

60MW Multi-Rotor Vertical Axis Wind Turbine Project Plan

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by

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Report duration: April 24, 2023 – April 28, 2023

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Course: AE3200 Design Synthesis

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Introduction

Wind turbines are becoming an increasingly common sight in today's countryside. In the future, they will become ever more present both on land and at sea in offshore wind farms. By 2050 the spatial requirement for offshore wind will exceed 250 000 km²¹. That is equivalent to six times the land area of The Netherlands. This illustrates the need for larger and more space-efficient wind energy systems. Increasing the diameter of a traditional wind turbine presents the challenge of ever larger torques in the low-speed shaft and the gear box. A multi-rotor system with vertical axis wind turbines increases the energy density while reducing the torque [1]. This project investigates the commercial feasibility of such a design.

One of the main drivers of turbine development is the costs associated with them. Maintenance accounts for a large portion of costs during a lifetime of a wind turbine. Up-scaling of wind turbines decreases these costs by reducing the units deployed per megawatt. Up-scaling also aids in managing foundation and electrical interconnection requirements. Systems with multiple rotors, having only a single supporting structure, may maximize the benefits of minimizing maintenance costs and making wind energy more cost-effective. Smaller rotors and larger rotational frequencies allow for the oversizing of components, increasing reliability. Additionally, multi-rotor systems allow for better wake management systems due to a larger supporting structure on which it can be mounted.

Another big driver for this project is decreasing the environmental impact of wind turbines. As wind turbines are massive structures, placing them in natural environments, for example, offshore projects, cause massive changes to the local environment and thus provide negative impact to the area. Minimizing the negative impact of wind farms and increasing their sustainability is thus another goal of this project.

The scope of the Design Synthesis Exercise constitutes 10 students working full-time for 10 weeks. The project is mentored by the staff and professors of TU Delft. The goal of this project is to make a plan for the 10 weeks of the DSE: to become familiar with all design options and limitations and to do a trade-off. Based on this, make a detailed, optimized design, a proposal for a wind turbine that would be more sustainable, cheaper and efficient than any other wind energy alternative. The wind turbine should aid in solving the eminent challenges in moving to a green economy.

This paper constitutes the plan for the Design Syntheses Exercises. The design requirements are a scale of 60 MW (approx. 430x430 m²), Multi Rotor System of Vertical Axis Wind Turbines, higher wind farm energy density above 16MW/km²; 45% lower cost of energy; and improved Life Cycle Analysis performance in materials, energy and emissions.

¹URL: <https://www.dnv.com/research/download/oceans-future-thank-you.html> [cited 28 April 2023]

2

Project description

2.1. Mission Need Statement

The mission need statement is given in this section. The need that underlines the whole project was brought to the group's attention by the tutor of the group. Given the direction taken by the Dutch government, which plans to achieve 21 GW of wind energy capacity by the year 2030 and between 38 GW and 72 GW by 2050, the opportunity to innovate the wind energy system is apparent ¹. The focus on sustainability and sea conservation, coupled with lower costs for energy, can be found within the mission statement.

Generating a means of producing energy with higher energy density, above 16MW/km², at 45% lower cost of energy with improved Life Cycle Analysis performance of materials, energy, and emissions.

2.2. Project Objective Statement

The project objective statement as set by the tutor of the project is presented here. This statement will guide the team along the length of the entire project and help the team share the same image with regard to the desired outcome as provided by the client.

Design a 60 MW Multi Rotor System of Vertical Axis Wind Turbines that allows for wind farm energy density above 16 MW/km², 45% lower cost of energy and improved material and emission sustainability in 10 weeks by 10 students.

2.3. Description of system

This section presents the overview of the entire system. The system is a Multi-Rotor System of Vertical Axis Wind Turbine. The system input is the weather data from The Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI), the wind that passes through the system, the environment, and a maintenance center. The system outputs electrical power to the power grid TenneT through a transformer. The system will need to be connected to the TenneT grid. The system consists of:

- Yaw control system - responsible for aligning the structure with the wind to obtain the best performance.
- Sensors - responsible for gathering information needed to operate the wind turbines and yaw control system, to operate and schedule maintenance.
- Wake management - responsible for re-energizing the airflow that passes the wind turbines
- Lightning rod - responsible for directing lightning to the ground in case of a lightning strike
- Structure - responsible for taking the loads of and supporting wind turbines
- Wind turbines - responsible system for power generation

¹URL: <https://english.rvo.nl/information/offshore-wind-energy/offshore-wind-energy-plans-2030-2050>
[cited 26 April 2023]

- Power center - responsible for power transfer from the individual generators to the transformer system.

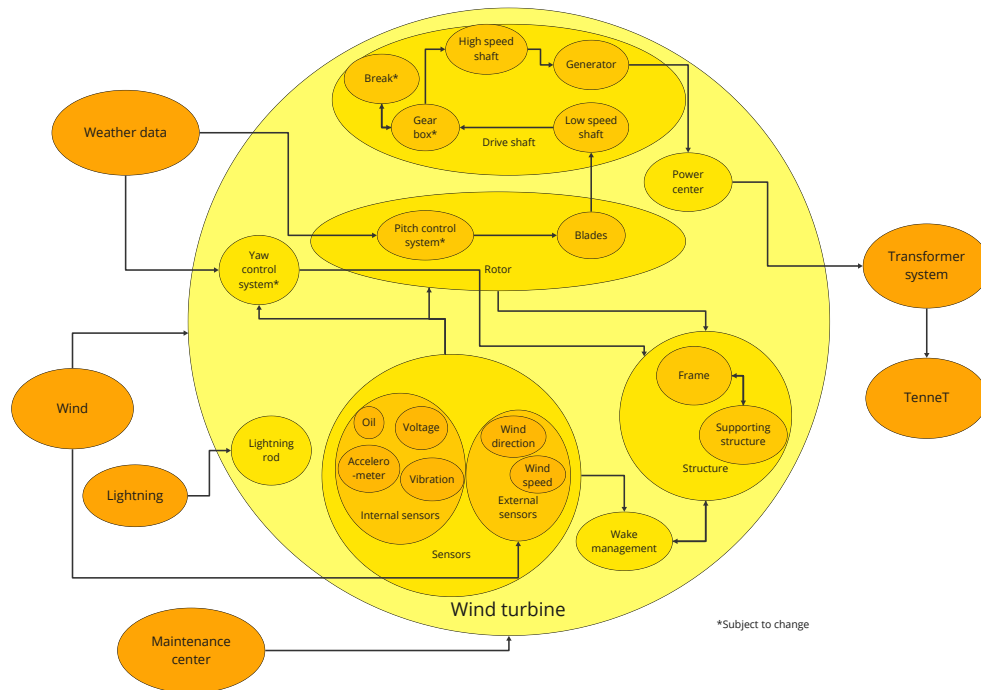


Figure 2.1: System description diagram

2.4. User requirements

The user requirements presented in this section have been either derived from the mission need statement as presented in section 2.1, or from private discussions conducted with the client, the sole user of our design expertise.

