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Subject: New submission from EIS Submission

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Representative Information

Are you making this submission on behalf of someone else and/or an organisation?

No

Your Details

Name

Colin Sachs

Address

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Email

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

How would you like to make your submission?

- I would like to enter it into a textbox

Your Submission

Introduction

I am writing to formally object to the above offshore wind development proposed within the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone, off the coast of the Gippsland Lakes and Ninety Mile Beach. I as land owner in the region and I have serious concerns about the environmental, procedural, and community impacts of this proposal as currently constituted.

2. Environmental Concerns

Ninety Mile Beach and the Gippsland Lakes sit within a recognised migratory corridor for whales, including humpback and southern right whales, as well as significant seabird populations.

My primary objection to this project is environmental:

Marine mammal impact. Construction noise (particularly pile-driving), increased vessel traffic, and the long-term presence of turbine infrastructure pose risks to whale migration patterns and behaviour through this corridor. I am not satisfied that the current assessment adequately quantifies or mitigates this risk.

Bird strike and habitat disruption. The Gippsland Lakes system is an important habitat for migratory shorebirds and seabirds. Offshore turbine arrays present a credible risk of bird strike and habitat displacement that has not, in my view, been sufficiently studied for this specific site.

Benthic and fisheries impact. Seabed disturbance from turbine foundations, cabling, and anchor systems may affect benthic habitat and local fish stocks, with flow-on effects for commercial and recreational fishing in the area.

Cumulative impact. This project cannot be assessed in isolation. With multiple offshore wind zones proposed across Gippsland, I am concerned that the cumulative environmental impact across the whole REZ has not been properly modelled, only the impact of each individual project.

3. Visual and Amenity Impact

Ninety Mile Beach is one of the longest uninterrupted beaches in Australia and a significant drawcard for tourism and local lifestyle. Turbines of this scale, visible from the coastline, will permanently alter the visual character of the area. I do not believe the visual and amenity impact on residents, tourism operators, and visitors has been given sufficient weight in the assessment process.

4. Economic and Community Impact

Fishing industry. Local commercial and recreational fishing operations rely on this stretch of coast. Exclusion zones, cabling corridors, and construction activity may materially affect access and catch, with downstream effects on local livelihoods.

Tourism. A significant share of the regional economy depends on the natural amenity of the Gippsland Lakes and Ninety Mile Beach. Industrialising the seascape carries real economic risk to that base.

5. Concerns About the Assessment Process

I am also concerned about the adequacy of the consultation process itself:

The timeframe provided for public review and comment has been inadequate given the scale, complexity, and number of technical documents involved in this assessment.

I understand that several related projects within the Gippsland REZ have received an "assessment not required" referral decision under sections 75 and 77A of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, meaning no full Environmental Impact Assessment will be conducted for those projects. Given the shared marine environment, migratory corridors, and cumulative pressures across the REZ, I believe this sets a concerning precedent and undermines the integrity of the assessment for projects still under review.

I request that the assessment authority extend the comment period and commit to a full, cumulative assessment of all proposed projects in the Gippsland REZ, not just the individual project under review.

6. Conclusion

For the reasons set out above — environmental risk to whale and bird migration, marine habitat, visual and amenity impact, economic impact on fishing and tourism, and a flawed and rushed consultation process — I oppose this proposal in its current form. I request that the assessing authority:

Require a full, independent Environmental Impact Statement that properly assesses cumulative impacts across the whole Gippsland REZ;

Extend the public comment period to allow genuine community and expert review;

Commission independent (not developer-supplied) marine mammal and seabird impact studies specific to this stretch of coast; and

Refuse approval until these matters are properly addressed.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Submission Declaration

 This submission does not contain any material that could be regarded as defamatory or offensive to any person

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