



Towards a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland

A Roadmap for the delivery of
the national Marine Spatial Plan



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1. Introduction and context

As an island nation with sovereign rights over one of the largest marine areas in Europe, Ireland's economy, culture and society is inextricably linked to the sea. Our marine environment is a national asset that yields multiple commercial and non-commercial benefits in terms, for example of seafood, tourism, recreation, renewable energy, oil and gas, cultural heritage, and biodiversity. The future sustainable development of our marine area affects many people. In order to create places and spaces where people can work, live and enjoy, those with an interest can have their say in the marine planning process.

The development of an overarching national marine spatial plan is identified as a Government policy objective in Ireland's Integrated Marine Plan, *Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth* (HOOW) (2012). HOOW identified that the organisation and regulation of marine-based activity in Irish waters was being carried out on a sectoral and demand-driven basis, without a strategic framework in which sectoral policy objectives could be envisioned, planned and delivered over the long term. As set out in HOOW, "managing our ocean wealth requires an overarching national marine 'spatial' plan underpinned by an efficient and robust planning and licensing framework. Such an approach can provide a governance structure and blueprint for national, regional and local planning of our ocean wealth. This will provide competitive advantage for our marine sectors, help realise the full benefit of our ocean wealth and assist with managing our resources effectively and sustainably".

HOOW Targets

Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth (HOOW) is Ireland's integrated marine plan. It sets out a comprehensive range of actions across a number of sectoral areas to enable our marine potential to be realised. Key objectives are to:

- Double the value of our ocean wealth to 2.4% of GDP by 2030.
- Increase the turnover from our ocean economy to exceed €6.4bn by 2020.

To achieve these, HOOW envisages significant growth in seafood production and aquaculture, maritime transport, marine renewable energy, marine biotechnology and ICT, marine and coastal tourism and leisure. At the same time, HOOW also recognises the importance of our rich marine biodiversity and ecosystems to our ocean wealth.

Realisation of these objectives will require the development of a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland for the following reasons:

- To give coastal communities and other stakeholders a clear role in determining how we plan for current and future uses and treatment of our marine territory;
- To reduce conflicts between sectors and create synergies between different activities;
- To encourage investment by creating predictability, transparency and clearer rules;
- To increase cross-border cooperation between EU countries to develop energy grids, shipping lanes, pipelines, submarine cables and other activities, but also to develop coherent networks of protected areas;
- To support sustainability through early identification of impact and opportunities for multiple uses of space.

HOOW predates EU Directive 2014/89/EU which established an EU-wide framework for maritime spatial planning (MSP) and was adopted in July 2014. The directive established a framework for MSP, defined as “a process by which the relevant Member State’s authorities analyse and organise human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives”. The Directive details the main goals and minimum requirements for Member States as follows:

- balanced and sustainable territorial development of marine waters and coastal zones;
- optimised development of maritime activities and business climate;
- better adaptation to risks; and
- resource-efficient and integrated coastal and maritime development.

In addition to enhanced environmental management of marine areas, the Directive is also expected to deliver a range of economic benefits for Member States, including:

- lower transaction costs for maritime businesses and improved national competitiveness;
- improved certainty and predictability for private investments;
- improved certainty in obtaining financing for investments in the maritime area;
- improved use of sea space and the best possible coexistence of uses in coastal zones and marine waters;
- improved attractiveness of coastal regions as places to live and invest;
- reduced co-ordination costs for public authorities;
- greater development of innovation and research; and
- enhanced and integrated data and information.

Ireland has transposed the Directive through the European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning) Regulations 2016, signed into law on 29th June 2016. The regulations establish the legal basis and broad framework for Ireland to implement MSP through the development of a maritime spatial plan (or plans) on a 10 year cycle. Under the Regulations, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (now the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government) is the competent authority for the purposes of the Directive and, by extension, for purposes of preparing Ireland’s first maritime spatial plan. A summary of the MSP Directive is set out at Appendix 1 on p. 19.

In line with the sort of framework envisaged in HOOW, a Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland will sit at the top of the hierarchy of plans and sectoral policies for the marine area. The plan will be informed by existing sectoral plans and will, in turn, be used to inform future cycles of those plans in an ongoing feedback loop. It will provide a coherent framework in which those sectoral policies and objectives can be realised. It will become a decision making tool for regulatory authorities and policy makers into the future in a number of ways including, decisions on individual consent applications which will have to have regard to the provisions of the plan in the same way that terrestrial plans form part of the decision making tool-kit in the on-land planning process. It will also form a key input to the development of future sectoral policies.

Maritime spatial plans will not replace or remove existing regulatory regimes or legislative requirements governing the operation of various marine sectoral activities. Rather they will provide an overarching framework for their continued operation. Public bodies involved in consenting for marine development and activities will be obliged to take into account the objectives of plans as part of their decision-making processes. However, decisions on applications for consent should not be delayed in anticipation of plans being adopted for the first time.

What is this document?

This document is an important step in the activation stage of making the plan which will ultimately be brought to Government for approval by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government. It is important that, as well as drawing on best practice and experience, we take account of stakeholders' views on how they want to be involved to ensure their participation at appropriate stages in the planning process. The aim of this document is to describe how we will do this, when we will do this and what we will do with the outcomes of your views and opinions.

