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350 Humboldt Comments on Revised Offshore Wind Permitting Road Map

Please see attachment

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

Comments to CEC Board Wednesday May 10, 2023 by 350 Humboldt representative Daniel Chandler, Ph.D.ⁱ

For an agency like the CEC, where scientists abound, it is strange to say it is not following the science — but with respect to permitting offshore wind it is true. The IPCC 2023 Synthesis report says:

“Without a strengthening of policies, emissions are projected to rise, leading to a median global warming of 2.2°C–3.5°C by 2100... [This] implies deep, rapid and sustained global GHG emission reductions *this decade*....Near-term actions involve high up-front investments and potentially disruptive changes....”

The Bezos 10 billion dollar Earth Fund CEO, Andrew Steer, warned a week ago:

“This is the decisive decade....if we don’t get it right this decade, actually next decade it will be impossibly expensive to do anything and will quite frankly be too late.”

This revised permitting report projects the process to take 7 to 12 years before construction can *start*, not including transmission. And that too is, frankly, too late.

Your Commission can initiate the “disruptive changes” that will be necessary to make offshore wind relevant to climate mitigation *within this decade*. We urge you to direct staff to prepare a final strategy that includes legislation to reduce the total permitting time to two years and take other necessary steps so that we generate at least five to ten gigawatts of offshore wind power *before 2030*.ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Two of the quotations here are condensed to fit the two-minute time frame. The full quotations are: Bezos Earth Fund CEO Andrew Steer: “This is the decisive decade. And the next decade will also be decisive. The reason this is especially decisive is that if we don’t get it right this decade, actually, next decade it will be impossibly expensive to do anything, and will quite frankly be too late.” From an interview on the podcast *Zero*. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-05-04/transcript-zero-episode-37-how-the-bezos-earth-fund-spends-its-billions#xj4y7vzkg>

IPCC Synthesis report: “A substantial ‘emissions gap’ exists as global GHG emissions in 2030 associated with the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions... announced prior to COP26 would be similar to or only slightly below 2019 emission levels and higher than those associated with modelled mitigation pathways that limit warming to 1.5°C (>50%) with no or limited overshoot or to 2°C (>67%), *assuming immediate action, which implies deep, rapid and sustained global GHG emission reductions this decade.*” “Deep, rapid and sustained mitigation and accelerated implementation of adaptation actions in this decade would reduce projected losses and damages for humans and ecosystems (*very high confidence*), and deliver many co-benefits, especially for air quality and health (*high confidence*). Delayed mitigation and adaptation action would lock-in high-emissions infrastructure, raise risks of stranded assets and cost-escalation, reduce feasibility, and increase losses and damages (*high confidence*). *Near-term actions involve high up-front investments and potentially disruptive changes* that can be lessened by a range of enabling policies (*high confidence*). {2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8}” “Projected global emissions implied by policies implemented by the end of 2020 are 57 (52–60) GtCO₂-eq in 2030 (Table 2.2). This points to an implementation gap compared with the NDCs of 4–7 GtCO₂-eq in 2030 (Table 2.2); *without a strengthening of policies, emissions are projected to rise, leading to a median global warming of 2.2°C–3.5°C (very likely range) by 2100 (medium confidence)* (see Section 3.1.1). {WGIII SPM B.6.1, WGIII SPM C.1}”<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/resources/spm-headline-statements/>
https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_LongerReport.pdf

The Chris Grieg statement was made on the Energy Policy Now podcast on May 8th.

ⁱⁱ The GridLab presentation to the Board on June 27, 2023 showed how this is feasible, but it will take a significant course change.