**ANNEXURE 1**
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Genesis Hexicon (Pty) Ltd (GH) is seeking to develop an offshore floating wind farm of approximately 810 MW off the coast of Richards Bay, KwaZulu-Natal. The proposed project is called the Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm. The site of the facility is 140 km$^2$, approximately 5 km offshore the coastline at its closest point in the north, and approximately 17 km offshore the coastline at its closest point in the south (Figure 2).

The proposed wind farm will comprise the following components:

- Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) which will convert wind energy into electrical power.
- Floating sub-structures, to support the WTGs.
- Offshore sub-stations, which collect the electrical power from the WTGs and convert it to a voltage suitable for transmission.
- Offshore inter-array cables that will connect the WTGs to each other and to the offshore sub-station and transfer the electricity from the WTGs to the offshore sub-station. Inter-array cables will be both dynamic (floating) and static (on the seabed).
- Offshore export cable(s) which will transmit the electricity from the offshore sub-station to an onshore jointing bay (at the jointing bay, the offshore export cable(s) is connected to the onshore export cable(s).

A schematic of the key project components is provided in Figure 1.

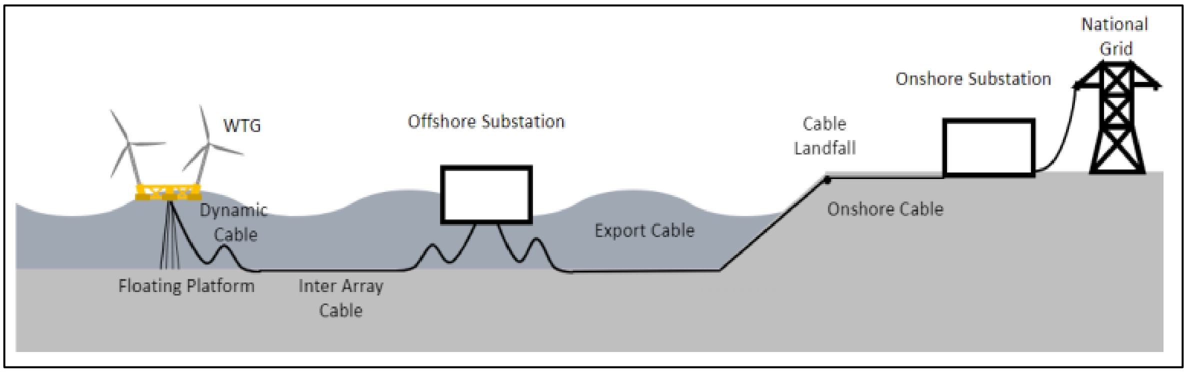


**Figure 1 Schematic diagram of a floating offshore wind farm**

The construction of the proposed wind farm is likely to be phased over 10 years. The construction of floating foundations takes longer than fixed wind foundations, and it may be necessary to build the project in phases to match supply chain logistics and/or local grid constraints.

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| The onshore components required to link the electricity to the Eskom grid will form part of a separate environmental authorisation process (as required by DFFE following a pre-application meeting in April 2022) |