US.REQ.01 The system shall deliver at least 60 MW of power.

US.REQ.02 The system shall have an energy density equal to or greater than 16 MW/km².

US.REQ.03 The system shall have 45 % lower levelized cost of energy than traditional horizontal axis off-shore wind turbines.

US.REQ.04 The system shall have multiple rotors.

US.REQ.05 The system shall have lower lifetime emissions than traditional horizontal axis offshore wind turbines.

US.REQ.06 The system shall have increased material recyclability than traditional horizontal axis offshore wind turbines.

US.REQ.07 The system shall have decreased rare metals use than comparable conventional offshore wind energy alternatives.

US.REQ.08 The system shall have a wake re-energizing management system.

US.REQ.09 The system shall be installed offshore.

US.REQ.10 The system shall have less impact on marine life than traditional horizontal axis offshore wind farms.

3

Project organisation

3.1. Team organisation

In this section, the team organisation overview is presented. Firstly, the team organisational approach is provided, followed by an organogram depicting the way specific people are assigned to their respective roles. Lastly, a list of basic rules along with specific corrective actions are presented in order to maintain the proper operation of the team.

3.1.1. Organisational approach

Technical vs Non-technical roles

The team has managed to divide the necessary team roles between technical roles and non-technical or organisational roles. The technical roles are aggregated into technical departments and require special engineering skills. The organisational roles concern all support duties that are required so that the team is able to meet the project's objectives in the scheduled period, within the available resource budgets and with the required quality by the tutor. In order to include all team members equitably across the technical and organisational fields, each team member holds one non-technical role and two technical roles. The duality of technical roles will ensure that all team members will have developed an extensive knowledge about at least two main aspects of the project.

Department division

After extensive talks with the client, it was determined that the project requires the establishment of four main departments, namely aerodynamics, structures, performance and sustainability. These departments will accommodate multiple people, who will share the same title and place in their hierarchy. This functional team organisation will be able to assure that human resources can flow freely between tasks within departments. All departments of engineering will be overseen by the chief engineer. Apart from these technical departments, two other organisational departments have been established, namely documentation and system engineering.

Workday breakdown

The workday begins at 9:00 and ends at 18:00. This includes four 10-minute briefing meetings, where all members of the group update each other on the progress on assigned tasks, as well as planning for the next tasks. The briefing meetings are scheduled in the very morning, before lunchtime, at the midpoint of the afternoon session and at the final of the day. Five additional minutes are allocated for each member to fill in their logbook. In total, one hour is allocated for breaks. This is divided into a 40 min lunch break and two 10 min coffee breaks. Status meetings are planned a minimum of once per week in consultation with the principal tutor.

Responsibility vs Accountability

It is important to mention the crucial difference between different activities in the decision making process. Four different attributes are identified for the decision making parties involved, namely responsible, accountable, consulted and informed. The responsible person is the person that performs the task, while the accountable person is the one that receives the consequences of the work and has ultimate decisive power. The consulted person is the one providing feedback or help. The informed person is only aware of the decision making process, but has no decisive power. Using accurate vocabulary is fundamental in keeping team responsibilities and obligations clear.

Maintaining a healthy working space

There are a few important factors in promoting a healthy working space for all team members. Attention to communication is important. Firstly, respect and appreciation of others' ideas and proposals gives confidence to discuss ideas. Team members that struggle with a task should have the possibility to ask for help/advice/resources/additional time by informing the project manager of the problem. Accountability for the task remains with the group member otherwise, so communicating issues is encouraged.

3.1.2. Organogram

In Figure 3.1, different technical and non-technical roles are assigned to each team members. Non-technical roles, displayed in yellow, concern the organisational and management aspects of the project, while the technical roles displayed in blue concern the different aspects of engineering design that each department will work on. The diagram shows some overlap between the engineering departments, as each team member has two technical roles and one non-technical role.

