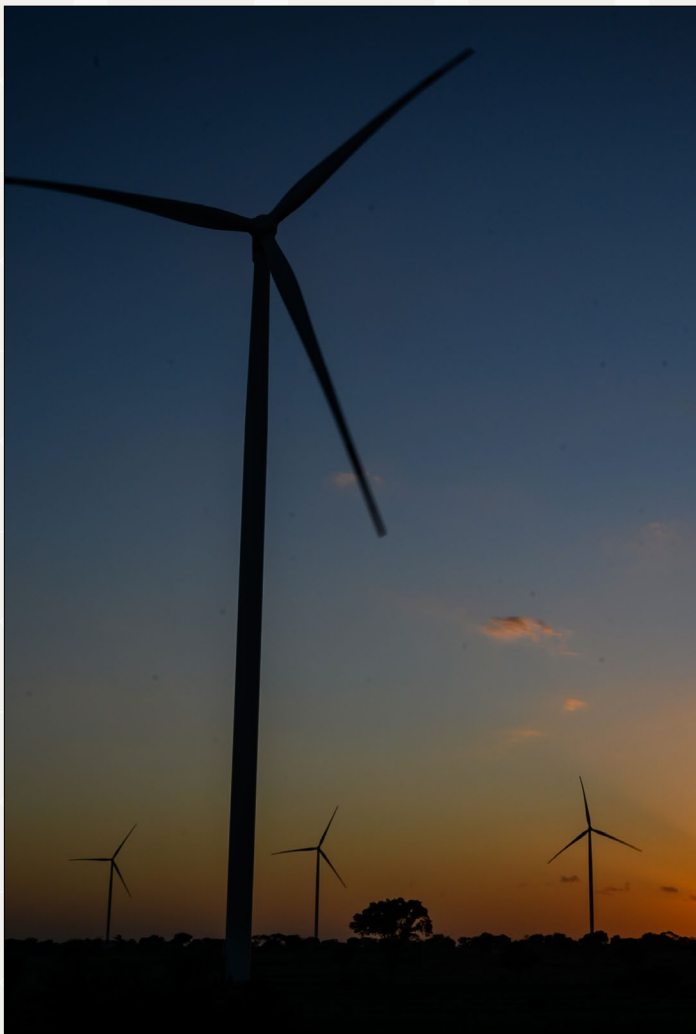




THE DOSSIER

Offshore Renewable Energy in Asia-Pacific: Defending the Present, Protecting the Future

By Dr. Ariel Cohen, LLB, Ph.D., and Wesley Alexander Hill



Turbines spin at the Tolo 1 Jenepono wind energy power plant in South Sulawesi. Indonesia has two wind power plants with a total capacity of 147 MW – one of the largest in Southeast Asia. (Hariandi Hafid / SOPA Images / LightRocket via Getty Images)

Executive Summary

With increasing pollution, population, energy demand, and costs for nonrenewable energy, Southeast Asia is increasingly looking toward investing in offshore renewable energy. For most Southeast Asian nations, offshoring will be cheaper than production of nonrenewable energy and will produce more energy than onshore renewable energy. The South China Sea has excellent offshore wind and wave energy potential, which will be cost-efficient in the long term.

To further promote offshore renewables in Southeast Asia, the best course of action for these countries and their foreign partners, particularly the United States, is to develop regulations and investment regimes facilitating investment. These countries should address security issues with China by promoting naval cooperation, training and arms sales, and gear supply before a border conflict arises. Strengthening the security component of offshore energy production will contribute to a greener future, increase the potency of China's economic competitors, and empower Southeast Asian nations in their goals for energy security and carbon neutrality.

Key Takeaways

- Southeast Asia is uniquely endowed with natural advantages for offshore wind, solar, and tidal energy, which can help local energy security and aid economic development.
- The South China Sea's offshore renewables are mostly in areas less susceptible, but not



immune, to territorial disputes or Chinese territorial aggrandizement.

- Preemptively addressing geopolitical problems stemming from Southeast Asia's offshore renewables can provide a basis for resolving other territorial disputes in the South China Sea and their associated geopolitical issues.

- Other regional disputes can impede offshore renewable development, but offshore renewable development itself can factor into the resolution of these disputes.

- The most practical way to address concerns about Southeast Asia's offshore renewables is to facilitate international investment in the region and multilateral cooperation between adjacent littoral actors.

