with Traditional Owners should remain an important component of project delivery.

3. Port infrastructure: a critical regional priority

While port selection sits outside the scope of the EIS, C4G wishes to highlight the critical importance of port infrastructure to Gippsland's long-term economic future.

C4G acknowledges the Victorian Government's selection of the Port of Hastings as the preferred location for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal, recognising its important role in supporting the construction of Victoria's offshore wind industry.

At the same time, Gippsland's ports will play a critical role in supporting operations, maintenance and regional supply chains associated with offshore wind development. Strategic investment in Gippsland's port infrastructure will be essential to maximise regional economic participation and ensure local businesses are well positioned to capture long-term opportunities arising from the offshore wind sector.

C4G encourages the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to continue investing in infrastructure that supports progressing the development of the offshore wind industry in Gippsland, creating lasting economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Conclusion

C4G supports the Star of the South project and encourages the Minister to give due weight to the substantial regional economic, employment and environmental benefits identified in the EIS, together with the comprehensive environmental management framework proposed for the project.

C4G believes the project represents an important opportunity to combine environmental responsibility with regional economic development.

Gippsland stands capable and determined to lead Australia's offshore wind industry. C4G looks forward to continuing to work with Star of the South, all levels of governments, community and industry to help ensure this transformative project delivers lasting economic, employment and community benefits for Gippsland while contributing to Australia's clean energy future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss this submission further.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Committee for Gippsland