The specific purposes of this document are to:

- inform all interested parties that a new Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for Ireland is being developed;
- set out the scope and broad content of the MSP;
- assist in identifying key stakeholders who need to be kept informed of progress in the development of the MSP; and
- describe how we take account of stakeholders' views on how they want to be involved to ensure their participation at appropriate stages in the planning process, when we will do this and what we will do with the outcomes of their views and opinions.

In the following sections we set out how and when people can become involved in marine planning. We also briefly describe the main stages and activities in producing a marine plan.

Our principles of engagement

In developing this plan, we will be guided by the following principles for engaging in marine planning.

We will:

- involve people early on in the decision-making process and in developing specific policy within the framework provided by HOOW;
- engage with interested people and organisations at the appropriate time using effective engagement methods and allowing sufficient time for meaningful consultation;
- be adaptable, recognising that some consultation methods work better for some people and some issues and that a one size fits all approach will not work;
- respect the diversity of people and their lifestyles and give people a fair chance to have their voice heard regardless of gender, age, race, abilities, sexual orientation, circumstances or wherever they live;
- be clear in the purpose of any engagement and how you may contribute and let people know how their views have been taken into account within agreed timescales;
- make documents publicly available on the Department's website;
- communicate clearly with people using plain English and avoiding jargon.

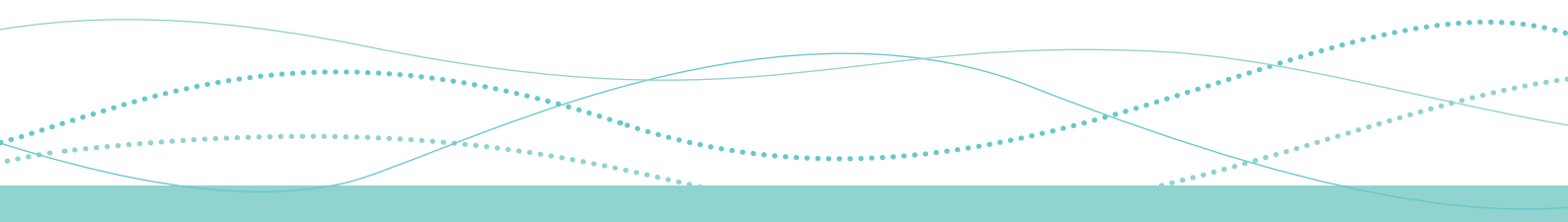
Who is this document for?

This document is for those who have an interest in Ireland's marine area or those who will be affected by decisions taken on the basis of the plan. Stakeholders could represent a wide range of interests, including those who live or conduct business in and around the marine environment, enjoy it, care about it or help to manage it, from individuals to groups to organisations.

People have the opportunity to be involved in shaping their marine area. If you are part of a local group, business or an individual with an interest in Ireland's marine areas, you may have information and ideas that can help shape its future. By taking part in the marine planning process you can influence the decisions being made about the marine spatial plan.

Getting involved

Anybody who wants to become involved in the MSP process may make contact in writing by email at msp@housing.gov.ie or by post to Marine Spatial Planning Section, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Newtown Road, Wexford, Y35 AP90.



2. Background to marine planning

Why marine planning?

As our appreciation grows for the potential of our oceans and seas to support local communities, sustainably manage our marine resources and provide long term investment predictability for development and activities in our maritime area, there is a recognised need to adopt an integrated and strategic approach to manage the use of our seas in the most sustainable way.

Marine planning has been established to do this, complementing existing measures such as licensing and day-to-day management. It focuses on a specific area, considers economic, environmental and social issues, encompasses all sectors, and is forward-looking with a clearly set out vision, objectives and policies. In doing so, our marine area will finally have a system comparable to the well-established and tested planning system on land, delivered through the hierarchy of forward plans. Ireland's MSP will be a policy framework with a horizon of 2040, in line with the lifetime of the new *National Planning Framework, Ireland 2040*. It will be supported by a Government decision and informed by detailed analysis of current conditions, uses and trends in Ireland's marine environment.

Ireland's Marine Wealth - Did you know?

- Ireland's marine territory contains an extraordinary amount and variety of plants and animals.
- Our coastline is home to over 24 species of resident and visiting seabirds. There are over 500,000 pairs of seabirds around the island of Ireland.
- Over 7,300 animal species have been recorded in the seas around Ireland. 25 species of cetaceans have been found in Irish waters, including common dolphins, bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoises.
- There are almost 600 species of seaweed around Ireland.
- 40% of Ireland's population lives within 5 kilometres of the coast.
- Across Europe, aquaculture accounts for 20% of fish production and directly employs 85,000 people.
- Aquaculture production in Ireland increased by 9% in 2016 to 44,000 tonnes produced, worth €167m.
- Irish ports are critical infrastructure for our international trade, with over 90% of our international trade moving by sea.
- 12,242 vessels arrived in Irish ports in 2015.
- 4.3 million passengers travelled to and from Ireland by ferry in 2016.
- Coastal tourism employs over 3.2 million people in the EU and generates €183 billion in gross value added to the EU economy.
- Available ocean energy exceeds present and projected future needs globally.
- Irish seafood exports were worth €559m in 2016.
- 11,000 people are directly or indirectly employed in the seafood industry in Ireland. The seafood industry contributes €1.1 billion to Ireland's GDP.
- Our ocean economy supported an estimated 17,000 full time equivalents (FTEs) and an estimated 51,000 direct and indirect jobs in 2007, or 1% of the total workforce in 2007.

Benefits of the marine planning system – what will the MSP do?