Recommendations

- The U.S. must maintain its commitment toward an open South China Sea with internationally recognized maritime boundaries. China's "nine-dash line" program of territorial aggrandizement must be thwarted by

continued U.S. Navy Freedom of Navigation patrols and broader diplomatic support to regional partners such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines. This will ensure the region remains open for renewable energy development.

- The U.S. government and nongovernment agencies must promote and encourage American companies' direct investment and regional involvement. This will comfort partner states, as the U.S. will have a direct stake in thwarting China's territorial ambitions while decreasing the insurance rates and political risk for many companies. In conjunction, these will reduce operating costs and stimulate development.

- All local state actors must develop and adopt standard regional regulations (tax, environmental, economic, etc.) to incentivize large-scale investment. This regional framework can draw from lessons learned in the Caribbean and the North Sea, allowing for direct cooperation with the United States and European Union. They must also invest in naval and anti-naval capabilities to maintain a credible deterrent toward Chinese aggression.



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The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and not an official policy or position of the New Lines Institute.

COVER PHOTO: Transmission lines generate electricity above the hills of Bangui Bay, Ilocos Norte, northern Philippines. (Joel Nito / AFP via Getty Images)

The New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy

Our mission is to provoke principled and transformative leadership based on peace and security, global communities, character, stewardship, and development.

Our purpose is to shape U.S. foreign policy based on a deep understanding of regional geopolitics and the value systems of those regions.





Introduction

With environmental problems, population growth, increasing energy demands, and rising costs for traditional nonrenewable energy, Southeast Asia is increasingly looking toward investing in renewable energy. A growing population of 675 million and an [aggregate economic growth rate of 5.8% in 2022](#) have increased energy demand and stress on the environment in the region. As energy access in Southeast Asia has improved significantly in recent years, with approximately 95% of households having access to electricity, energy demand in the region has increased by an average of 3% per year, with three-fourths of that demand met by fossil fuels, leading to a [35% increase in carbon emissions](#).

Southeast Asia's local ecological stressors make the incentives of a green transition pressing and immediate. The region has a [strong potential](#) to harvest offshore wind and wave energy to supplement and ultimately supplant fossil fuels. China and Taiwan currently utilize some of the offshore renewable energy potentials of the South China Sea, with [China's offshore wind sector soaring](#). These nations have invested heavily in wind energy, while wave, tidal power, and ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC) lag but have massive latent potential.

Although Southeast Asia's northern neighbors, especially [China](#), have invested heavily in renewables, the region lags. Increasing energy demand in Southeast Asia, the unique geography of the South China Sea, and the emergence of regionally suitable renewable energy technology mean this geopolitically contentious region will take on even more global economic significance. The South China Sea has practical and cost-efficient renewable energy [potential](#) for Southeast Asia's unfolding energy transformation.

The South China Sea is host to a sundry assortment of territorial disputes, the most famous being China's ["nine-dash line,"](#) which stems from claims and de facto control over the Spratly Islands, coral reefs, and some artificially constructed islands. Because most renewable energy sources in the area are out of China's claimed or enforced jurisdiction, investment in Southeast Asia's offshore renewables will not

immediately challenge China's territorial [aspirations](#). This will enable a comparatively cheap and safe entry point for American and international actors to enter the South China Sea and subsequently create a wider private constituency for containing China's territorial claims in the region.

While renewable investments will initially sidestep China's aggression and militarization of the South China Sea, it will not entirely avoid it. Territorial disputes over South China Sea waters and their impact on increasing energy insecurity directly threaten the national interests of the United States and its regional partners. The United States needs to increase its engagement in the region's renewable energy development sector to protect its national security interests and utilize its economic statecraft to expand its influence.

There are two vital ways that the United States can contribute to renewable energy development in the South China Sea. First, the U.S. must maintain its commitment to an open South China Sea with internationally recognized maritime boundaries. China's ["nine-dash line"](#) program of territorial aggrandizement must be thwarted by continued U.S. Navy Freedom of Navigation patrols and broader diplomatic support to regional partners such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines. This will ensure the region remains open for renewable energy development.

Second, the U.S. must [promote](#) American companies' direct investment and regional involvement. This will comfort partner states, as the U.S. will have a direct stake in thwarting China's territorial ambitions while decreasing the insurance rates and political risk for many companies. In conjunction, these will reduce operating costs and stimulate development.