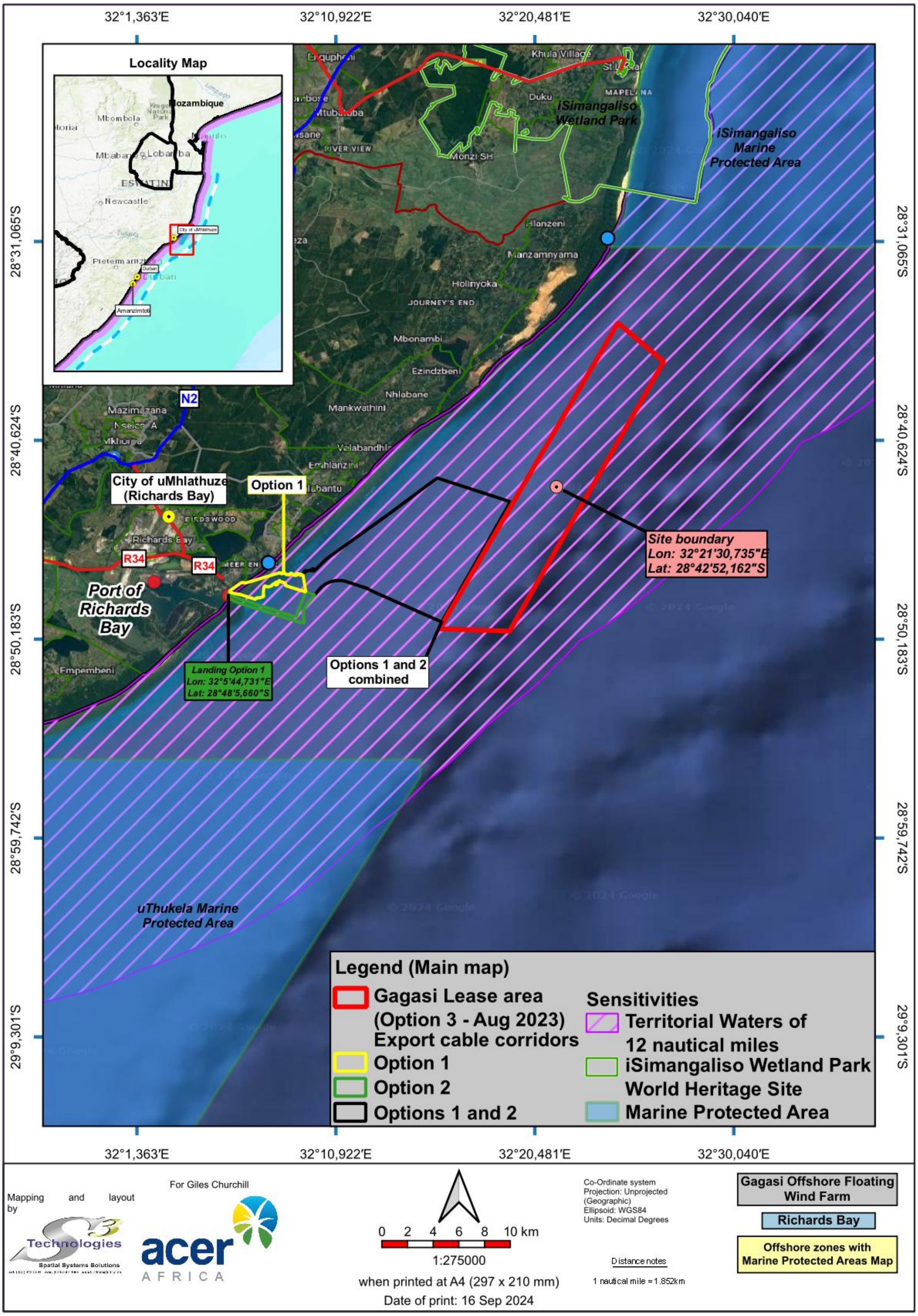


**Figure 2** **General locality map of the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm near Richards Bay, KwaZulu-Natal**

## 2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This Background Information Document (BID) provides information about the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) required for environmental authorisation. The BID covers:

- Applicable environmental legislation.
- Description of project activities and components.
- Potential issues associated with the proposed offshore wind farm and proposed specialist studies to be undertaken in support of the EIA.
- The Environmental Impact Assessment process.
- Information on how to register as an Interested and/or Affected Party.

## 3. APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

In terms of the requirements of the EIA Regulations of 2014 (as amended), published under the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), the construction of the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm and associated infrastructure triggers several listed activities in GN R. 324, 325 and 327, as detailed in Table 1. These require the undertaking of a full EIA (Scoping and Impact Assessment), supported by public participation.

**Table 1 Listed activities potentially triggered by the proposed Gagasi 800 MW Offshore Floating Wind Farm**

| Activity No(s) | Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 1 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended (GN R. 327) | Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates |
|---|---|---|
| 11 | The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity—<br><br>(aa) outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts; or<br>(bb) inside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of 275 kilovolts or more. | Power generated by the WTGs is generally at 33 or 66 kV and then converted to a higher voltage for transmission through the export cable to reduce losses. Export cables are generally rated 132, 220 or 275 kV. Each sub-station may require a separate export cable to transmit power to shore, however, it may be possible to link offshore sub-stations to reduce the number of export cables to shore. This listed activity is triggered as the export cables, located outside urban areas, may have a capacity of up to 275 kV. |
| 15 | The development of structures in the coastal public property where the development footprint is bigger than 50 square metres. | The project will entail the landing of marine electricity export cables on Richards Bay beaches. Landing infrastructure includes the cable trench across the beach and into the inter-tidal zone. This activity is triggered as the development footprint will be larger than 50 square meters. |
| 17 | Development-<br>(a) in the sea,<br>(b) […];<br>(c) \within the littoral active zone,<br>(d) in front of a development setback; or<br>(e) if no development setback exists, within a distance of 100 metres inland of the high- water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever is the greater.<br><br>in respect of-<br>(iv) infrastructure with a development footprint of 50 | The project will entail the installation of a number of floating platforms, marine cables, offshore sub-stations and marine electricity export cables which will make landfall near Richards Bay. This activity is triggered as the development footprint will be larger than 50 square meters. |

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| | square metres or more. | |
| 18 | The planting of vegetation or placing of any material on dunes or exposed sand surfaces of more than 10 square metres, within the littoral active zone, for the purpose of preventing the free movement of sand, erosion or accretion, excluding where –<br><br>(a) the planting of vegetation or placement of material relates to restoration and maintenance of indigenous coastal vegetation undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan | Rehabilitation of dune vegetation at the beaches will be undertaken if construction activities associated with the laying of the electrical export cables disturbs vegetation on the shoreline. |
| 19A | The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles, or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from –<br><br>(i) the seashore,<br>(ii) the littoral active zone, an estuary or a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever distance is the greater: or<br>(iii) the sea | The project will entail the excavation and deposition of more than 5 $m^3$ of material within 100 m of the high-water mark of the sea when trenching for, and backfilling of, the marine electricity export cables occurs. |
| **Activity No(s)** | **Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended (GN R. 324)** | **Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates** |
| 14 | The development of—<br><br>(ii) structure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more.<br><br>where such development occurs—<br><br>(b) in front of a development setback; or<br>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse.<br><br>D. In KwaZulu-Natal, in<br>vii) Critical biodiversity areas or ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans.<br><br>Inside urban areas:<br>(aa) Areas zoned for use as public open space.<br>(bb) Areas designated for conservation use in Spatial Development Frameworks adopted by the competent authority, zoned for a conservation purpose; or<br>(cc) Areas seaward of the development setback line or within 100 metres from the high-water mark of the sea if no such development setback line is determined. | The landing of the electricity export cable/cables at Richards Bay and the construction of the terrestrial powerline to feed into the Eskom grid will result in a development footprint of more than 10 $m^2$ within 32 m of a watercourse and in front of the development setback line; therefore, this listed activity is triggered by the proposed development. |
| **Activity No(s)** | **Provide the relevant Scoping and EIR Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 2 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended (GN R. 325)** | **Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates** |
| 1 | The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more | The proposed development involves the construction of an offshore wind farm with a generation capacity of approximately 810 MW. As such, this listed activity is triggered. |
| 9 | The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity with a capacity of 275 kilovolts or more, outside an urban area or industrial | This listed activity is triggered as the export cables might have a capacity of up to 275 kV (and they are located outside of urban |

