Guidelines for Renewable Energy Development

Issued by

Coast Conservation Department (CCD)

The regulatory framework of the Coast Conservation and Coastal Resources Management (CC&CRM) Act, No.57 of 1981 is being used as an effective management instrument by the Coast Conservation and Coastal Resources Management Department (CC&CRMD) for managing activities and the resources within the Coastal Zone.

The development of renewable energy in coastal areas, including wind, solar, and ocean thermal energy conversion, wave energy conversion, requires careful planning and consideration of environmental, social, and economic factors. The following guidelines will facilitate the sustainable development of renewable energy projects in the coastal zone:

1. Conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) or IEE (Initial Environmental Examination) to identify potential social, environmental, and ecological impacts considering the following;
    - Sensitive coastal habitats and coastal ecosystems
    - Wildlife migration routes
    - Significant archaeological sites/resources
    - Traditional fishing practices
    - Sensitive security installations
    - water quality
2. The EIA should also consider cumulative impacts in conjunction with other existing or planned coastal developments
3. The proposed project sites should not be located in, affected areas, and/or conservation areas as declared/specified.
4. The coastal land grading should be carried out at a minimum level without altering the physical nature of the coastal land form
5. Separate permission must be obtained for amalgamation of other development with the renewable energy development projects.
6. Ensure stakeholder engagement through the Involvement of local communities, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process. Engage them early in the planning stages to gather local knowledge, address concerns, and consider their input on project design and location.

7. Design wind turbines and solar installations with aesthetics in mind to reduce visual impacts on coastal landscapes. Consider using offshore wind farms in suitable locations to minimize visibility from shore.

8. Implement measures to mitigate noise pollution from wind turbines and minimize potential harm to birds and marine life. For example, use turbine designs that reduce noise and consider seasonal restrictions during sensitive wildlife migration periods.

9. Implement ecosystem restoration and offset measures to compensate for any unavoidable environmental impacts. For example, support habitat restoration projects in nearby areas to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem health.

10. For offshore projects, ensure that they adhere to safety standards and do not pose hazards to navigation or marine traffic. Properly mark and light structures to avoid collisions.

11. Establish a robust monitoring program to track the environmental and social impacts of the projects over time by relevant authorities. The collected monitoring data should be handed over to the CC&CRMD by the project proponent.

12. Develop a clear plan for the decommissioning and restoration of the site once the project reaches the end of its operational life. This plan should address how to remove infrastructure and restore the area to its original state or an agreed-upon alternative use.