Offshore Renewable Energy in Southeast Asia

The most critical question regarding renewable energy is its cost efficiency compared to nonrenewable energy. The affordability of renewables remains a concern, as many green technologies are not yet cost-competitive or fully developed. In addition, many countries in Southeast Asia lack regulatory and financing frameworks that would reduce the cost of



green [energy projects](#). While clean energy equipment may have higher upfront costs than coal and gas, offshore renewable energy is more cost-efficient in the [long term](#). Moreover, offshore renewable energy costs are falling as technology advances, and clean energy is cheaper in the long term, especially with no fuel costs.

Nations like the Philippines are especially interested in offshore renewables. In the long run, with renewables Southeast Asia can save around \$160 billion in energy costs by 2050. Some renewable energy sources, such as wind, have become the [cheapest power option](#) in many of these countries, especially in the many off-grid and remote areas common throughout the region.

Many Southeast Asian countries are looking to expand their offshore renewable energy sector. Offshore wind energy may be the best option for Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines, but technical, economic, and security issues present problems. While the financial and technical issues can be resolved through foreign investment and collaboration, military threats appear more intractable and demand U.S. involvement.

Offshore renewable energy has strong commercial potential, resulting in many Southeast Asian countries expanding research and development and implementing projects. This is particularly true for Vietnam, where renewable [energy has become the cheapest option](#). Vietnam has expanded significantly in solar energy, but most notable are Vietnam's offshore wind farm endeavors, despite its heavy reliance on coal. Vietnam has a [unique geographical potential for offshore wind energy](#), with its southeast coast having powerful winds. The Danish Energy Agency evaluates that [the Vietnamese coastline could generate 160 GW of power](#) if fully utilized, nearly 11 times that of the EU's current offshore wind capacity (14.6 GW).

As a result, Vietnam has numerous investors in its offshore wind ventures. The Vietnamese government has collaborated with research institutes since 2000 to assess the country's offshore renewable energy potential. Vietnam has 126 offshore wind farms under development, with 29 in operation. Singapore's Sembcorp signed a joint agreement with PetroVietnam in February to build an [offshore wind energy project](#) to bring energy to Singapore. The AES Corporation plans to develop a \$13 billion wind farm near the

Wind Speeds Along Vietnam's Coast



coast of Binh Thuan. Through cutting-edge research and development, the Institute of Energy Science of Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology Studies is [developing wave energy prototypes](#).

These offshore projects have attracted investment from abroad. Danish company Ørsted has signed an agreement with Vietnam's T&T group, and to develop a 2 GW offshore wind power plant in the southwest region. Danish company Vestas, the largest producer of wind turbines, is also [interested](#)



[in investing](#) in Vietnam due to its proximity to strong winds and strong steel output. Even China has invested in Vietnam through the [Xinshun Offshore Wind Power Project](#), which started commercial operations in November 2021. This project has 18 turbines and an operational capacity of 90 MW, which, while significantly less output than larger offshore [wind farms](#), shows strong potential for [more ambitious projects](#). The World Bank Group estimates these projects could [generate \\$50 billion for the Vietnamese economy by 2030](#).

Chinese investment in some of these offshore renewable projects is a double-edged sword. On one hand, infusions of capital help overcome renewable energy's biggest hurdle, and cooperation on environmental issues is good for the international system. On the other hand, local actors are and should be skeptical of these investments. The fear is that Chinese investment will either act as a means of legitimizing Chinese territorial aggrandizement, a paltry concession to bargain for gains elsewhere, or as direct leverage over state actors.

