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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.10.2025)

It is for the Member States to designate renewable acceleration areas for one or more types of renewable energy sources in accordance with applicable EU law, in particular the Renewable Energy Directive (RED)[1] or Regulation (EU) 2022/2577[2]. EU law does not exclude that an area is reassessed after a few years and is declared as an acceleration area for wind energy, provided that the conditions under Article 15c(1) of RED or Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2022/2577, or those relating to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive[3] as applicable, are met. The Reichswald forest is partly located in the Natura 2000 site 'Reichswald' (DE4202-302), so that for this part of the site the restrictions for establishing acceleration areas according to Article 15c(1)(a)(ii) of RED apply.

According to Article 16a of RED, renewable energy projects located in renewable acceleration areas are exempted from assessments under the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EIAD)[4], provided that the conditions of Article 15c(1) of RED are met. The same applies to areas designated under Regulation (EU) 2022/2577. This exemption does not apply to projects that are likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State or where a Member State likely to be significantly affected so requests, as provided for in Article 7 of the EIAD.

The process laid down by Article 7 of the EIAD is triggered either if a Member State is aware that a project is likely to have significant effects on the environment in another Member State or where a Member State likely to be significantly affected so requests.

[1] Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast), OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, pp. 82–209.
[2] Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2577 of 22 December 2022 laying down a framework to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy, OJ L 335, 29.12.2022, pp. 36–44.
[3] Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p. 30–37.
[4] Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, OJ L 26, 28.1.2012, p. 1–21, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014, OJ L 124, 25.4.2014, p. 1–18.