



CASE STUDY

PROJECT CERTIFICATION FOR OFFSHORE WIND FARM BORKUM WEST II IN GERMANY

In May 2008, SGS was assigned a contract to conduct Project Certification services for Borkum West II offshore wind farm. Project Certification provided by SGS enables wind farm owners to obtain necessary approvals and meet international and local standards.

PROJECT CASE BORKUM WEST II

A large number of wind farms are currently under development in German waters in the North and Baltic Seas. For those wind projects located within the so-called Exclusive Economic Zone which begins 12 nautical miles from the coast, official approval by the German Authority "Bundesamt für Seefahrt und Hydrographie" (BSH) is required. The BSH also requires that the development process be accompanied by a project certification to be carried out by a recognised certification body. SGS is currently involved in the project certification of 18 German offshore wind farms with the objective of obtaining approval by the BSH.

The offshore wind farm project Borkum West II is located in the North Sea, approximately 40 km north-northwest off of Lower Saxony. Water depths are in the range of 27 to 32 m. The installed capacity of the project will be 400 MW using 80 wind turbines each with a rated capacity of 5 MW. The annual energy yield is estimated to be in the order of 1200 GWh, enough to power some 250,000 households, which will result in an annual reduction of CO₂ emissions of 700,000 tonnes. An offshore sub-station will be installed at the same location will serve to connect these wind turbines with the grid on the mainland.

The preliminary geotechnical investigation on site has been completed. On-site construction work is scheduled to begin in second quarter of 2012. SGS has been involved with project certification since May 2008.

PROJECT CERTIFICATION PHASE I

Phase I of the project certification can be thought of as a feasibility study within the project's development phase. For the certification activities, independent expertise, opinions and advice were provided by several SGS experts who have been involved with the project. Specifically, the SGS team consisted of a project manager, a geotechnical expert, an offshore engineering expert and a structural design expert. Documents to be verified during this phase are

- Design Basis Documentation
- Preliminary Ground Investigation Reports
- Geotechnical Reports
- Preliminary Design Document on the sub-structure

The first step was the verification of the Design Basis. This document describes firstly the general assumptions and data sources to be used in the design calculations and development of the project and secondly summarises the environmental, wind, and maritime conditions; relevant technical data; hierarchy of standards to be applied and general recommendations for further calculations.



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The Preliminary Ground Investigation Reports and the Geotechnical Report include the results of the geophysical and geotechnical investigations. These investigations are conducted both by indirect methods such as sonar, seismic and echo sounding as well as direct methods such as drilling, penetration testing and pile driving tests. Soil samples will be further analysed in laboratory tests. For the preliminary ground investigation, at least 10% of the planned turbine locations must be investigated via penetration testing and borehole sampling to provide a representative portrait of in-situ ground conditions.

The preliminary design document for the sub-structure indicates the selected design of the sub-structure, including its dimensions and the boundary conditions used for dimensioning. SGS experts performed a verification of all relevant documents, including simplified calculations and plausibility checks of the data provided. Findings, doubts and deviations were summarised in our status reports, which document the ongoing verification process at SGS. The resulting issues were then discussed with the relevant experts from our client or their subcontractors who prepared the documentation. Upon submission and final check of the revised documentation, SGS prepared the corresponding Certification Report for Phase I, to be submitted to the BSH by the client. Lastly, the BSH reviewed the documentation and invited SGS and the applicant for final discussions prior to issuing its 1st Release.

PROJECT CERTIFICATION PHASE II

Upon completion of Phase I, the design phase of the project commences, known as Phase II of Project Certification. In this phase, detailed calculations of the loads on the turbine and its support structure must be carried out based on local environmental conditions. In this case the turbine manufacturer Multibrid GmbH supplied the respective load calculations; these are used to design the final turbine support structure and to verify whether the resulting loads incurred by the turbine are within the design limits defined in the wind turbine type certificate. The offshore sub-station, including the electrical installations, is also part of the Phase II design verification. In order to verify structural integrity, SGS performs parallel calculations for both the loads and structural design. Moreover, submarine cables, met mast, logistics and decommissioning concept are also covered under this verification.

Phase II culminates with the 3rd release by the BSH, which is essentially the starting signal for the applicant to commence installation of the offshore turbines.

OUTLOOK

The subsequent phases of Project Certification pertain to the commissioning and operation of the wind farm. The primary focus in these phases will be on the monitoring of production, transport, installation and commissioning. During wind farm operations, SGS will verify the recurrent tests as well as prepare the inspection reports on periodic monitoring.

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