

06 March 2026

Dear all

OFFSHORE WIND COST RECOVERY

You will all be aware that in recent years there has been a significant increase in demand for offshore wind advice from NatureScot. This has resulted in a significant shortfall in resource to be able to support the consenting process. In close liaison with Scottish Government, and the wider sector, NatureScot will implement a full cost recovery approach from 1 April. This steer is in line with the wider Scottish Government Public Service Reform agenda, under which public bodies are expected to explore all options for cost recovery based on the services provided.

We have co-designed this approach with a number of industry partners during 2025 and we are grateful to them for their input and constructive feedback during its development. We are particularly grateful to Scottish Renewables for their support and input during this process.

From 1 April 2026, we will begin implementing a two-tier charging approach for our offshore wind advice. This will consist of a Standard service available for each of the discrete phases of work during the project life cycle, with a Top up service option available if required. The Standard service phases and associated rates are detailed in Annex 1. The approach will be subject to review at the end of 2026-27.

The Standard service will be charged as a mandatory flat fee per phase for each project requiring NatureScot advice (with some adjustment to fees for projects already operating within a phase to reflect remaining advice needs). The service level is broadly equivalent to that currently provided by NatureScot, and will include a clear escalation process where needed. The Top up service will be charged at an hourly rate per specific, additional element (e.g. additional meetings, advice requests), and applies to work outwith or beyond that included in the Standard service. We will continue to engage with partners as we develop details of the Top up service.

We understand that this is a change to how the sector operates and you may have questions. Please contact offshorewindcostrecovery@nature.scot with any queries on cost recovery and visit our new webpage ([Offshore wind cost recovery](#)), which will be updated regularly with more information, including more details of the phases and services, guidance and FAQs.

To ensure a smooth introduction of this service, please respond to this letter to confirm the contact details for the person at your organisation with whom we can confirm finance, invoicing and contract arrangements. If we do not receive a reply, we will direct further queries to you at this address.

We look forward to continuing to work in partnership to support an effective consenting process for offshore wind projects in Scotland.

Kind regards,



Stuart MacQuarrie

Director for Nature and Climate Change

NatureScot

Annex 1 – Phases and associated standard service fees

Phase	Standard service fee [†]
1 - Pre application discussions (up to and including scoping / screening for EIA / HRA)	£41,250
2 - Pre application / Variation / Additional Information discussions (post scoping / screening up to application submission)	£22,625
3 - Application (additional fee will apply for Additional Information cases)	£74,625
3a - Variation	£39,125
4 - Post application / preconstruction and consideration and approval of consent plans	£63,000
5 - Derogation cases – advice pre, during and post submissions including monitoring and adaptive management requirements	£23,250
6 - Operations and maintenance*	TBD
7 - Decommissioning (additional fee will apply for Variation / Additional Information cases)	£74,625

*Note that for phase 6 (Operations and maintenance), we have limited experience of this phase and therefore fees for this phase have not yet been calculated.

†Note that fees are exclusive of VAT.