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| | complex. | areas). |
| 14 | The development and related operation of-<br><br>(i) an anchored platform; or<br>(ii) any other structure or infrastructure – on, below or along the seabed. | The proposed development involves the construction of floating platforms which will support the wind turbines as well as the construction and installation of subsurface electrical cables to export power ashore. As such, this listed activity is triggered by the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm. |
| 26 | Development-- in the sea within the littoral active zone or if no development setback exists, within a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever is the greater.<br><br>in respect of–<br>c) inter- and sub-tidal structures for entrapment of sand. or<br>h) underwater channels.<br><br>but excluding the development of structures within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour. | Although unlikely to be triggered, this listed activity has been included as the trench for the marine cable may result in the entrapment of sand within the inter- and sub-tidal zones. In addition, the trench in which to bury the cable, may be construed as an underwater channel. |

### 3.1 Environmental Assessment Practitioner

In accordance with the EIA regulations, ACER (Africa) Environmental Consultants was commissioned as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the EIA for the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm to be constructed near Richards Bay on the north coast of KwaZulu-Natal.

## 4. PROJECT COMPONENTS

### 4.1 Wind Turbine Generators

The proposed project will consist of up to 54 WTGs depending on their individual capacity. WTGs would be installed on up to 54 floating foundations. WTG technology is rapidly evolving and depending on the final technology selected, the capacity per WTG could range from 15 to 25 MW, requiring up to 54 WTGs. The tallest type of WTG is 370 m in height (at blade tip when pointing up) above sea level (Figure 3).

The choice of WTG is an important factor when finalising engineering designs and is influenced by several technical and commercial factors. Due to the rapidly evolving technology, final decisions on WTGs are made at a late stage of the development process, once there is a clear timeline for construction and connection to the grid. In this regard, it is the proponent’s intention to reduce the number of floating foundations if larger capacity WTGs can be installed. The EIA will consider the worst-case scenario in terms of the maximum size of WTGs that are expected to be available at the proposed time of construction.

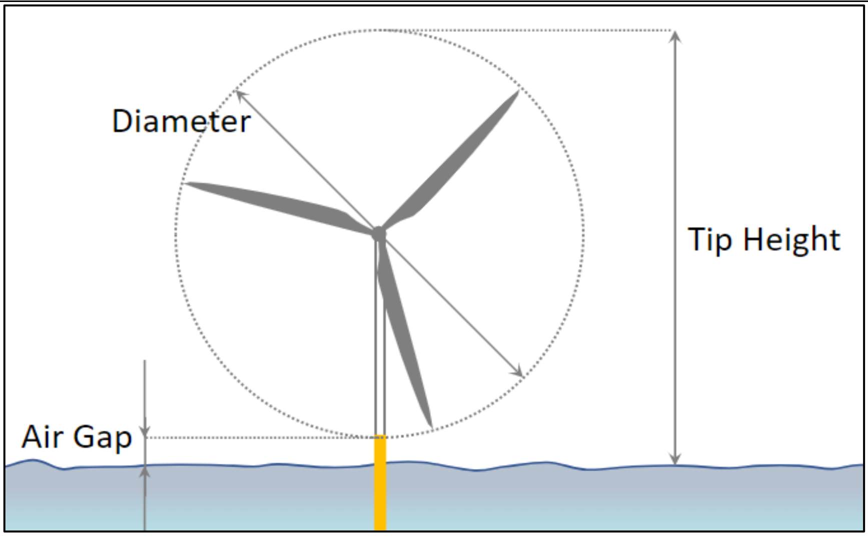


**Figure 3 Graphic representation of a Wind Turbine Generator**

### 4.2 Floating Substructures

There are several floating substructure designs currently deployed in early demonstration projects or under development. Semi-submersible substructure designs are currently the most commonly deployed foundation. The hydrodynamic stability of such structures comes from the platform dimensions and its buoyancy properties with the mooring system keeping these structures in place. There are two main semi-submersible concepts that would be considered by GH for the proposed Gagasi Offshore Floating Wind Farm as outlined below:

- Substructures with a single WTG installed, as shown in Figure 4.
- Substructures with two WTGs installed, as shown in Figure 5.

