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**Consultation on indirect emissions and EIA:**

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*Published in:*  
Scottish Planning and Environmental Law

*Publication date:*  
2024

*Document Version*  
Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication in Discovery Research Portal](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*  
Reid, C. (2024). Consultation on indirect emissions and EIA: Offshore projects. *Scottish Planning and Environmental Law*, (226), 123.

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## Consultation on indirect emissions and EIA – offshore projects

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has published a consultation paper and draft guidance on including indirect emissions in the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for offshore oil and gas projects.<sup>1</sup> This follows the decision of the Supreme Court in *R (Finch) v Surrey County Council* ((2024) 224 SPEL 90) that it is not only the emissions directly arising from an extraction project but also those that arise from the use of the oil and gas extracted that must be considered when determining whether or not to grant permission for a project to proceed.

An EIA for offshore oil and gas projects is required under the Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1497). Such assessments have previously focused on the impacts of constructing and operating the project itself, but the decision in *Finch* means that they must also include the greenhouse gas emissions caused by the burning of the oil and gas that is extracted. The proposed guidance aims to help in shaping how such emissions can be included in the environmental statements required from applicants.

Matters covered include the need to quantify what the project will add beyond a baseline scenario and a requirement to explain the methodology used for estimating the indirect emissions produced, as well as how the likely effects on the climate, the significance of cumulative effects, the identification of mitigation measures and the consideration of alternatives should be addressed. Rather than providing a complete template or specific methodology, the guidance points to the matters that must be covered, leaving scope for different approaches to be taken. The closing date for the consultation is 8 January, 2025.

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Author Accepted Manuscript of Reid, C 2024, 'Consultation on indirect emissions and EIA: Offshore projects' Scottish Planning and Environmental Law, no. 226, pp. 123.  
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<sup>1</sup> [Consultation on draft supplementary EIA guidance - GOV.UK](#)