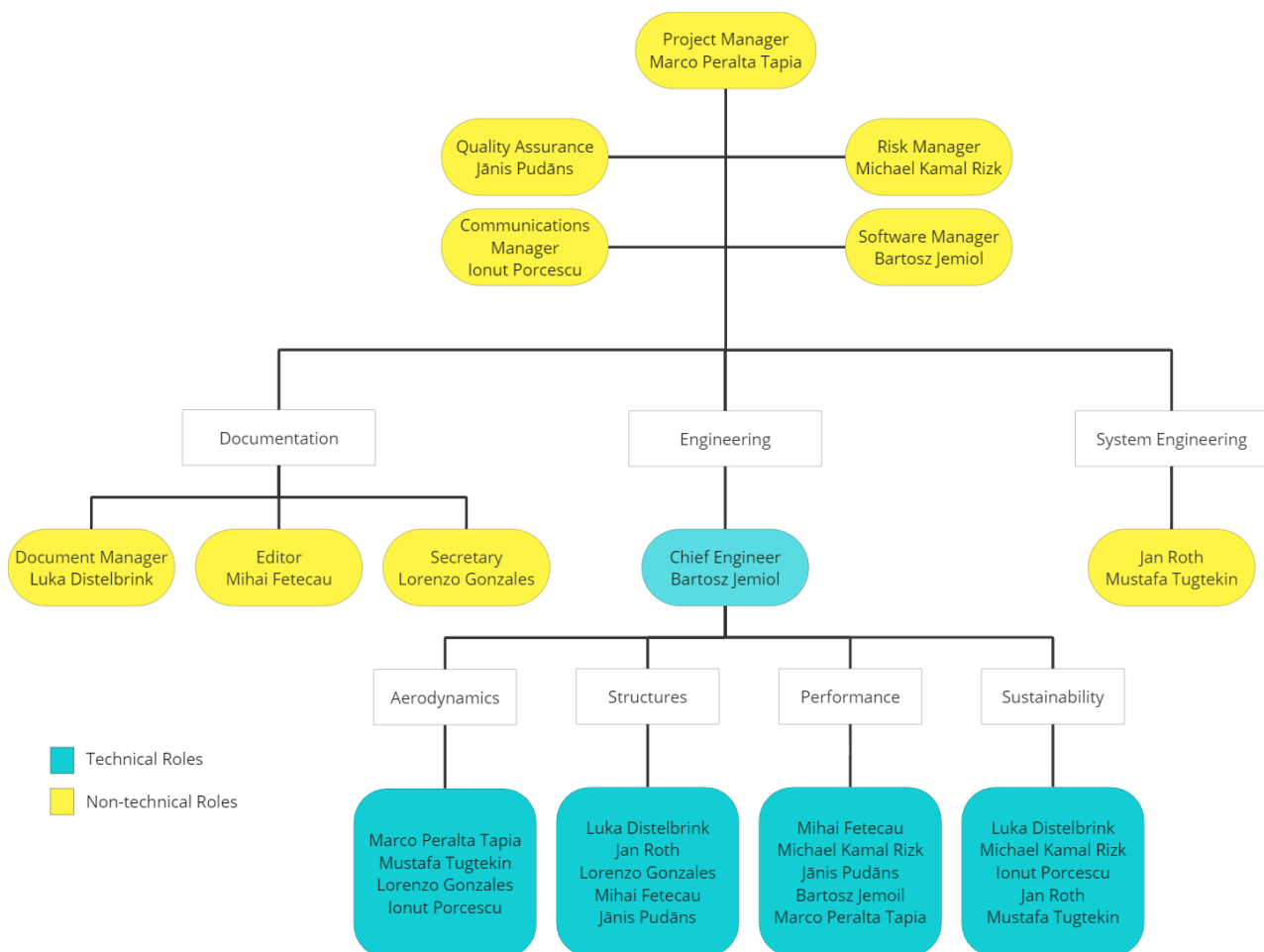


Figure 3.1: Organogram specifying technical and non-technical roles for group members

The responsibilities of each role are summarised here:

Project Manager Responsible for overseeing the group's task progress by following up during the briefings on the progress of each assigned task. This includes organising resources according to need (adding members to certain tasks, reorganising the Gantt chart, etc.). The project manager is responsible for establishing shared objectives and deadlines with the client, for leading the team and assuring the functional cohesion of the team, to plan the activities of the team and to ensure the delivery of the system in time, within budget and of the prescribed quality.

Quality Assurance Ensures the quality of the content of the reports and deliverables through inspection, proposes measures to maintain the desired quality during the design process and implements quality assurance practices.

Risk Manager Monitors risks that could affect project progress and provides mitigation and contingency plans to manage these risks. Oversees technical risk assessment and management plans.

Communication Manager Handles group communication with principal tutor, coaches, internal or external experts and third parties.

Software Manager Manages the use of software during the project and provides software solutions.

Document Manager Responsible for data organisation and archiving of group resources as well as submitting deliverables.

Editor Responsible for the formatting of all overleaf documents so that they are consistent and match the expected standard, and solving latex errors that may arise.

Secretary Responsible for taking minutes during the meeting with the client or other persons of contact and develop a summarized information form of what was discussed.

Systems Engineer Responsible for handling the communication at the interfaces between the engineering departments, for giving support to team members regarding system engineering standards and tools, and for identifying possible issues that arise from the inter-dependencies between departments.

Chief Engineer Responsible for leading and overseeing the day-to-day operation of the engineering departments to reach their respective goals, for giving technical support in design decision making and for setting project goals within the technical departments.

Aerodynamics Engineer Responsible for evaluating the aerodynamic performance of the turbines integrated into the system, while also assessing the aerodynamic loads that impinge on the structure of the system.

Structures Engineer Responsible for designing, verifying and validating the performance and safety of the load bearing elements of the system.

Performance Engineer Responsible for the electrical design of the system, the control and stability of the system, the operation and maintenance strategies to be implemented in the system design.

Sustainability Engineer Responsible for integrating the client's sustainability goals in the system design and analysing the sustainability risks and mitigation strategies involved in these risks.

3.1.3. Team rules

Conflicts technical/non-technical It may happen that conflicts arise during the project. Here, the types of conflicts are divided between technical and non-technical. The technical conflicts shall be mediated by the chief engineer. The chief engineer then chooses, based on his own skills and experience, to mediate the issue alone or to raise the problem to the attention of the entire group. For the non-technical conflicts,

all issues should first be solved between the involved parties in their personal time outside of the project, keeping in mind that a professional attitude is required for all project participants. In the unlikely case that the conflict escalates and interferes with the quality of the project work, the project manager will intervene and mediate the conflict. If the project manager ultimately cannot make the parties involved reach a unilateral conclusion, the DSE staff will be informed and corrective action will be taken according to them.

Time management If a group member is more than 1 min late, they must buy cake for team members. Additionally, if a team member is consistently late, other group members should inform TAs. Finally, attendance to team briefings takes priority over completing a task.

Communication Communication with tutor/coaches should go through communications officer. Outside intervention should go through tutor first. Inter-department technical communications should involve the systems engineer.

3.2. Work flow diagram

Work flow diagram was made in order to present the relation of tasks that are to be done in order to complete the design. The diagram was split into four major stages: beginning project plan, project plan to base report, base report to midterm report, and midterm report to final report. The breakdown was done first on a very high, fully-sequential level, then on a more detailed level. At that point, could already be done in parallel.

3.3. Work breakdown diagram

While the work flow diagram mostly contains large-scale tasks and illustrates their relations, many blocks on it describe work items too large to be done by a single person in one day. To this end, a work breakdown diagram was made, where each task that was too extensive to be done by a single person in at most 8 hours (one working day) was further broken down into smaller and smaller pieces, until all could be done with the constraints.