In addition to semi-submersible designs, spar buoy concepts are currently being deployed. Spar buoy substructures use a counter-weighted structure to provide both buoyancy and stability (Figure 6). Tension Leg Platforms (TLP) are another design concept that could be used; they are held under-tension with most of the substructure submerged to provide hydrodynamic stability (Figure 7).

The final choice and design of the substructure will depend on several factors, such as site meteorological and seabed conditions, WTG choice, water depth, wind speeds and the availability of suppliers to construct and deliver substructures to the project area at the time of construction. The project will undergo several Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) phases, as well as a commercial procurement phase to determine the ultimate solution. The EIA will include the worst-case scenarios for all potential substructure choices to ensure that the final design is within the parameters assessed within the EIA.

**Figure 4 Example of a semi-submersible with single WTG (Kincardine OWF, Scotland)**

**Figure 5 Example of a semi-submersible with twin WTG design**

**Figure 6 Example of a spar buoy concept**

**Figure 7 Example of a Tension Leg Platform concept**

### 4.3 Mooring Systems

There are two potential mooring systems that could be used to secure a floating substructure to the seabed as described below:

- Catenary mooring systems (Figure 8), where the floating substructure is secured to the seabed using several free hanging mooring lines. These are most commonly used and have been adapted from traditional maritime anchoring systems. Both semi-submersible and spar buoy technologies can be deployed using catenary mooring systems. The mooring lines can be secured to the seabed using a variety of anchor types as shown in Figure 10.
- Tension leg mooring systems (Figure 9) are also a potential option. These hold the substructure in place using several mooring lines under tension resulting in a smaller overall footprint. Both semi-submersible and TLP substructures can use this mooring system. Mooring lines are secured to the seabed using anchors which can withstand a vertical element of the loading, such as piles, torpedo anchors, vertical load anchors (VLA).

The optimum mooring line solution for a site depend on several factors including:

- Water depth.
- Seabed type.
- Tidal range.
- Wind and wave conditions.
- Substructure design.

Typically, the final choice of mooring system is made during the FEED and detailed design phase of a project, therefore, the EIA will consider all possible alternatives.

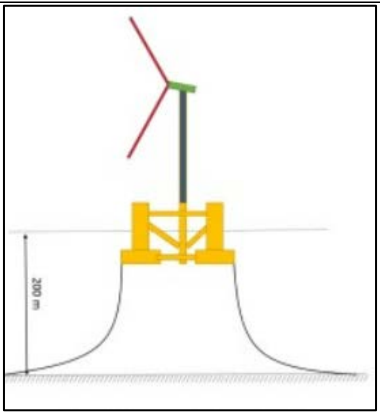


**Figure 8 Example of a catenary mooring system**

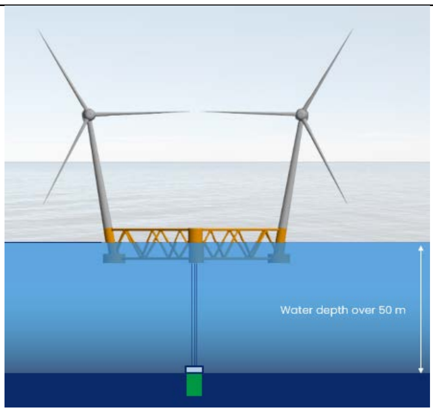


**Figure 9 Example of a tension leg mooring system**

The mooring lines can be secured to the seabed using numerous anchoring options. The anchor choice depends on the mooring configuration, seabed conditions, and required holding capacity. Drag-embedded anchors are commonly used in catenary mooring configurations to handle horizontal loads, whereas suction piles or gravity anchors are commonly used in tension leg mooring configurations to handle the large vertical loads placed on the mooring and anchoring system. Ultimately, anchor selection will be site specific, with seabed conditions dictating anchor selection. Figure 10 illustrates some anchor types that could be used for the floating foundations.