Marine planning will contribute to the effective management of marine activities and more sustainable use of our marine resources. It will enable the Government to set a clear direction for managing our seas, to clarify objectives and priorities, and to direct decision makers, users and stakeholders towards more strategic and efficient use of marine resources. It will inform decisions about the current and future development of the marine area, aiming to integrate social, economic and environmental needs.

Marine planning will create the framework for decision making that is consistent, evidence-based and secures a sustainable future for the marine area. Through extensive public involvement, it will offer everyone with an interest in our seas and coasts the opportunity to have a say in how their marine area is managed.

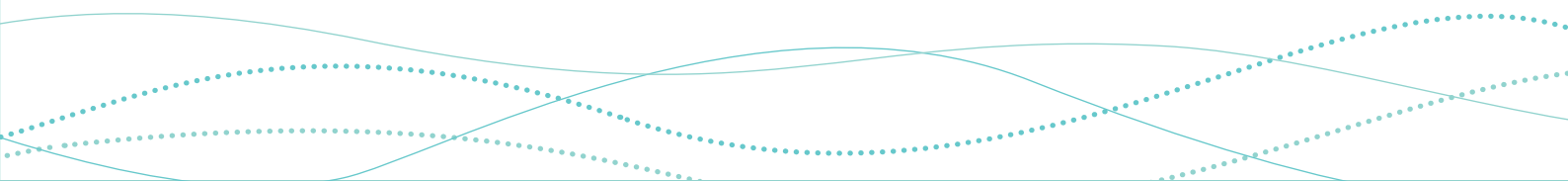
Marine users, including regulators, applicants for consent and interested persons, should find that the system will reduce the regulatory burden on them by giving them more certainty regarding where activities could best take place and thereby speed up the licensing process. Marine users should also feel more confident that decisions made on applications for projects will be robust in the face of challenge, provided they are made in accordance with the policy framework set out in the marine spatial plan. This is because the plan will be based on the best available technical and scientific evidence, including early and consistent engagement with stakeholders together with a sustainability appraisal.

Progress towards marine planning – where are we at now?

Ireland has transposed the MSP Directive (EU Directive 2014/89/EU) through the European Union (Framework for Maritime Spatial Planning) Regulations 2016, signed into law on 29th June 2016. The regulations establish the legal basis and broad framework for Ireland to implement MSP through the development of a maritime spatial plan (or plans) on a 10 year cycle. Under the Regulations, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government (now the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government) is the competent authority for the purposes of the Directive and, by extension, for purposes of preparing Ireland's first maritime spatial plan.

What area will be covered?

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides the basis in international law for the establishment of maritime jurisdictions, as outlined in Figure 1.



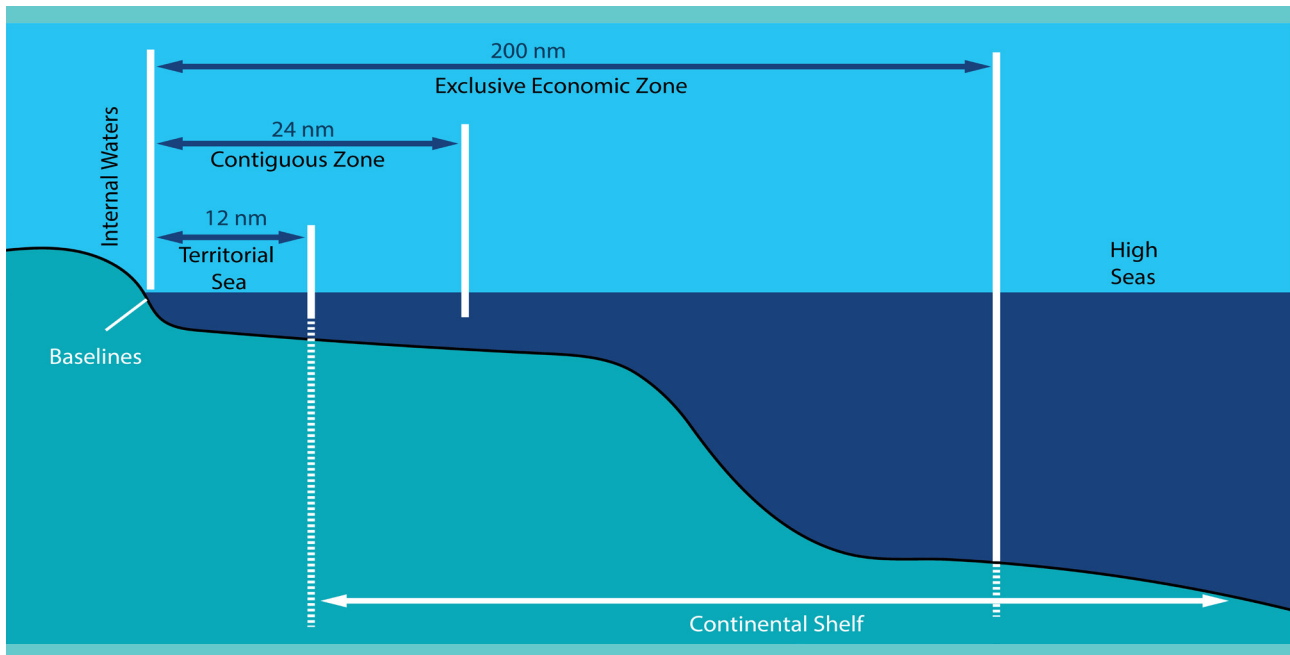


Figure 1: Maritime zones as provided for in international law¹

The marine plan will cover Ireland's maritime area, including internal waters (sea area), territorial seas, exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and continental shelf. The maritime area comprises approx. 490,000 km² and extends from mean high water mark at the coast seaward to in excess of 200 nautical miles in parts (Figure 2). It is proposed that a single plan will be prepared for the entire area with the possibility of more detailed regional plans being made at a later date.