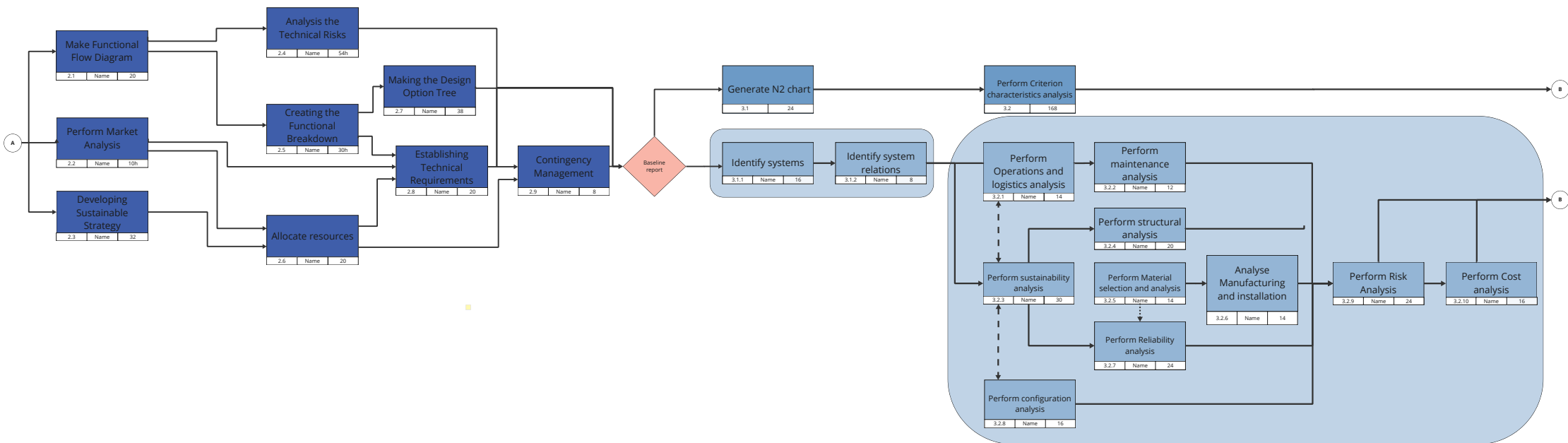
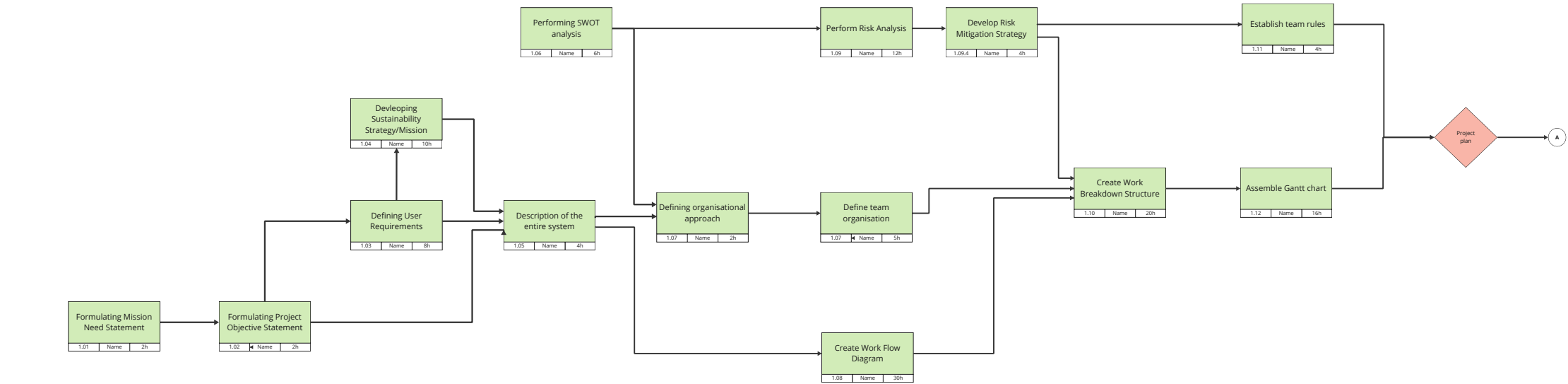
Just as before for the work flow diagram, the work breakdown was done in four main groups: beginning project plan, project plan to base report, base report to midterm report, and midterm report to final report. The breakdown up until midterm review was done in its entirety. For the period from midterm onwards, not all tasks were fully broken down, as the WBS will largely depend on the design selected later.

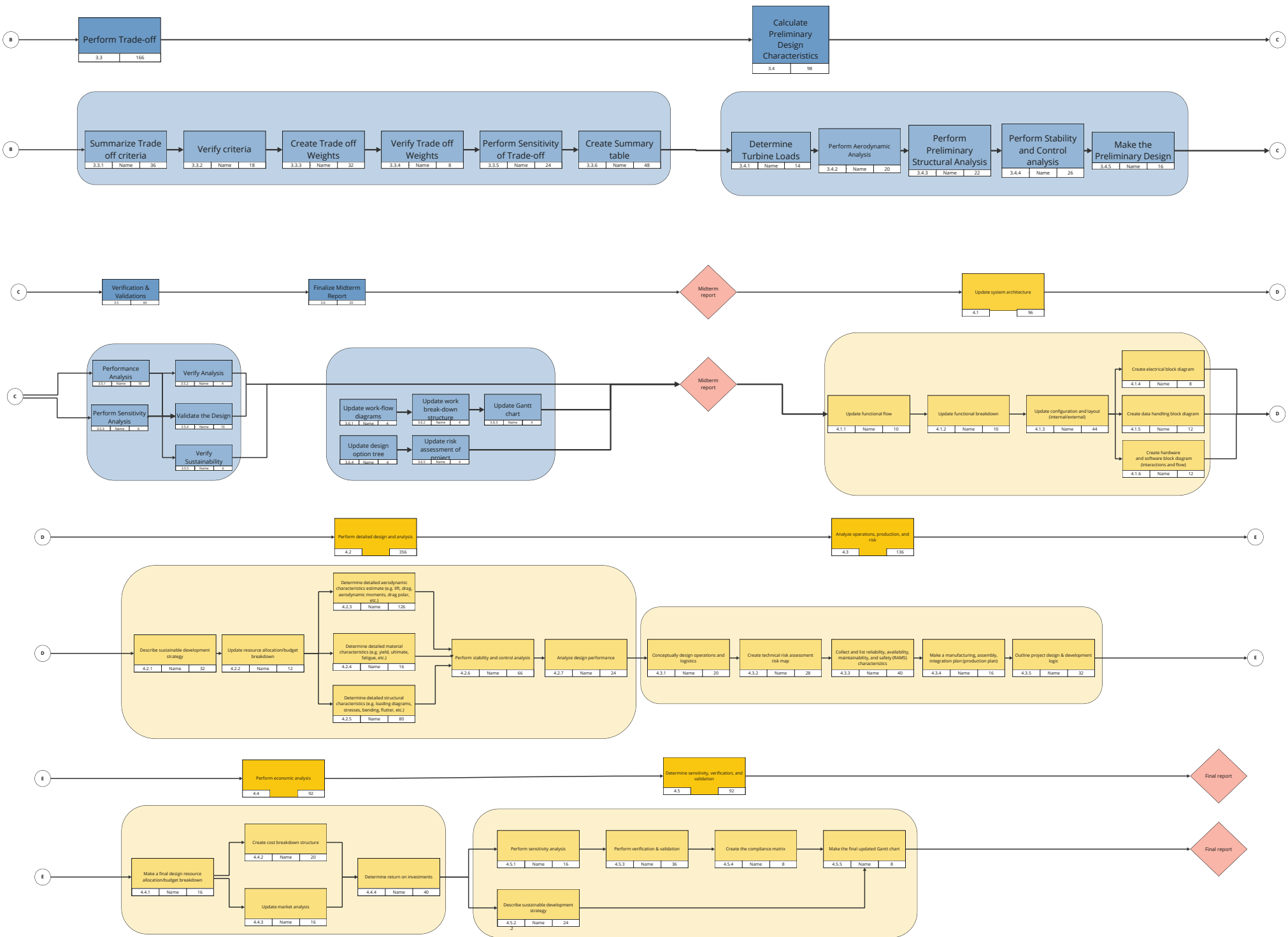
To aid with planning, the estimate for the number of man hours that the task is expected to take was made. The numbers for lower levels were then added together to make estimates for higher levels. The workflow diagram is intended as a guide, but should regularly be updated and revised during the course of the project in order to help with planning and to reflect the real state of the project.