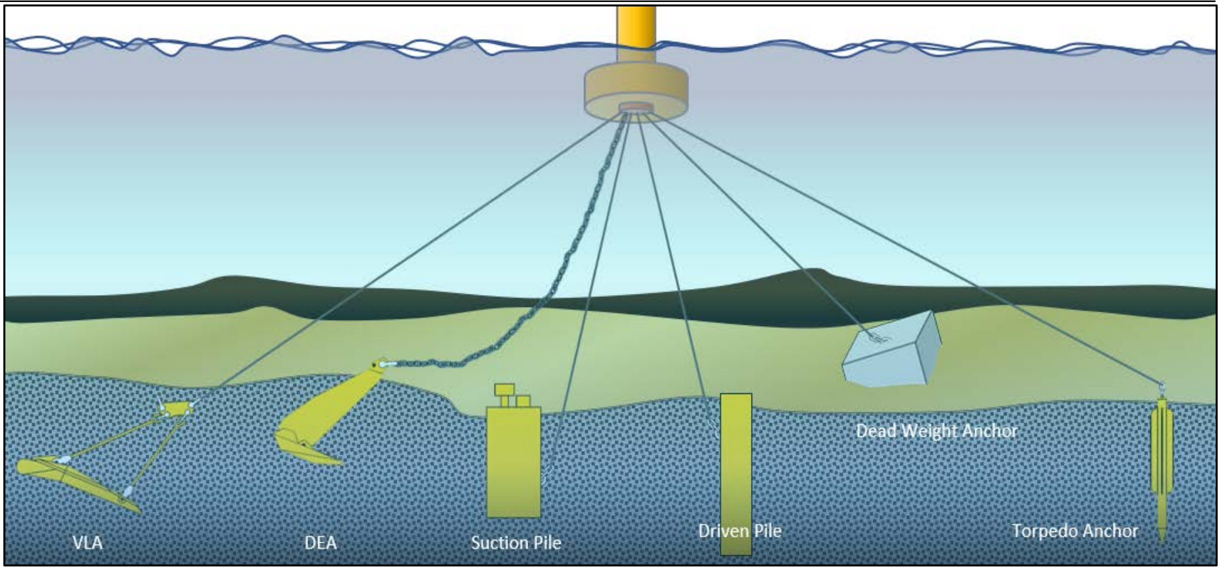


**Figure 10 Anchoring systems that could be used**

## 4.4 Offshore Substations

To date, offshore sub-station technology has been deployed on fixed bottom projects in water depths of 50 m or less. Current designs are based on an electrical topside, mounted on a jacket substructure fixed to the seabed using pin-piles (Figure 11).

With floating wind farms moving into deeper water, alternative sub-station options are being developed, including floating (Figure 12) and seabed mounted (Figure 13) concepts. These technologies are at an early stage of development and testing, and there is considerable uncertainty about whether they will prove viable. Site selection for this project allowed for the inclusion of areas of the site with water depths of around 50 m, which will allow for fixed substructure sub-stations to be retained as an option. However, if available in time, floating or seabed mounted sub-station options would be considered. Depending on the final technology selected, there may be up to four bottom-fixed substations, or up to five floating substations, or up to 10 subsea mounted substations.


**Figure 11 Sub-station on fixed jacket substructure**

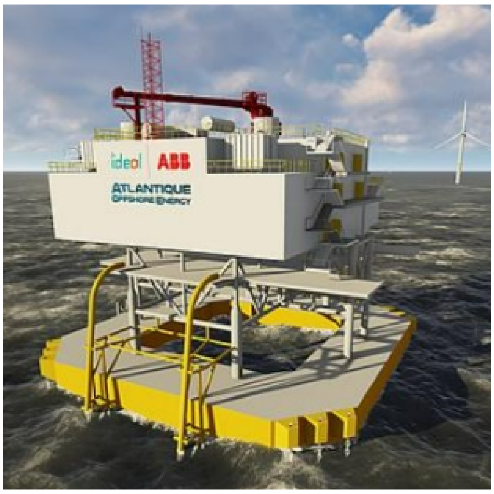


**Figure 12 Floating offshore sub-station**

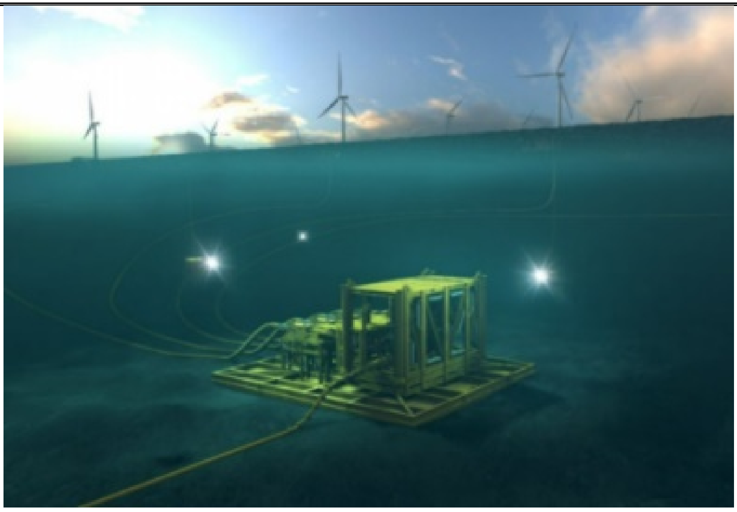

**Figure 13 Sub-station on a seabed mounted substructure**

### 4.5 Inter-Array and Export Cables

Two main categories of cable will be required offshore, inter-array cables and offshore export cables as described below:

- Inter-array cables are installed between WTGs in a string, with the first WTG on a string linked to an offshore sub-station. The number of WTGs in a string can vary depending on the electrical design. Inter-array cables transport generated power to the offshore sub-station. For floating offshore wind farms, there needs to be a free hanging section of cable between the base of the WTG or substructure and the seabed. This is referred to as a dynamic cable. The dynamic cable is designed to endure the motions from the platform and current forces during its lifespan. The cable design normally consists of a 'lazy-wave' configuration which uses buoyancy modules attached to the midpoint of the cable. This allows the configuration of the cable to be extended and shaped in response to the movements of the floaters and decouples the floater motions from the fixed subsea end. There are several configurations of a dynamic cable as illustrated in Figure 14. The dynamic cable may be connected to a section of buried cable, referred to as the static cable.
- The offshore export cable links the offshore sub-station to the onshore electrical system and transmits power from the offshore generating infrastructure to the grid. Power generated by the WTGs is generally at 33 or 66 kV and then converted to a higher voltage for transmission through the export cable to reduce losses. Export cables are generally rated 132, 220, or 275 kV. Each sub-station may require a separate export cable to transmit power to shore, however, it may be possible to link offshore sub-stations to reduce the number of export cables to shore. This would need to be determined during the FEED process.