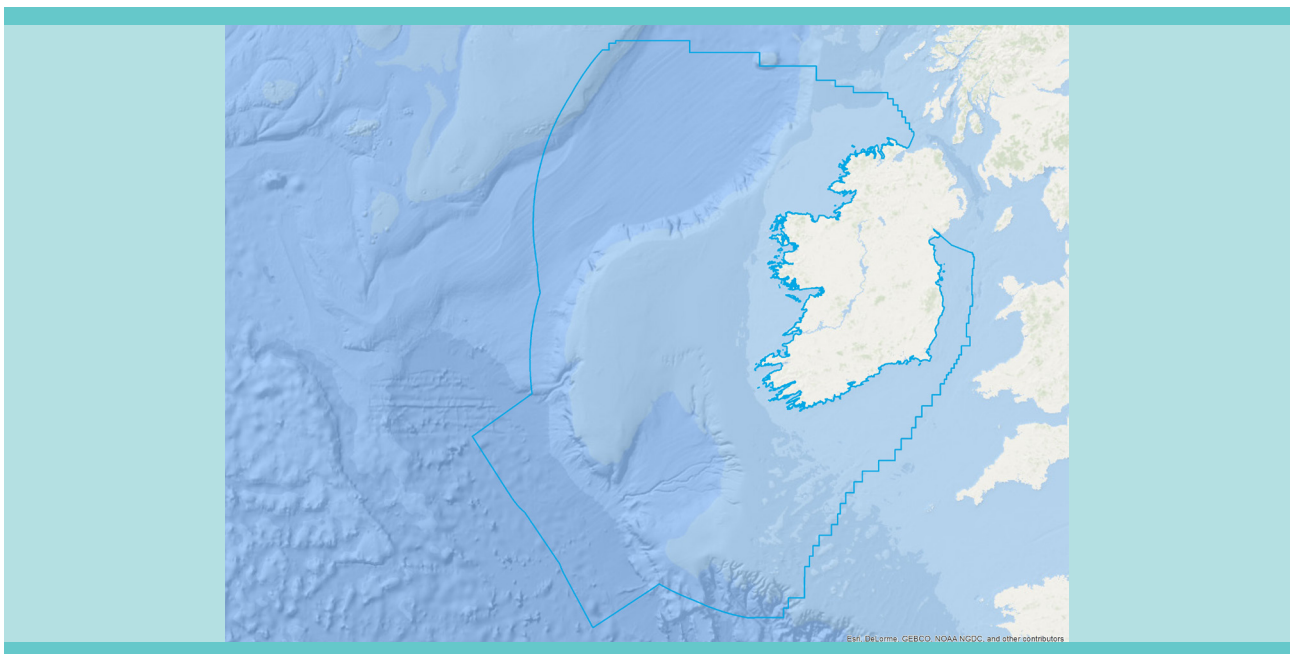


Figure 2: Ireland's maritime area

¹ Adapted from UNCLOS 30th Anniversary Pamphlet: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_convention.htm

What issues will the plan address?

The MSP will be a succinct strategic document that will deal with, inter alia, the following environmental, social and economic issues:

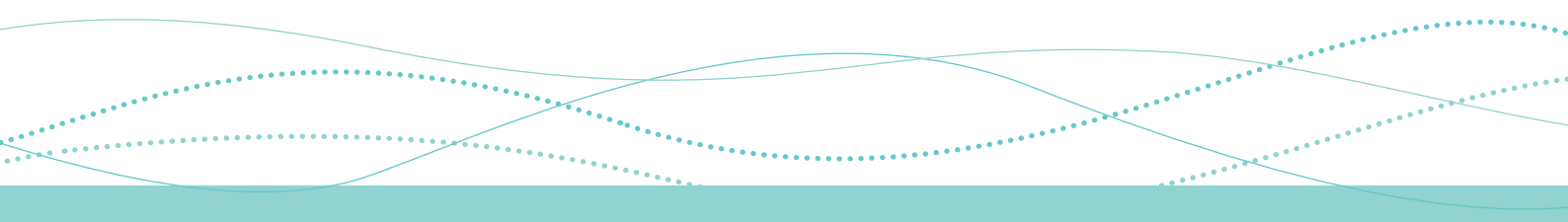
- key marine activities such as fisheries, tourism, transport, offshore renewable energy generation, oil and gas exploration and production, aquaculture, and how they interact;
- climate change and related impacts;
- communities and health;
- cultural heritage;
- marine environment and biodiversity;
- transboundary interactions with other jurisdictions.

Reporting area of the marine plans

The reporting area will consist of the wider areas of analysis required for the plan, which includes the broader area outside of the plans' area boundaries. A reporting area will not have a defined geographical boundary; rather the area differs depending on the issues being reported. As such, those stakeholders may be affected by the marine plans outside the plan areas boundaries, depending on the issue being considered. Working with the Marine Institute, we will engage and consult with those other countries bordering Irish waters in the United Kingdom and France.

