

# PORTUGAL SIMPLIFIES RENEWABLES' ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The “Environmental Simplex” simplifies procedures, eliminates acts, and reduces deadlines for the Portuguese renewables sector.

The Portuguese government simplified the environmental requirements for the implementing, among others, renewable energy production plants, through [Decree-Law no. 11/2023](#), of February 10th, also known as “Environmental Simplex”, which is expected to reduce the project’s construction timelines. We highlight below the more impacting ones.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) is waived in the case of:

- Solar plants, irrespectively of their location, where the area occupied by solar panels is equal to or less than 100 ha;
- Wind farms with 20 towers located outside sensitive areas or wind farms with 10 towers, if located in sensitive areas, with special conditions for over-equipment of existing wind farms; and
- Transmission grid lines up to 20 km and 110 kV.

When a project is located outside environmentally sensitive areas, EIA is will not be required for:

- Solar power plants where the installed area is less than 15 ha, is not located less than 2 km from other solar plants with more than 1MW and when the connection to the national grid is made by voltage line equal to or less than 60 kv and with length smaller than 10 km;
- Solar plants where there is only one tower, at a distance greater than 2km from another tower.

The Environmental Simplex added two new rules to produce renewable energy:

- In relation to the alternative grid lines, the deadline for the declaration of EIA is 90 days or it is deemed as approved; and
- Solar self-consuming units are exempt from EIA when installed in built structures or buildings (except classified) or in artificial areas, existing or future.

The use of water produced for re-used to produce energy, in particular hydrogen, is now subject, in some cases, to a prior communication; In the case of decentralized systems, a production license was replaced by a prior communication; and if PEA does not decide in 20 days counted of the communication, the person concerned may start his activity.

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