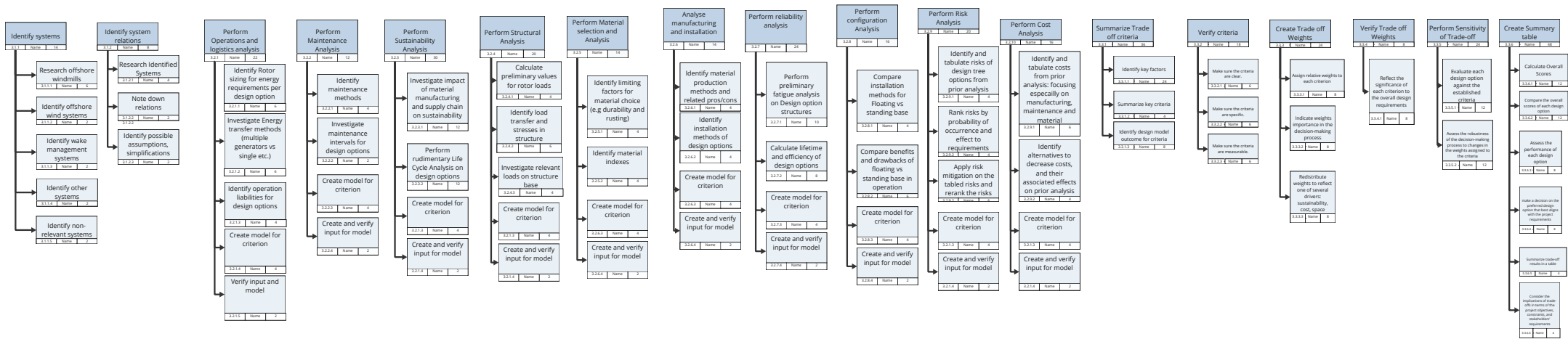
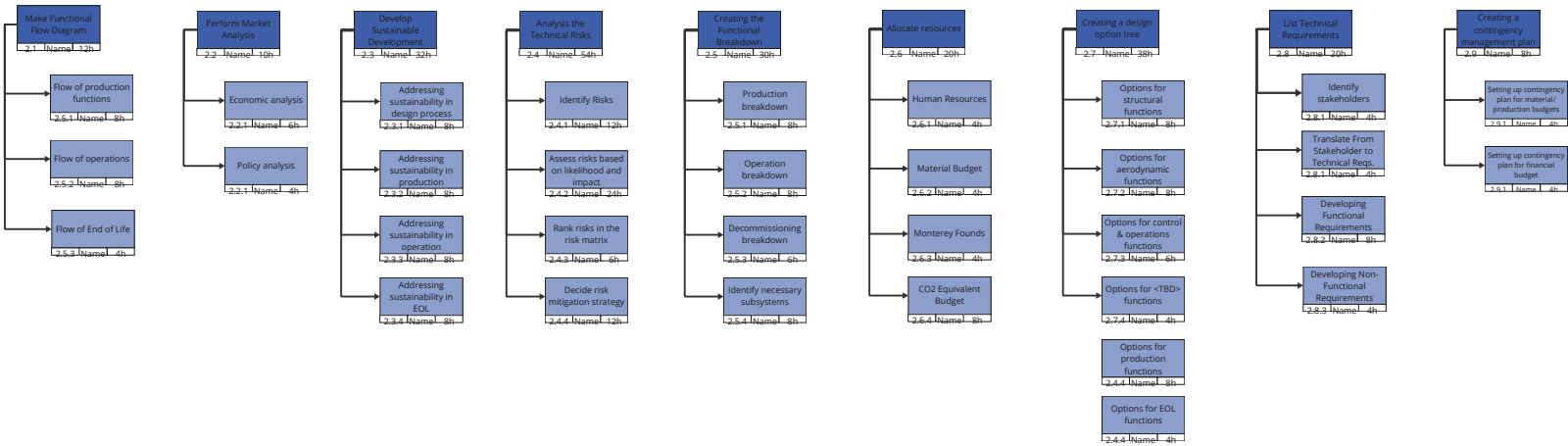
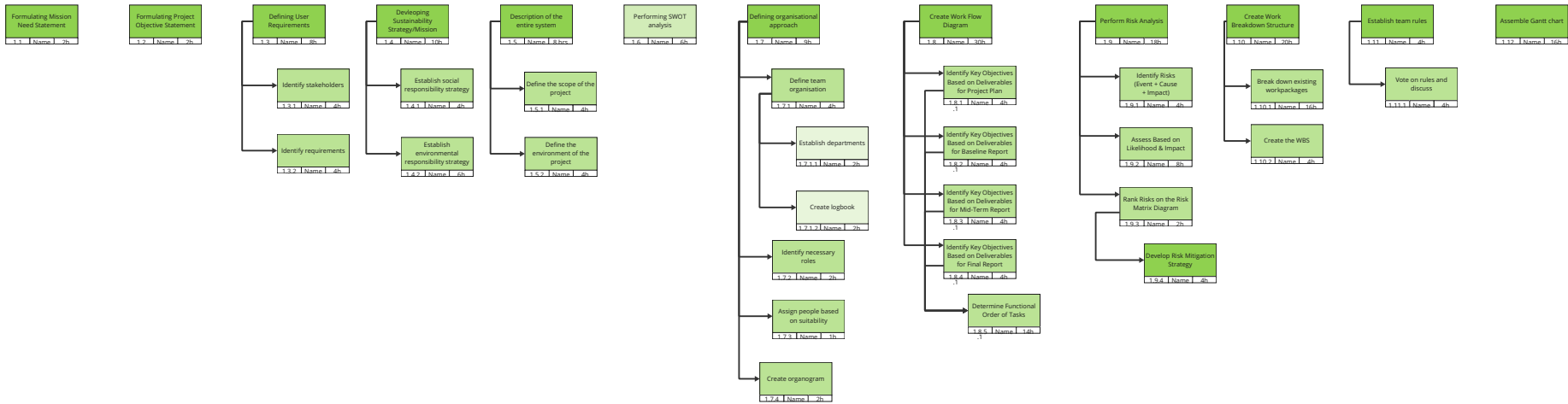
3.4. Gantt chart