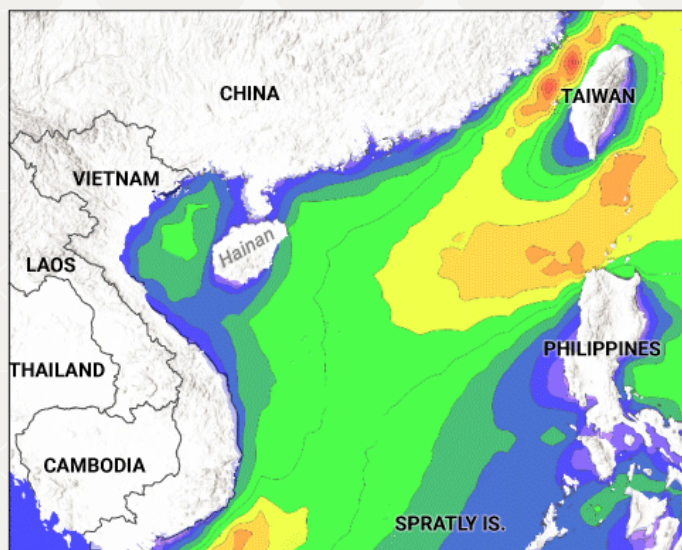
Regardless of China's involvement, [Vietnam has other strong motivations to invest in offshore wind energy](#), such as poor air quality from coal emissions and its goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. This has made it a regional leader. Vietnam is investing in its natural resources to provide power, with hydropower sources mostly tapped out and [energy needs increasing by 10% each year](#).

Regional Offshore Renewables Race

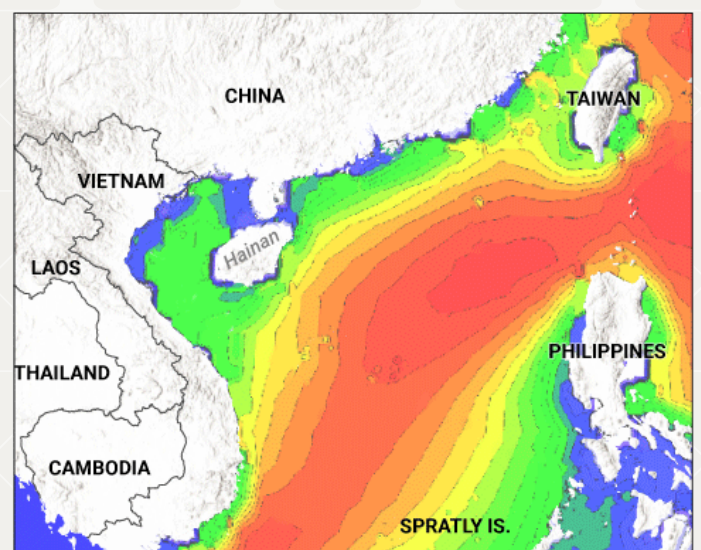
The rest of Southeast Asia is looking into research and investment in similar projects. In the Philippines, [Energy Development Corporation's](#) wind farm in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, is Southeast Asia's largest onshore wind energy producer, with a 150 MW capacity from 50 turbines over a 600-hectare area. After Vietnam, the Philippines has the most [foreign investment for offshore wind farming](#), despite currently having no installed offshore wind plants; the World Bank estimates [more than 178 GW of potential wind energy](#) on the Philippines' shores. [This potential has attracted investors from Norway](#) and other European nations. The U.S. Trade and Development

Offshore Renewable Energy in the South China Sea

Multi-Year Annual Potential Wind Energy



Multi-Year Annual Potential Wave Energy



400 km
200 mi

Potential Energy
LESSER GREATER

Source: Journal of Sustainability Science and Management (Offshore Wind Energy Resource Assessment in Malaysia with Satellite Altimetry)

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Agency is conducting a project with Climate Capital Management, Aboitiz Power Corporation, and the think tank RMI to [develop up to 3 GW of offshore wind energy](#) in the Philippines by 2040.

The Philippine Department of Energy estimates that the country also has more than 170 GW of potential energy in [wave-generated power](#). Offshore renewable energy is part of the Philippines' national energy [plan](#), and agencies to manage projects have already been established.

The Philippines plans to establish an offshore renewable energy wind facility [by 2030](#). The Philippines has [strong wind and wave energy](#) near the Luzon Strait and the northern area of the South China Sea. While this could generate more than enough power, it could also cause some disputes between the Philippines and both China and Taiwan, given their claims in the South China Sea.

Other Southeast Asian countries are exploring offshore renewable development but do not have the same natural potential as Vietnam and the Philippines. Malaysia is conducting research, development, and demonstration work into tidal, wave, and OTEC. Malaysia is also planning to expand on offshore renewable energy, pass a law on OTEC, and build the first OTEC plant in Southeast Asia, to create means for international investors to get involved. However, [ocean-based energy best suits remote and coastal areas](#).