What will be the relationship between this plan and the National Planning Framework?

Just as the National Planning Framework will stand as the spatial expression of national policy for Ireland's terrestrial area, the MSP will set out the spatial expression of national policy for Ireland's marine area. There are many shared aims and overlapping areas of co-ordination and activity between forward planning for our terrestrial and marine space, just as there are sectors in which activities or development have a presence on land and in our seas. As depicted in Figure 3 below, the land use planning and marine spatial planning processes will work alongside each other to ensure a consistent and effective policy and regulatory approach to marine and terrestrial planning. The alignment of the lifetimes of the two plans is important in this regard.



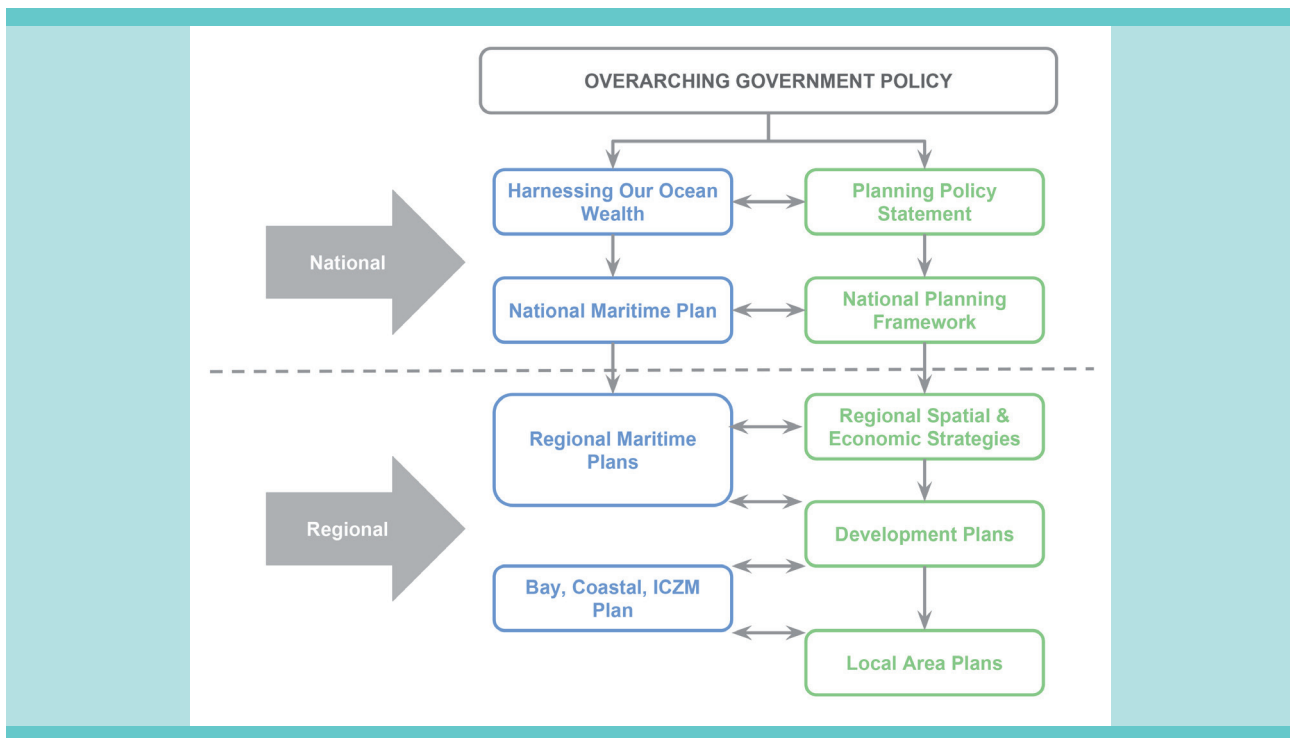


Figure 3: Alignment of Maritime and Terrestrial Planning

3. Stages in the preparation of Ireland's MSP

This roadmap marks the first stage in the development of Ireland's marine spatial plan – so the process of plan making is now underway. To guide and oversee the day to day preparation of the plan, Minister Eoghan Murphy, T.D., will establish a Cross-Departmental / Inter-Agency team.

It is intended that the MSP will be finalised in 2020, and forwarded to the European Commission at that time, ahead of the due date for submission by Member States of their plans in March 2021. There will be four broad stages in the development of the plan.

The first is the Activation Stage, which will run to end 2017, and has involved establishing the MSP function in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Stage 2, the Development Stage, of which this roadmap forms a central part, will run until Q3 of 2019 and will involve the analysis and identification of data and information required to provide a robust evidence base to underpin the MSP. It will involve the publication of an evidence and issues overview for public consultation. This stage will draw together key information and viewpoints from stakeholders in order to identify and test options for a preferred approach to MSP. It will conclude with the publication of a draft Marine Spatial Plan and supporting environmental assessments for consultation.

Stage 3, the Finalisation Stage, will run from Q4 of 2019 to Q3 of 2020. It will include approval of the plan by Government, followed subsequently by publication of the final MSP and its notification to the European Commission ahead of the required deadline of March 2021.

The final stage of the process, Stage 4, will run from end 2020 onwards. It will involve implementation of the plan, review of its operation and preparation for the next iteration of the planning process.

An outline of potential tasks for each of the four main stages is provided at Appendix 2.

