



**Renewables
Finland**

**Survey: Impacts of the 50-ha
zoning threshold on utility-scale
solar projects**

11.3.2026

Background of the survey

Renewables Finland conducted a survey in January 2026 among **55 member companies** involved in solar power project development.

The aim of the survey was to assess the expected impacts of the 50-hectare zoning threshold introduced in connection with the Land Use Act on solar project development in Finland. The threshold would require **all solar power projects larger than 50 hectares to undergo zoning**. The survey also examined the types of land used for projects and their distance from the nearest settlement (e.g. a village).

A total of **16 companies responded**, covering **135 solar power projects**. The combined planned capacity of these projects exceeds **11,500 MW**. Response rate:

30% of companies

45% of projects

According to Renewables Finland's **January 2026 project pipeline**, there are currently about **301 solar power projects** under development in Finland.



Impact of regulation on investment willingness

Question:

How has the proposed 50-hectare zoning threshold affected your company's willingness to initiate new solar power projects?

- **12 companies** say the threshold has reduced willingness to start new projects
- **4 companies** report no impact
- **0 companies** say it has increased willingness

→ The proposed regulatory change is **already affecting solar project development.**

Impact of regulation on projects

Total capacity of projects in the dataset (N = 135): **11,510 MW**. Capacity distribution:

- **Under 50 ha:** ~280 MW
- **Over 50 ha:** ~11,230 MW

Projects **over 50 ha** currently in permitting phase:

86 projects, 8,710 MW (63.7% of projects, 75.7% of capacity). Of these:

- Projects that would be zoned anyway or already have a construction permit application underway: **29 projects, 3,095 MW** (21.5% of projects / 26.9% of capacity)
- Projects facing negative impacts: **57 projects, 5,615 MW** (42% of projects, 48.7% of capacity)

Impact of regulation on projects

In practice, **every project larger than 50 hectares that is still in permitting and would not otherwise require zoning is negatively affected by the proposed regulation.**

The combined capacity of such projects exceeds **5,600 MW (48.7% of total capacity).**

In other words, projects within the scope of the proposed regulation are expected to face negative impacts such as:

- longer project timelines
- higher costs
- increased uncertainty
- delayed or cancelled investment decisions
- in some cases, the project may not proceed at all

→ Negative impacts are particularly observed in projects planned for **former peat production areas and other wastelands**. These areas typically have **lower environmental and land-use impacts**, as they are located far from settlements, have limited alternative land-use value and have already been modified by human activity.



Project size

- Median: **100 ha**
Average: **85 ha**
Minimum: **6 ha**
Maximum: **600 ha**

→ The majority of projects fall within the 70–150 ha range

→ The 50 ha threshold therefore affects a large share of typical project development, not only exceptionally large projects.

Distance of projects from settlements

- Median: **1,500 m**
Average: **~1,800 m**
Minimum: **0 m**
Maximum: **~7,000 m**

Distance of projects	Portion
< 1 km	~20 %
1–2 km	~40 %
2–3 km	~20 %
> 3 km	~15 %

Land type of projects

Land type	Amount	Portion
Field / agricultural land	61	~45 %
Former peat production area	44	~33 %
Wasteland	10	~7 %
Forest	8	~6 %
Mixed	12	~9 %
Yhteensä	135	100 %

(Mixed category = combinations such as field + forest, peatland + forest, etc.)

→ Most projects are located in **already modified environments.**

→ Forest land represents **only a small share** of project locations.

Summary of project data

Land type	Typical size	Typical distance to settlements	Profile
Field / agricultural land	70–120 ha	1–1,5 km	Medium-sized, closest to settlements
Former peat production area	100–150+ ha	≥ 2 km	Largest, farthest from settlements
Wasteland	Varies	Varies	Repurposed land
Forest	Medium-sized	1,5–2 km	Marginal group
Mixed	Medium-sized	1,5–2 km	Mixed

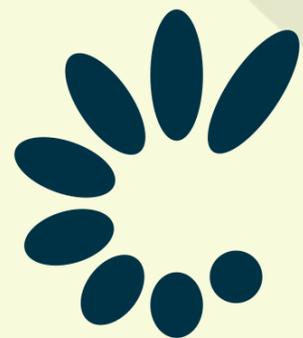
Summary

The Land Use Act proposal has not yet been submitted to Parliament, but the proposed **50 ha zoning threshold** has already caused significant disruption to solar project development.

75% of companies responding to the survey say the threshold has reduced their willingness to initiate new solar projects. Some companies report that they have **halted the development of new solar projects entirely**.

Companies estimate that the threshold would **negatively affect around half of the total project pipeline capacity**.

The impacts are particularly significant for projects planned on **wastelands, such as former peat production areas**. These are precisely the types of areas where, according to the Government Programme, **solar power development should be directed**.



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