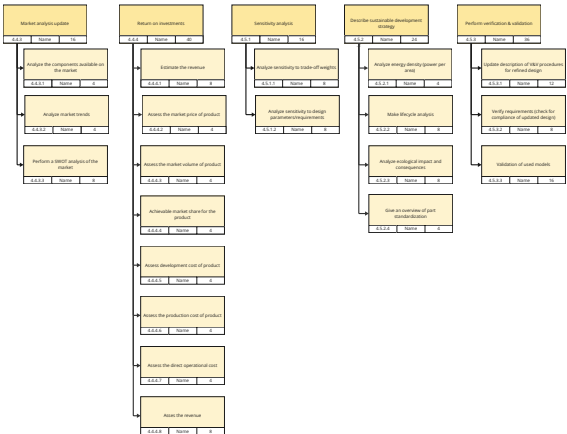
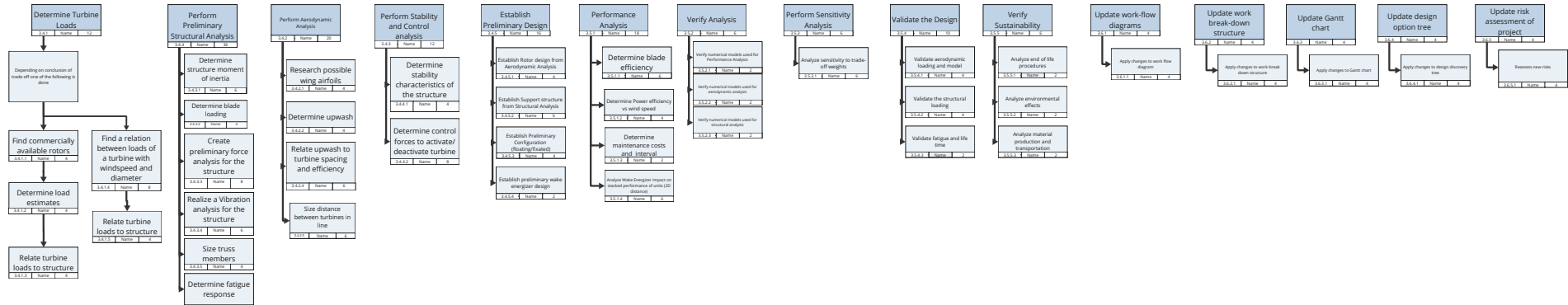
With the WFD and WBS done, a Gantt chart was made. The chart contains all tasks to be done from the beginning of work for the baseline report, up until the final report. The chart does not yet include information about the responsibilities of individual team members, as that was agreed to be determined later.

The Gantt chart will be used to follow progress during the course of the project. It is expected that the final chart will differ from the original state quite largely, however it serves as the best outline of how and when the tasks should be done.









[illegible]

4

Project analysis

4.1. Risk analysis

The risks of the project meeting its goals should be analyzed so that corrective or mitigating measures can be planned in advance accordingly. To do so, a SWOT analysis of the project and team is performed in Subsection 4.1.1, the threats identified here are used as a starting point for the organizational risk assessment in Subsection 4.1.2. Then in Subsection 4.1.3 a risk management plan is proposed to deal with the most critical risks previously identified.

4.1.1. SWOT Analysis

Before performing the risk analysis, the SWOT analysis was performed in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the team and the opportunities and threats of the project. These would aid in identifying risks posed by the team's weaknesses and external threats, as well as mitigation and contingency options offered by the team's strengths and opportunities.

The team's strengths were identified as having an experienced principal tutor who has already done this type of project previously. Internally, the team can give the DSE project their undivided attention. Additionally, the team seems to have good cohesion for the incipient part of this project. Since this is an academic project at a university, the team should have easy access to research resources. Lastly, the team has a very diverse set of skills thanks to different minor programs, such as Offshore Wind Energy, FEM and Control Systems, and Computational Science and Engineering, to name a few.

The main weaknesses of the team were identified as stemming from a lack of experience and knowledge of how to run a problem of such scale. There was also a degree of unfamiliarity with the field of research itself and limited technical resources.

Opportunities for the team arise mainly thanks to the supporting staff - principal tutor, coaches, and teacher assistants. The team also identified the field of research to which the project relates as being new and growing. During the planning phase, an MSc student reached out to the team as well, offering a potentially valuable opportunity to test the wake of the design and validate numerical models.

Lastly, threats to the project stem from bad circumstances affecting the team members, such as sickness, absence due to circumstances, or fatigue. Due to such instances, the team may, in some very unfortunate cases, also lose one or more of its members. Due to the team's inexperience, the team's progress could also be hindered by poor scheduling, poor risk management, poor communication, and failure to recognize whether some requirements can even be fulfilled. There are also external threats, such as losing workspace availability which would severely hinder the team's progress.

The information of this summary is presented in the SWOT diagram Figure 4.1. The diagram presents the summary for each of the four aspects considered in the analysis above.



Figure 4.1: SWOT diagram

4.1.2. Organizational Risk Assessment

Following the SWOT analysis described in Subsection 4.1.1, a number of project organization risks were already identified. A few more risks were found in addition to those and added to this list. The risks were evaluated based on the likelihood of them occurring and the severity of their consequences. The explanation of scales used to classify them is presented in Table 4.1. Based on these risks and likelihoods, the risks were placed in a risk matrix, visible in Figure 4.2.

Table 4.1: The definitions of the likelihood and consequence severity scales.

Likelihood categories:	Likelihood of occurrence	Consequence	Definition
Very unlikely	<5%	Trivial	Daily work is slightly disrupted
unlikely	<25%	Minor	The schedule is slightly disrupted
plausible	<50%	Moderate	Overtime from some team members is required
likely	<95%	Severe	The scope of the projects needs to be re-evaluated or all members will need to work significant over-time
very likely	>95%	Catastrophic	Project can not be completed