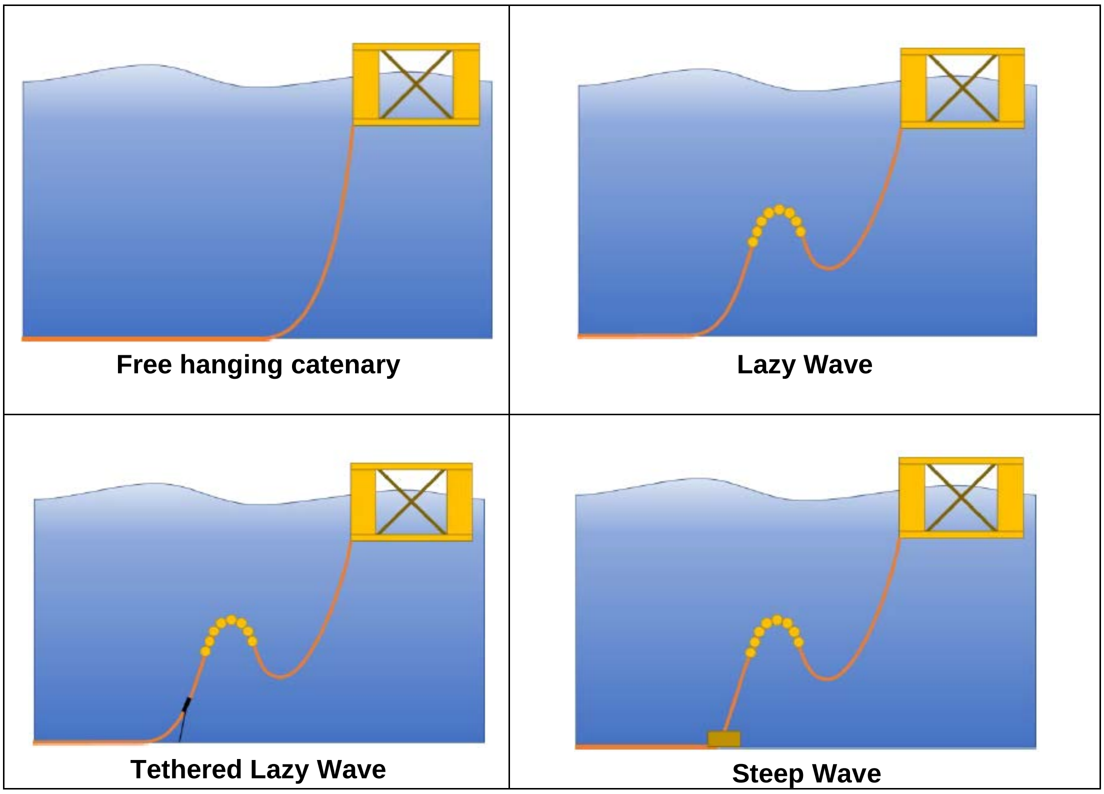


**Figure 14 Possible configurations of inter-array cables**

### 4.6 Onshore Infrastructure

Onshore infrastructure will consist of an onshore export cable, which runs from the jointing bay near to where the marine export cable(s) makes landfall to the onshore sub-station, before exporting power to the Eskom grid. To convert the power generated by the wind farm into a suitable format for exporting to the Eskom grid, there may be a need to build a separate onshore sub-station near to an existing Eskom sub-station (Imvubu Sub-station). Alternatively, it may be possible to adapt or extend an existing sub-station for this purpose to avoid the need for a separate sub-station.

The onshore infrastructure required to distribute the power generated by the proposed Gagasi 800 MW Offshore Floating Wind Farm will form part of a separate environmental authorisation process as required by DFFE. It is important to note, however, that the on- and off-shore infrastructure is linked, and the project cannot be operated without both sets of infrastructure being authorised.

### 4.7 Selection of the Richard's Bay site and Consideration of Alternatives

Prior to selecting the site for the proposed project, Genesis undertook an extensive site selection process that considered much of the South African coastline. The first phase of the site selection process considered areas with suitable wind resources, water depths between 50 m and 400 m and within 100 km of suitable grid connection locations and suitable harbours. The database of existing seabed rights' boundaries was also checked.

The site selection process then considered important environmental factors such as proximity to protected regions, conservation areas, Marine Protected Areas and Important Bird/Biodiversity Areas. Sites that met the minimum technical criteria were interrogated using a quantifiable multi-criteria decision making (MCDM) methodology, ranking relative importance of the above criteria to assign a suitability score for sites meeting the minimum requirements.

The results of this part of the selection process identified potentially suitable sites near Richards Bay and around the coastline of South Africa however Richards Bay site was ranked highest due to the following factors:

- The site provides a good wind resource.
- The site has a higher amount of currently unallocated seabed.
- The site is located near suitable commercial harbour facilities and grid feed-in locations.

### 4.8 Selection of Alternative Technology

The water depth in Richards Bay rapidly descends beyond 50 m approximately 18 km from shore, from where it descends to 400 m within a short distance. Fixed foundation wind farms are at the extreme of their viable range in water depths of over 50 m and, therefore, a fixed foundation wind farm would need to be built within 0-18 km from shore, which is not considered a viable option. It is considered that an offshore wind farm in Richards Bay would be technically feasible only through the use of floating substructures.