Organisational responsibilities

To ensure an effective approach to the preparation of the MSP, the following arrangements are proposed:

(1) A high-level Cross-Departmental Steering Group will be established to lead and oversee the development of the MSP. This group will be made up of high-level representatives of government departments whose policies and functions are relevant to the Plan.

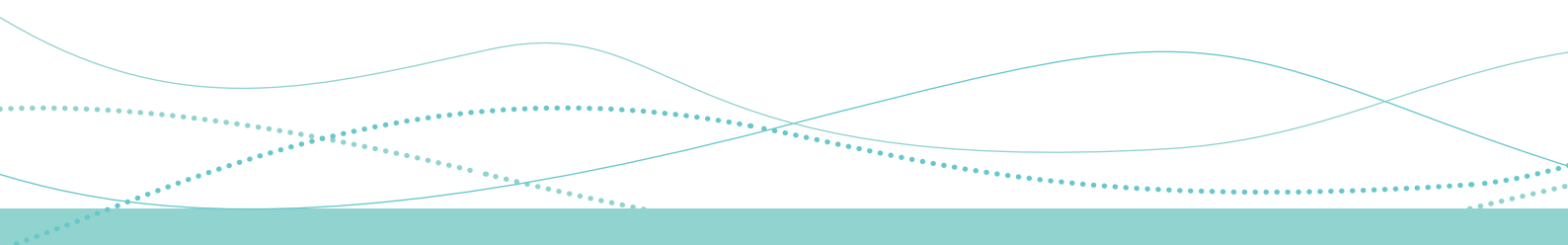
The group will also contain one representative from the local government sector and one representative from the Marine Institute. To ensure effective communication around the new MSP, the Steering Group will develop a communications framework to maximise engagement in the

MSP preparation across all relevant media, including social media. It is proposed that this group will report to the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Economic Infrastructure.

(2) An Advisory Group will be established to ensure the participation of relevant non-governmental organisations, professional bodies and technical experts in the process. It will be the effective link to facilitate the participation of the economic, environment and social pillars while maintaining flexibility to incorporate other sectors as appropriate within these consultative forums e.g. the third level education or knowledge sector etc.

(3) The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government has established a dedicated Marine Spatial Planning Section, staffed with administrative personnel and supported by the relevant technical expertise including from the Marine Institute which has a key support role in terms of technical and scientific input to the development of the Plan, to service the proposed organisational structures above, and to support the overall process of preparing the new Plan, including compliance with legal requirements under various EU directives, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive, and Birds and Habitats Directives.

As it is intended that the MSP will be built from the ground up, together with the strategic oversight of its development at national level, it is necessary to construct the consultative arrangements to ensure delivery of a coherent framework with broad ownership and buy-in from the local and regional level. Accordingly, the broad structure for participation arrangements provides for an extensive participatory process designed to embrace local authorities including the elected members, regional assemblies, relevant non-governmental organisations and professional bodies, under the auspices of all government departments. Further detail on public participation and consultation is set out in the next section.



4. Consultation phases for marine plan production

When will we engage?

We will carry out ongoing engagement as the plan develops and will work closely with our key stakeholders and people interested in the marine area. In addition, there are certain stages at which we are legally required to engage in a structured and formal way, for example formal consultation on the draft plan, or during the strategic environmental assessment process. However, it will be important for us to hear stakeholder's views and opinions on how they feel the plans are progressing throughout the process.

Alongside the stakeholder engagement processes outlined below, we will put in place arrangements for public consultation through interactive web based arrangements, including the establishment of a dedicated website www.msp.gov.ie.

The timeline at Appendix 2 below sets out our proposed stages of plan making, highlighting a number of key opportunities for stakeholder input into the planning process. However, you should note that these timelines represent a rough guide only: plan making is an iterative process so these stages may be subject to amendment.

Who will we engage with?

As previously mentioned, the marine plans are for anyone who has an interest in the marine plan areas. However, there are certain sectors that are immediately recognisable as playing a key part in marine planning, such as:

- aquaculture;
- defence and national security;
- offshore renewable energy;
- oil and gas exploration and production;
- fisheries;
- local coastal communities and elected members;
- local authorities;
- marine aggregates;
- environmental organisations, including marine conservation;
- cultural heritage;
- marine dredging and disposal;
- ports and shipping;
- telecommunications and cabling;
- tourism and recreation;
- waste water treatment and disposal.

This is not intended to be an exclusive list² and will be expanded upon throughout the marine planning process. We are committed to communicating and engaging with as many groups and individuals as possible.

² The ordering of lists in this document does not denote any order of priority or hierarchy among the items listed.

How will we engage?

There are certain groups and organisations which represent the interests of these sectors and they will be key contributors when engaging in marine plan making. It is expected that these groups will play a major role in marine planning, adding value to the work of the Department by contributing to the overall stakeholder engagement process.