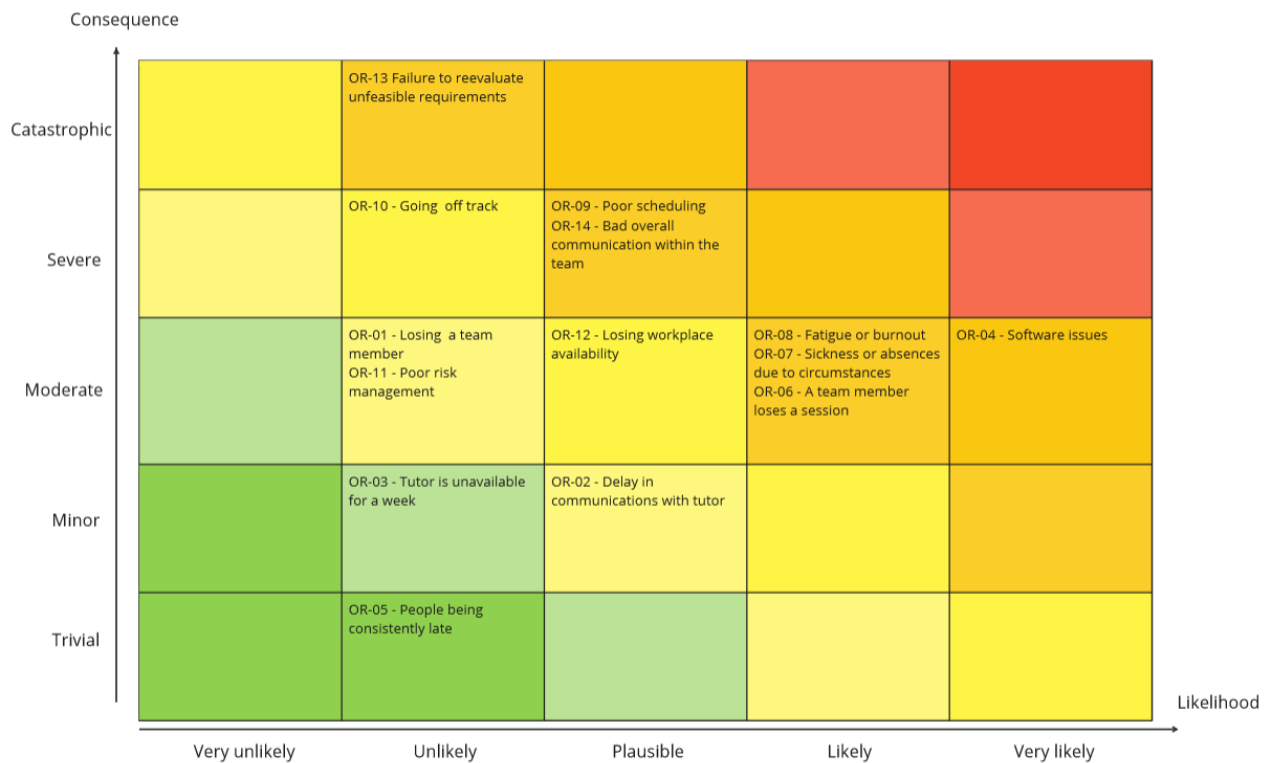


Figure 4.2: *The project management risk matrix*

The risks in the bottom left are unlikely and of little consequence. The risks towards the top right require immediate attention, as they are likely to occur and have severe consequences. The four risks that require the most attention were identified, and respective mitigation strategies and contingency plans were created. This is discussed in Subsection 4.1.3. In the mitigation and contingency plans, bulleted points comprise several solution options listed in no particular order, while numbered points represent a list of solutions to attempt in chronological order.

4.1.3. Organizational Risk Management Plan

In order to deal with the risks established in Subsection 4.1.2, a risk management plan was set up. This includes the group plan for risk mitigation, as well as a contingency plan to recover from any realized risks. The risks determined to present the greatest risk to the completion of the project were **OR-04**, **OR-09**, **OR-13**, **OR-14**.

OR-04: Software issues (Likelihood: very high, Severity: moderate)

Mitigation:

- Not introducing new software unnecessarily. If the task can be done with software the team has experience with, use that software unless changing is necessary.
- Allocating additional time to any tasks that are known in advance to require the use of the software.

Contingency:

1. Ask someone with good knowledge/experience with the software for help
2. Consider the use of alternative software, e.g. Javafoil instead of XFOIL.

3. Consider using another method to achieve the task at hand

OR-09: Poor scheduling (Likelihood: plausible, Severity: severe)

Mitigation:

- Re-evaluate the schedule on a weekly basis.
- Team members regularly communicate how tasks are progressing.
- Project manager keeps track of the schedule and suggests changes.

Contingency:

1. Overtime within reason (max. 50 man-hours extra per week in case of necessity to stay on track)
2. Removing non-critical tasks and secondary objectives
3. Changing project scope

OR-13: Failure to reevaluate unfeasible requirements (Likelihood: unlikely, Severity: catastrophic)

Mitigation:

- When a certain analysis is performed, and it is concluded that requirement seems unfeasible, renegotiate requirements with the customer

Contingency:

1. When certain requirements cannot be met, design the product as closely as possible and communicate in the requirements compliance matrix why the requirements could not be met.

OR-14: Failure to communicate within the team (Likelihood: plausible, Severity: severe)

Mitigation:

- Project manager and the rest of the team discuss what resources/time they need to complete certain tasks.
- If you are struggling or unsure about something, you should be able to bring up the issue and ask for help. This saves time and keeps group morale high.
- Communicating if you run into unexpected issues (making use of collective team experience)
- Keep a positive attitude in the workspace. Maintain respect between group members.

Contingency:

1. Set up a rigorous communication plan which clearly defines what should be communicated and to who.
2. Raise issues that have not been communicated with tutor/coaches and them for help with organization.
 - In case of technical/project-related conflicts, consult with the chief engineer/project manager
 - In case personal conflict arises, attempt to resolve the issue
 1. Between conflict parties
 2. Through mediation with the rest of the group

3. If an issue escalates, bring it up with DSE staff

4.2. Sustainability strategy

Energy is defined to be sustainable if it "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." [2] Definitions of sustainable energy include environmental considerations such as greenhouse gas emissions and social and economic factors such as energy poverty.

Wind power is set to become the fundamental pillar of the global renewable energy supply. It accounted for over 6% of global energy production in 2020 ¹Generating power from wind could be used to produce hydrogen and synthetic fuels, like kerosene, which the aerospace industry uses in a climate-friendly way.

Although wind energy is sustainable, it does not mean it has no carbon emissions. This is due to the manufacturing, installation, and end-of-life procedures of the turbines. Because wind energy is inherently renewable and sustainable, the group will focus on increasing the sustainability of wind turbines in two main aspects. Firstly by increasing the possible density of turbines in wind farms, thus decreasing the area and number required; and during production and end of life by material choice and manufacturing methods. In addition to this, the team will focus on the ecological and social impacts of the project and delivered system.

4.2.1. Drivers of Sustainable development

During the design and implementation of any system, considerations must be taken to ensure that the methods and results are sustainable. This is doubly true for renewable energy systems since they use a renewable resource, and thus new projects can be implemented as soon as the lifetime of the old one is spent.

One of the biggest drivers for sustainable development in this project is the scale of implementation. Since wind farms usually consist of multiple wind turbines, even implementation into a single wind farm would lead to a large number of turbines being produced. This means any impact stemming from the design and production of the wind turbine leads to orders of magnitude larger effects per farm.

The production of wind turbines typically includes large amounts of composites for the blades and rare-earth minerals for the permanent magnets used in generators [3].

In addition to this, Multi-Rotor VAWT are large products planned to be implemented in bodies of water that house large and complex ecosystems. Minimizing the impact of these is a priority for both environmental and economic reasons. In this regard, wind farms have already been shown to affect their environment, creating turbulent current wakes underwater, and atmospheric wakes in the air [4], and thus, their development must emphasize this danger to their immediate area. Therefore the amount of area used for wind farms should be minimized. To this end, it is more sustainable for a wind farm to have a higher energy density, the impacted area will be smaller for a farm of the same power output.