Malaysia is currently researching wave energy at various academic and government institutions, including the OTEC Research Centre in Kuala Lumpur, to investigate its [potential](#) in Sabah Island; another research project funded by the School of Ocean Engineering at the University of Malaysia Terengganu discovered that there is a [high potential for offshore wind energy in Kijal](#). This research is partly subsidized by the Malaysian government, which collaborates with private stakeholders on offshore renewable energy projects, showing political commitment to offshore renewables. This is further highlighted by the demarcation of responsibilities for offshore renewable energy projects already present in the Malaysian government; one agency makes a particular tariff system for offshore renewable energy while another

collects funds, and a third one conducts research on [offshore renewable energy potential](#).

The best areas for wave energy in Malaysia are [Terengganu and Sarawak](#). However, to achieve the maximum benefits of this energy potential, deployment, maintenance, and repair costs need to be reduced. Concurrently, companies like Shell are investing in Malaysia's offshore solar and wind potential by creating a [deep-water gas project powered by solar and wind energy](#). This hybrid model showcases the potential for Malaysian offshore renewable energy, igniting ideas for other renewable projects. Malaysia's largest oil and gas company, Petronas, has constructed onshore solar panels in Malaysia, generating 14 MW annually, and aims to have at least 3,000 MW of renewable energy capacity by 2024.

This overlap between offshore renewables and traditional hydrocarbon extraction highlights an important facet of energy in the South China Sea: It will be incredibly difficult to fully segregate traditional and renewable energy. This will only become more [salient](#) as economic activity in the region expands.

This hybrid model presents the path forward for most other regional actors. Traditional hydrocarbons cannot be quickly abandoned, but they can be used to quickly provide baseload energy in times when renewables are stressed, as well as generate the massive upfront energy demands that renewable energy requires.

Economic Obstacles to Offshore Renewable Energy

Offshore renewable energy development in Southeast Asia faces financial, technical, and political challenges. Local banks have funded most onshore renewable energy projects in Vietnam due to current funding templates not offering bankability as per international standards. In addition, even if this issue were to be fixed, Vietnam would still need about \$17 billion in lending for offshore wind, which is why [international investors](#) such as Sembcorp and Ørsted are critical. International investment also runs into [cross-cutting issues](#) like unpredictable regulatory frameworks, foreign investment restrictions, shallow financial and



capital markets, inexperienced domestic banks, and currency risks when working with these countries.

A critical problem with renewable energy investment in Vietnam is a [tariff](#) by Vietnam Electricity that makes most transitional wind projects commercially infeasible. Wind projects that missed the October 2021 deadline for the Feed-In Tariff of 9.8 cents/kWh now have a feed-in tariff for offshore wind at 7.7 cents/kWh, which is 20% lower and makes most of these projects unprofitable, causing many projects to halt production until a new bill is legislated.

Although offshore renewable energy would be the most affordable energy option in the long run, most of the funding must come from international investors. With global green companies realizing the energy potential of the South China Sea and funding research in most of these nations, this issue is diminishing. From 2016 to 2020, Southeast Asia's average annual energy investment was \$70 billion, with 40% invested in clean energy technology.

Due to competition with fossil fuels, the Philippines needs to invest the warranted amount of attention in offshore development. High installation, maintenance, and repair costs constrain its interest in offshore renewables, leading to the purposeful ignoring of renewables while [exploring oil and gas](#) and remaining reliant on coal. This has led to the Philippines and China disputing parts of the South China Sea in the [pursuit of hydrocarbons](#).

Technical Challenges

Technical problems are endemic to both onshore and offshore renewable energy in the region. These include unaffordable storage of electricity from renewable production, less-integrated regional grids compared with Europe, and rigid power generation contracts that make the switch to renewable energy difficult. A transition to renewables will have to be slow because many electricity grids are [locked into contracts with energy companies that extend past 2030](#) with little to no contract flexibility.

Another significant issue is the [installation phase](#), where administrative problems regarding site selection, cost deployment, and maintenance emerge.

Not all countries have the investment and natural potential that Vietnam has. Smaller countries like [Brunei and Singapore](#) must work with partners for offshore renewable energy for spatial reasons, while less-developed countries like Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar [need more resources, expertise, and infrastructure](#). Nevertheless, most of these technical issues can be resolved through foreign investment in research into cheaper methods and alternatives as well as projects.