Floating foundations have the following benefits which are associated with their construction and operation:

- The wind farm can be located further away from shore in deep waters thus limiting impacts on coastal seabirds and terrestrial wildlife (i.e. bats, etc.). In addition visual impacts from land-based receptors are also reduced as wind farms move further offshore.
- The preparation of the seabed is less complex compared to the bottom-fixed wind farms and entails less sediment spread and less noise as only moorings for the foundations are required.
- WTGs can be mounted on the floating foundations at the port side and then moved into position using tugs where they are connected to the mooring lines offshore. This minimises the time for installation works offshore.

Current (2022) fixed foundation wind farm projects are installing WTGs of 10-12 MW WTGs, with tip heights of approximately 190 m above sea level. By the mid-2020s, the expectation is that 15 MW-16 MW WTGs will be available, which have already been announced, and have tip heights of approximately 270 m above sea level. Beyond the mid-2020s it is predicted that WTGs with a capacity of up to 20-25 MW may be available, with tip heights of up to 360 m above sea level. Larger capacity WTGs have the benefit of enabling a higher power density per $km^2$ to be achieved, either reducing the seabed space needed, or to maximise the clean energy produced per $km^2$ leased. The proponent is of the opinion that it is fully feasible that large WTGs will be suitable for deployment on floating wind structures and that the supply chain will have appropriate capabilities. GH will base their WTG technology decisions on the most efficient solution available at the time of construction, aiming to minimise the environmental impact whilst maximising the efficiency of the wind farm.

Hexicon’s TwinWind patented floating platform, where two WTGs are deployed on a single foundation would allow for the same capacity to be generated from less foundations and cables compared with a wind farm designed using single floating units. Alternatively, there could be the option to generate 35-45% more clean energy for the same amount of seabed.

The EIA will be based on the possibility of using 54 single WTG floating units 15 MW each, as this represents the worst-case scenario in terms of the number of floating platforms. Should the TwinWind foundation system be chosen, the number of floating units could be reduced to approximately 27 platforms for 15 MW WTG or 16 platforms for the 25 MW WTGs. The project will undergo continuous evaluation of technology to ensure that the final technology choice is suitable for local project specific conditions and that the technology choice is aligned with the permit envelope.

## 5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED GAGASI 800 MW FLOATING OFFSHORE WIND FARM

A preliminary list of the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction of an offshore floating wind farm at Richards Bay on the KwaZulu-Natal north coast is outlined hereunder:

- *Effect on marine seabed environments.* Laying of the cables and the anchoring of floating platforms, including the ploughing and burial of the export cable(s) in shallower waters, could disturb and/or degrade sensitive marine environments off the KwaZulu-Natal coast.
- *Effect on marine ecology and fisheries.* The offshore wind farm has the potential to cause disruption to marine ecology (birds, marine mammals, turtles, etc.), and commercial and recreational fisheries during installation and operation.
- *Effect on intertidal and beach ecology.* During construction, trenching of the export cable(s) may disturb or threaten the local fauna and flora within the beach and dune environment.
- *Effect on Cultural Heritage Resources.* The proposed activity may impact on cultural heritage resources (on- and off-shore) within the project footprint and along the proposed export cable(s) alignment(s) to shore.
- *Disturbance to the beach and dunes.* The beach will be disturbed, and coastal dunes could be disturbed during construction/installation activities.
- *Disturbance to residents and beach visitors during construction.* The beaches at Richards Bay are public beaches used for bathing, surfing, shore-angling, etc. and are also lined with recreational and residential facilities. The installation of project infrastructure in the nearshore environment will affect residents and visitors to the beach at the landing site.
- *Offshore mining and exploration*. Approximately 98% of South Africa's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is subject to a right or lease for offshore Oil and Gas (O&G) exploration and/or production. Although no known mining or mineral exploration blocks have been identified within the project area, the EAP will engage with the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) to confirm that no offshore concession rights holders are affected.
- *Visual impacts from land-based receptors*. The proposed wind turbines could be as high as 370 m above sea level and could be visible from land, which could result in visual impacts.
- *Effect on the local and regional economy.* The proposed development will result in a significant financial injection into the local and regional economy and is anticipated to positively impact on the socio-economic environment.

As required in terms of NEMA, the cumulative impacts of the project will be assessed. Further, additional impacts may be identified during Scoping. At present, the following specialist studies are anticipated to be required in support of the application for environmental authorization:

- Fisheries Assessment (offshore).
- Beach and Dune Dynamics Assessment.
- Marine Shallow Water Benthic Assessment (< 30 m water depth to be supported by photographic surveys).
- Marine Ecology Assessment (offshore) (this study will be supported by the other offshore specialist studies).
- Cultural Heritage Assessment (on- and off-shore).
- Marine Mammals Assessment (offshore).
- Avifauna Assessment (on- and off-shore).
- Marine Turtles Assessment (offshore)
- Marine Coral Assessment (< 30 m water depth).
- Visual Impact Assessment (off- and on-shore).
- Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (on- and off-shore).
- Tourism Assessment (specific to Richards Bay).

Findings will be used in the assessment of impacts and the identification of mitigation and management measures. These measures will be incorporated in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) to mitigate and limit impacts on the receiving environment.