COASTAL COMMUNITIES

As part of the planning process, we want to ensure the interests of local people, their communities and local interest groups are taken into account. The Department will support the empowerment of local communities through the marine planning process, together with local authorities.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND OTHER REGULATORS

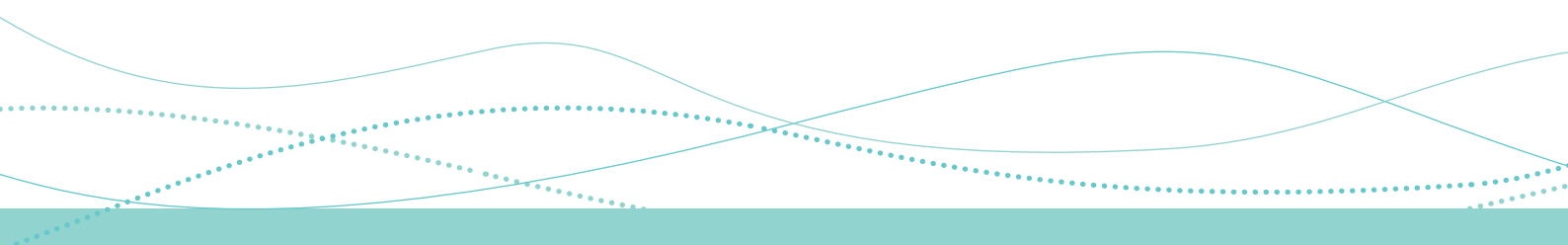
Local authorities and other land-based regulators such as the EPA will have an important role to play in marine planning. We need to engage with coastal local authorities throughout plan making and to ensure good alignment between the marine plans and existing forward plans at national, regional and county / city level, as well as other relevant land-based plans such as river basin management plans and others. We will maintain an ongoing and open dialogue with the relevant authorities, consulting with them at each stage of plan making. Local authorities can also act as a channel for communicating with local communities, representing their interests and offering another opportunity for engagement, such as newsletters and community events. Elected members will also play an important part in the marine planning process, representing the interests of their local communities. The Marine Institute will support the Department in this engagement.

NEIGHBOURING JURISDICTIONS

We will consult and engage with the Maritime Management Office in England, Marine Scotland, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland throughout plan making. We will also engage with neighbouring international administrations throughout the marine planning process to ensure that we take into account their policies and emerging marine plans.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOS)

Environmental groups and NGOs will play an important role in marine planning. NGOs such as the Irish Environmental Network (IEN), An Taisce, Sustainable Water Network (SWAN), Birdwatch Ireland, Coast Watch, Coastal Concern Alliance and many others, have a great deal of experience in land use and coastal planning and of marine ecosystems. These organisations can represent a wide range of interests of groups and individuals and are therefore key to engagement throughout the process.



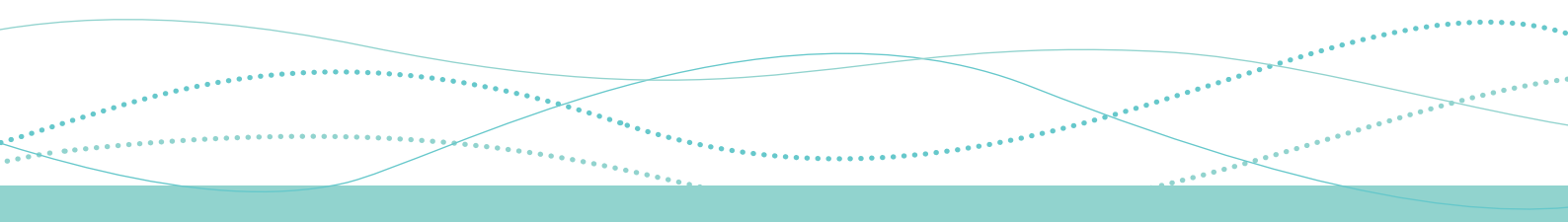
INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS

There are many industry groups which represent a number of sectors making use of marine resources such as fisheries, aggregates and renewable energy. These representative groups will have an important input into marine planning. It is essential to engage with these groups and the individuals they represent to obtain their views throughout the process making best use of their knowledge and experience.

STATUTORY PARTNERS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT BODIES

Government partners and bodies who will be heavily involved in the marine planning process include government departments and agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment including the Geological Survey of Ireland, the Marine Institute, port companies, Enterprise Ireland, Failte Ireland, the Irish Coastguard, the Irish Naval Service, and the Office of Public Works.

As we progress through plan making, we will identify more and more stakeholders and interested individuals and so we will take their interests into account during the planning process.



5. When and how will we be carrying out stakeholder engagement?

Each of us has a stake in Ireland's marine wealth. Extensive and active stakeholder engagement at local regional and national levels will improve the quality of this plan for the future realisation and use of our marine wealth. It is important that individuals, communities and organisations take the opportunity to contribute to the engagement processes to positively shape Ireland's Marine Spatial Plan.

The table below sets out the timetable for marine planning and outlines methods for engaging stakeholders in each stage of the planning process. All stakeholders will be given an opportunity to input at the earliest stage during the stakeholder engagement process that will take place on publication of an issues paper. This is important – it means that the work of producing a first draft of the plan will be informed by that early engagement.

We appreciate the need to take into account the differences between stakeholders and stakeholder groups and that some methods of engagement may not be appropriate for all. Therefore stakeholder participation in marine planning will be flexible and take account of the individual needs of stakeholders. As the marine planning process evolves our methods of engagement and communication with stakeholders and interested parties will take these developments into account. Engagement in this context is concerned with both informing stakeholders of progress of, and ensuring stakeholder input into marine planning.

We will notify stakeholders and interested parties of the consultation drafts in the following ways:

- localised press release;
- email notifications;
- web-based consultation;
- newsletter;
- hard copies at coastal locations and on request; and
- dissemination via stakeholder groups.