Military and Security Challenges

The People's Republic of China utilizes the "[nine-dash line](#)" as a geographical demarcation to assert territorial sovereignty over extensive areas of the South China Sea. This demarcation line originates from China's Hainan Island and encompasses approximately 90% of the sea's waters. Consequently, it overlaps with the maritime territories of Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan. In the 20th century, Chinese officials displayed limited interest and knowledge regarding the South China Sea. However, China's repeated and humiliating defeats against imperialist powers sparked an interest in mapmaking to restore national pride. As a result, China conceived and mapped the nine-dash line to depict its vision of becoming a [future regional hegemon](#).

China still upholds the nine-dash line, but its legal foundation and international recognition have faced significant controversy from neighboring states and courts worldwide. The line has been widely criticized for constituting a unilateral and excessive territorial claim that infringes upon the rights of other states in the region, as stipulated by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague [ruled in favor of the Philippines](#) in a case challenging China's maritime claims in the South China Sea. The court concluded that the nine-dash line lacks a legal basis and unequivocally violates the Philippines' sovereignty within its exclusive economic zone. China openly rejects and disregards this ruling, demonstrating an increased military presence and assertiveness in the region.

Southeast Asian states and China have recently witnessed [escalating conflicts](#) over energy exploration



Recent History of Conflict in the South China Sea



- 1974:** China seizes the Paracel Islands from South Vietnam – a sign of Chinese expansionism in the South China Sea.
- 1994:** United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) comes into force, creating a legal framework for defining maritime jurisdiction and activities. However, the convention does not explicitly adjudicate sovereignty disputes in the South China Sea.
- 1995:** Chinese and Philippine navy vessels clash over the Mischief Reef, part of a string of islands claimed by the Philippines.
- 2002:** Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) nations and China agree on a non-binding Code of Conduct that aims to reduce tensions in the South China Sea.
- 2009:** In response to Vietnam and Malaysia’s petition to the U.N. to expand their continental shelves, China releases its “nine-dash line” policy of territorial claims to the South China Sea.
- 2013:** China begins practice of building artificial islands in the South China Sea.
- 2015:** The U.S. starts “freedom of navigation operations” in the South China Sea to challenge Chinese territorial claims.
- 2016:** After the Philippines challenged China’s “nine-dash line” plan in 2013, the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague rules that the claim has no legal basis under UNCLOS.

in the South China Sea, with varying degrees of intensity. While renewables have not been the focus of these disputes, they are not immune from them either. These conflicts have involved a combination of [international tribunals](#), diplomatic protests, increased military presence in disputed regions, and contentious incidents, thereby generating tensions and escalations. Diplomatic disputes, [assertive maritime maneuvers](#), and occasional demonstrations of military capabilities primarily characterize the matches. China’s reclamation activities on the disputed islands have resulted in the deployment of more robust military assets, including missile systems.

Renewables and the Political Balance

A foundational issue underlying all investments is the geopolitical risk posed by political disagreements in the South China Sea, namely security risks resulting from China’s increased militarization. While initial investments in the most profitable offshore renewables are not threatened, this risk still hinders offshore renewable energy development in the region. Numerous recent disputes have occurred between China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, and Malaysia over [oil and gas exploration and production](#). Coastal countries in Southeast Asia are naturally concerned as these territorial disputes will affect offshore renewable energy development.



Competing Energy Claims in the South China Sea



While [Vietnam's wind projects](#) are close to the coastline and these disputes have no direct physical bearing for them, the rest of the littoral states are not so fortunate. Regional security issues impede offshore development more broadly and negatively impact foreign investors.

Security concerns also disturb the regional distribution of various projects. The Philippines' best offshore energy spot would be in the Luzon Strait, but disputes over the area with China and Taiwan have prevented significant development. Due to their other best spots for offshore wind energy being deep in the South China Sea, Malaysia and Brunei are most likely to develop territorial disputes with other countries should they wholeheartedly pursue it.