4.2.2. Principles implemented for Sustainable development

The following section will introduce the various measures that will be implemented as part of the sustainability strategy

¹URL: <https://www.c2es.org/content/renewable-energy/> [cited 28 April 2023]

Life Cycle Analysis

Life cycle analysis (LCA) is the method for evaluating the environmental impact of a product through its life cycle, encompassing extraction and processing of the raw materials, manufacturing, distribution, use, recycling, and final disposal. Each stage of life of the current wind turbines will be inspected to select the areas where improvements can be made for improvements in sustainability of the project. Beginning from the construction, wind turbines consume a lot of energy, especially the production of steel support structures and concrete foundations. On average, wind power plants take between 3 to 8 months² to generate the amount of energy that was needed for their construction. So-called upstream emissions are included in the overall carbon balance of a wind turbine's life cycle.

On average, wind turbines are operated for about 25 years.[5] Although blades are designed to last through the lifetime of the turbine 10-year lifespan is more standard as they are often replaced with bigger, more efficient blades, besides the other operational procedures that consume energy. Still, during this time, they generate 40 times more energy than the energy required for the production, operation, and disposal of a wind power plant. An onshore wind turbine with current technology produces around 9 grams of CO₂ for every kilowatt hour (kWh) it generates. A new offshore plant in the sea emits 7 grams of CO₂ per kWh³.

Cement and steel can be repurposed at the end of life in order to reduce their annual carbon emission. Turbine blades, on the other hand, produced by thermoset polymers are not recycled therefore, their carbon emission cannot be distributed over extended periods. This aspect is depicted in fig. 4.3. Some blades are burned for energy, even though this emits pollutants and is an inferior and inconsistent power source. In fact, because fibreglass is not combustible, around 60% of the scrap remains as ash, while the rest becomes air pollution.

Therefore, the project should aim to use recyclable blades in which the proposed VAWT design is advantageous. With its vertical orientation, the reduced distance from the rotational axis will minimize the moment of inertia and centrifugal forces induced, causing material requirements to be less restrictive. Also, because multiple turbines will be combined, the amount of cement to be cast per kilogram of the structure will decrease, further reducing carbon emissions.

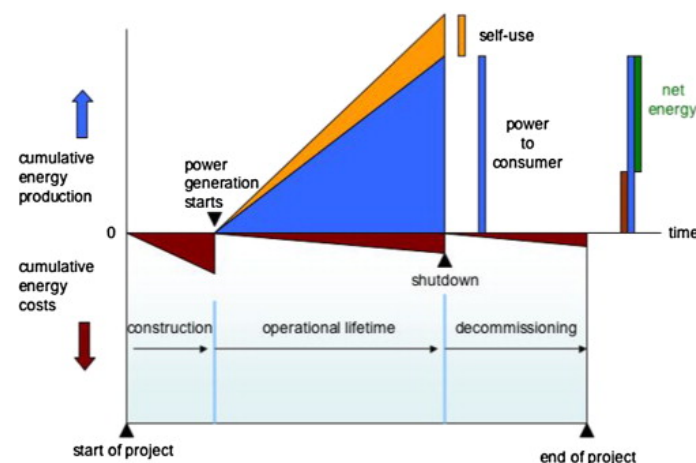


Figure 4.3: Energy production & consumption lifetime [5]

²URL: <https://nctce.com.au/how-is-wind-energy-sustainable/> [cited 26 April 2023]

³URL: <https://nctce.com.au/how-is-wind-energy-sustainable/> [cited 26 April 2023]

Deployment Environmental Impact Mitigation

In order to mitigate the effects of the turbine on its environment once deployed, various considerations will be taken while developing the conceptual design, as well as the that results from the design tree.

First, during the baseline report, research will be conducted on the sustainable development and impact of current wind farm technology. This is a crucial step to develop an understanding of the methods that can be implemented to make our VAWT more sustainable.

Options will be researched to determine the minimal impact on the environment and be made part of the trade-off.

In terms of the design trade-off, the criteria selection and their associated weights guide the choice of preliminary design. These will be made to include various factors that can accurately represent the associated effects on the environment. The most important trade-off criteria are the factors affecting the material choice, as this has the largest environmental impact overall.

In addition to the trade-off, further consideration must be made for the location where wind farms are planned. The location of the wind farm will influence whether the effect that the turbine has on the environment will have larger ramifications on less immediate surroundings or be able to minimize these effects. For example, the difference between placing a wind farm where they disrupt currents feeding into reefs nearby versus disrupting currents feeding into barren areas. Additionally, wind farms cannot disturb shipping routes, fishing areas, and other maritime activities.

Aside from the impact on maritime (plant)life, wind turbines also present a threat to bird life. The stability of bird populations can be severely impacted by a relatively small increase or decrease in mortality. A study by [Schippers et al.](#) showed that allowing a 5% increase in mortality led to a 9% to 72% decrease in population size after 10 years in followed populations [6]. Decreasing bird mortality would increase the ecological sustainability of wind energy generation.

Social sustainability

One of the key factors which makes the concept of relatively smaller vertical-axis turbines is the fact that, unlike the large horizontal-axis turbines, the components do not need be produced from the same high-performance materials. Instead, more widely available materials may be used. This, in turn, means that a much wider range of suppliers become available since such materials would be easier to produce and require less equipment. This would allow the supply of materials to become more local. This would benefit smaller local companies the most and decrease the GHG emissions associated with transport.

Note that the part size and complexity are connected to material selection. The design will allow for the use of smaller-scale parts. That, combined with more broadly available materials, which are required for the design, means that the manufacturing and production of the parts can be distributed between several smaller, local companies. This can be contrasted with traditional horizontal-axis turbines, the parts for which can only be made by large, specialized companies. A design with smaller parts made of less specialized materials allows for production to be democratized, offering a great opportunity for the field of wind energy to expand in a not-so-different way from solar energy.

Sustainable design philosophy

The department of sustainable engineering is responsible to integrate the sustainable design philosophy into the project. Each of the other engineering departments has at least one member who is also part of

the sustainability department. These members have the role to enforce the main principles of sustainable design and ensure that trade-offs reflect the main driver of this project, sustainability. The principles of sustainable engineering which will be applied in the design process of this project, as provided by Pennsylvania State University, are as follows ⁴:

- "Strive to ensure that material/energy inputs and outputs are not hazardous"
- "Waste minimization over waste management."
- "Design for easy separation and purification."
- "All components must be designed for maximum mass, energy, and temporal efficiency."
- "Avoid unnecessary consumption of mass/energy."
- "Use entropy and complexity as guidelines to decide end-of-life."
- "A product must not outlast its uses."
- "A product must not have unnecessary capabilities/capacities."
- "Minimize material diversity."
- "Product creation is only one part of the cycle."
- "Evaluate products based on life-cycle analysis."
- "Prioritize the use of renewable and readily available resources."

⁴URL: <https://www.e-education.psu.edu/eme504/node/5> [cited 28 April 2023]

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