## 6 THE EIA PROCESS

The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended), apply to this project. Scoping and an Impact Assessment are required, which must be completed within 300 days of acceptance of the Application for Authorisation by DFFE (Figure 15).

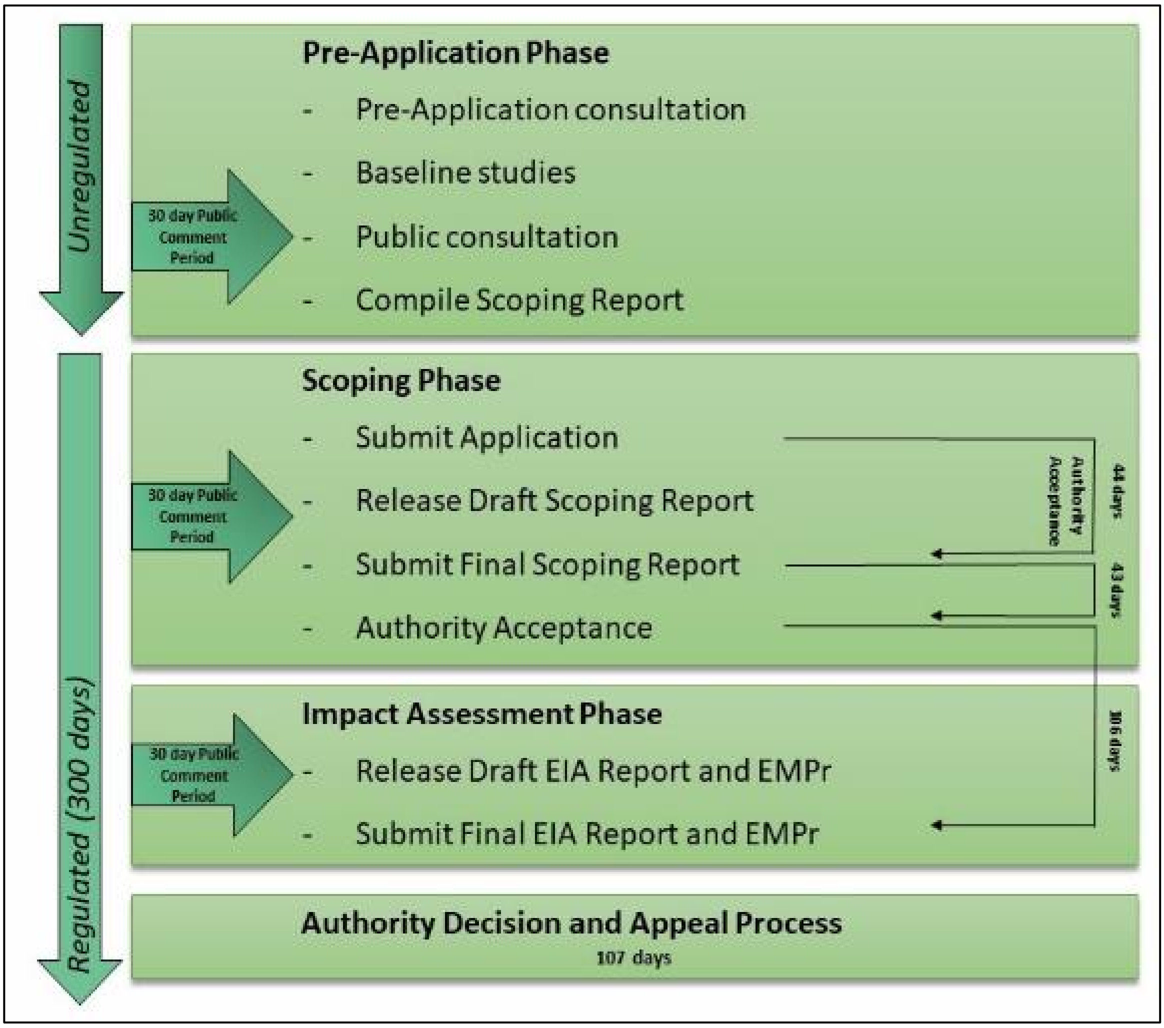


**Figure 15 Outline of the Environmental Impact Assessment process and legislated timeframes**

### 6.1 Public Participation

Public participation is an important component of the EIA process and aims to identify and proactively involve all parties that may have an interest in the project or be affected by it. This ensures that throughout the EIA process, the assessment is transparent, and it enables Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) to comment on the project and/or raise concerns. This information is included in the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment Reports and is taken into consideration during the competent authority's review and evaluation of the application for environmental authorisation.

## 7 REGISTRATION AS AN INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY

Should you wish to learn more about the proposed Gagasi 800 MW Offshore Floating Wind Farm and wish to register as an I&AP, please contact ACER as per the details provided below or complete and return the comment sheet provided herewith.

**ACER (Africa) Environmental Consultants**
Mr G Churchill
P O Box 503, Mtunzini, 3867
Tel: 035 340 2715
E-mail: **gagasi@acerafrica.co.za**

**Please note that consistent with GNR 326, 42(a), 44(1) and 19(1)(a) (7 April 2017), all comments received will be captured in a Comments and Responses Report which will be made available to the competent authority and which will be placed in the public domain as part of the public review process of the EIA reports.**