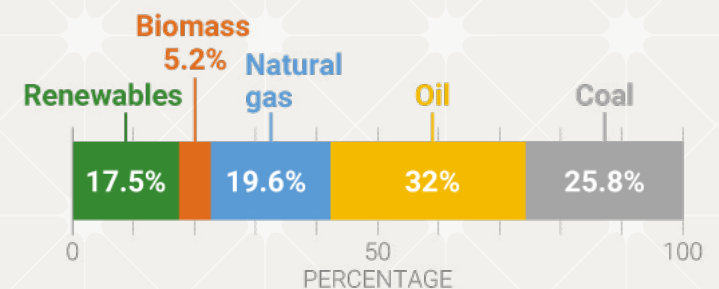
Current projects by Malaysia are within the country's own claimed boundaries, but parts are in the area where claims are also exercised by China. China and

Malaysia have had previous disputes over maritime borders in the South China Sea. Normally, due to Chinese investment in the country, Malaysia stays quiet about these violations or discusses them privately, but a 2021 incident where several People's Liberation Army aircraft flew over a Malaysian maritime zone provoked an [unusually vocal response](#). According to the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, Chinese ships constantly encroach on [Malaysian-claimed territory](#). Malaysian analysts state that China [intends to assert its dominance](#) over the nine-dash line every year, continually testing the tolerance of its neighbors and sending a message to those who cooperate with U.S. military exercises in the South China Sea, like Malaysia.

The military balance between China and other littoral states is self-evidently in China's favor. Even if all littoral states combined their military assets, China still enjoys considerable military and economic advantages. However, the utility of a firm military posture from China's littoral neighbors is not to defeat the Chinese military but rather to create a force capable of policing international claims and preventing a Chinese fait accompli. Making any prospective military conflict in the South China Sea more costly to Beijing than cooperation is a requirement for any resolution.

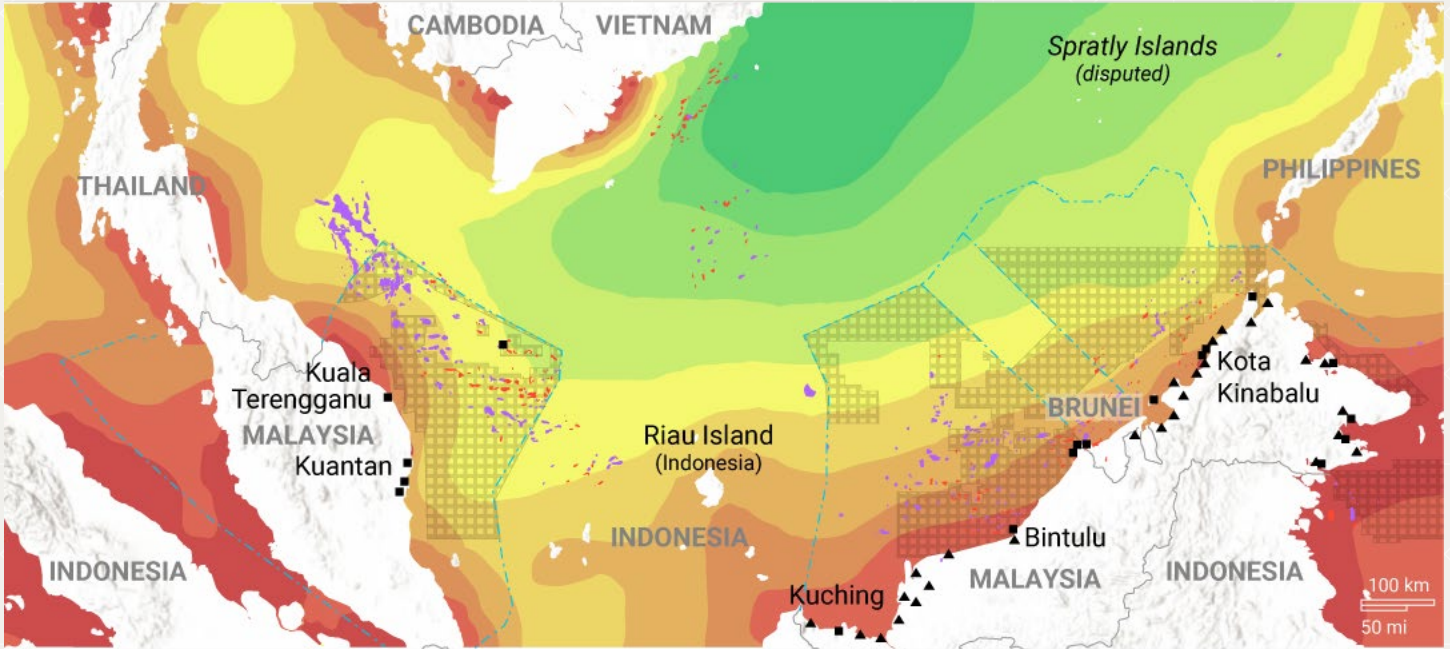
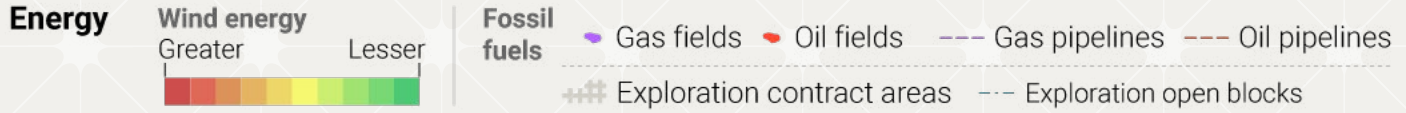
The obvious answer to Chinese territorial aggrandizement, its military superiority, and the unstable regional landscape lies in counterbalancing. However, if it were so easy, it would have manifested already. This will require tremendous effort in multiple

Breakdown of Primary Energy Supplies in Southeast Asia in 2020





Malaysia's Wind Energy Potential vs. Fossil Fuel Availability



Sources: Journal of Sustainability Science and Management (Offshore Wind Energy Resource Assessment in Malaysia with Satellite Altimetry), ESRI, USGS

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arenas beyond the scope of this work, but offshore renewables can help realize this objective.

The greatest advantage offshore renewables have is their comparatively easy placement in the region. The ability to strategically and consciously place projects in areas less constrained by geography than traditional hydrocarbons make offshore renewables a flexible and fiscally pragmatic component of any regional strategy. It also allows offshore renewables to simultaneously act as political and developmental projects.

Offshore renewables in the South China Sea can facilitate cooperation between China's littoral neighbors. Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines all have various territorial disputes in the region, which overlap in areas of high competition. Large cooperative ventures between these actors would not only create local win-win scenarios but also can go a long way in facilitating broader cooperation, enabling counterbalancing against China.

The demanding infrastructural nature of offshore wind power and its higher initial financing also create scenarios that would demand either local bilateral cooperation or foreign investment, both of which are likely to help contain China.

Investing in and cooperating over renewables in the South China Sea will also, over time, decrease the importance of traditional hydrocarbons in the area. This would create multiple advantages, further enabling multilateral cooperation. By lessening the dire developmental requirements of cheap energy underpinning territorial claims, it becomes more politically acceptable to domestic constituencies to pragmatically amend territorial claims.

Offshore renewables represent the easiest path forward to financially involve more actors in containing China's southern ambitions, have minimal upfront security risk, and can help solve local disputes,



enabling a regional focus on China rather than the current divided opposition.

Offshore renewables in the South China Sea will not, on their own, deter Chinese aggression or solve the many overlapping problems of territorial aggrandizement, but their presence is nevertheless necessary.

Policy Recommendations

American policy toward the South China Sea and China broadly will benefit from the holistic consideration of the region's offshore renewables. By promoting offshore renewables in the area, the United States will involve more stakeholders with an interest in regional security and normal economic activity. This will create an international constituency self-interested in peace in the South China Sea.

The United States needs to promote regional cooperation and reciprocal investment to facilitate this offshore investment. This can be done by resolving disputes between South China Sea littoral actors, working with international stakeholders to establish regional regulations and incentives for investment

by establishing a joint development fund to attract investors, and regularizing insurance modeled after the Caribbean Sea and North Sea.

To ensure regional stability, the United States must facilitate local security cooperation. Standardizing logistics and facilitating the investment in air and naval capabilities to maintain a credible deterrent against Chinese aggression will force China to either escalate to its disadvantage or regularize activity and pursue a negotiated settlement. The goal in this cooperation is not to match China's naval buildup, but to prevent an uncontested fait accompli.

Concurrent to these actions, the United States must not attempt to put the responsibility for containing China solely on local actors. The United States must uphold its commitment to an open South China Sea along internationally recognized maritime borders through its Freedom of Navigation patrols.

Only through the conscious realization of these political objectives can the vast environmental and economic potential of Southeast Asia's offshore renewables be unlocked and can China be contained.



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