In advance and running alongside of formal consultation we will also seek to engage through the following means:

- geographic or sector-based groups;
- workshops;
- web portal;
- one-to-one meetings;
- exhibitions and drop-in sessions;
- attendance at stakeholder meetings;
- questionnaires;
- web updates;
- newsletters.

Via our MSP website, we will confirm the timings of each stage of the plan making process so that stakeholders are clear on all stages of marine plan production and when they will occur. We will keep you up to date on general marine planning progress via electronic newsletters, printed newsletters, emails, web updates, and press and media coverage.

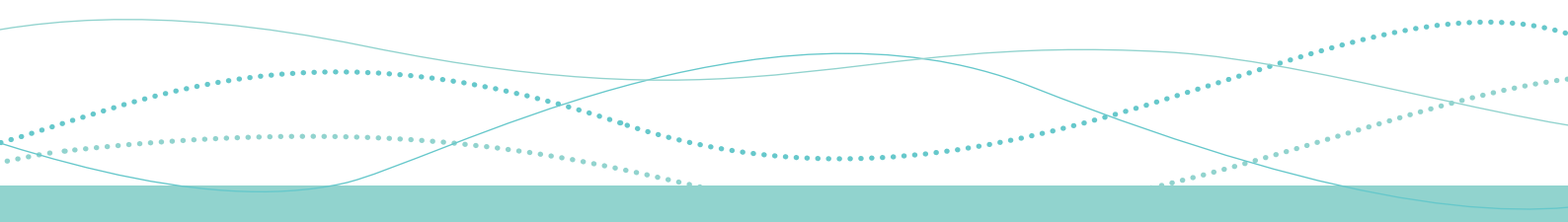
As part of the preparation of the Marine Spatial Plan, the Government is required to carry out a number of environmental assessments of the proposed plan. These include a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and an Appropriate Assessment (AA).

These assessments are undertaken so the impact of the proposed plan objectives on the environment can be evaluated and used to inform the direction of the final plan, so as to ensure that it responds to the sensitivities and requirements of the wider natural environment. The assessments will commence jointly with the preparation of the MSP and will be published alongside the draft document.

Making comments on the marine plan

At each stage of plan making (as set out above) we will make draft plan documents available on our website and invite stakeholders to comment on them. When we are consulting or seeking comment at certain stages of the marine plans, we will clearly set out how long you have to make your views known and how best to do so. Comments at each of these stages must be made in writing via email or letter.

Some stakeholders have expressed a preference for email and web based consultation rather than paper consultation documents. However, we are keen to include as many people as possible and for those who do not have access to computers or web material we can provide paper versions of any consultation documents on request.



6. What will we do with your views and comments?

Whenever we carry out stakeholder engagement, we will feed back the outcomes of the process. This may take the form of the next stage of the plan, updates on the marine planning website and through newsletters and information bulletins. We will also produce a summary of consultation where appropriate.

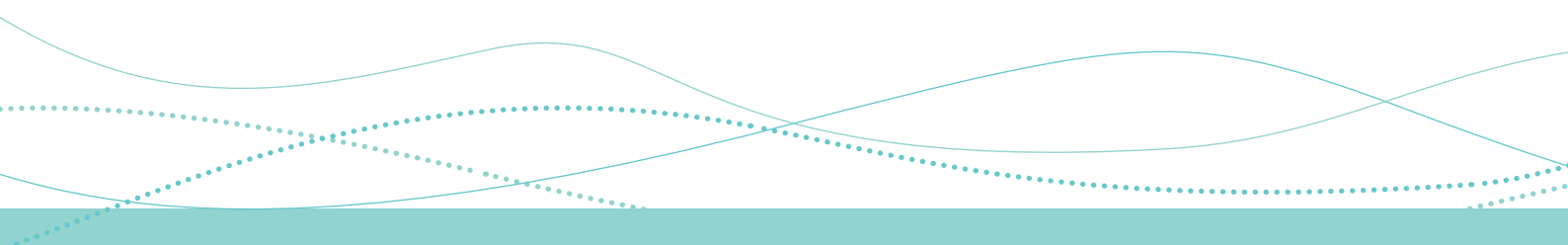
In terms of the formal consultation on the draft marine plan, once the 12-week public consultation period has closed, the responses will be analysed and a summary report will be produced detailing any comments made and published on our website. This report will also set out any changes made to the plans, any changes that weren't made and the reasons why. Everyone who submitted a response will be notified when it is published.

As part of the marine planning process, we will take into account the views and feedback from all stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement is vital to the success of the marine plan and while we will consider all comments, views and representations made on the draft plans, the outcome might not result in an alteration to the plan itself. The marine planning system must integrate future needs as well as different views. There are many different factors that contribute to the decision making process and the need to operate within existing national government policies. Early stakeholder engagement has highlighted the need to balance many different factors and that aspects of the marine plans are unlikely to satisfy everyone with some compromise required. However we will take all feedback into consideration, with a duty to maintain transparency throughout the marine planning process. In addition, we will ensure we are clear with stakeholders as to how decisions will be made in the marine plan.

Review of and revision to MSP

Marine planning is new for Ireland. It is not a static process. It will be dynamic and evolving in nature and as we move through the process, further changes may be made to draft plans to reflect evolving national policy. Where changes are made provision will be made for further stakeholder participation in the process to ensure the overall aims of marine planning are met.

Following adoption by Government marine plans will be reviewed and updated on a cyclical basis at least every 10 years. Revising and updating plans will involve an iteration of the process as outlined in this document, culminating in the adoption by Government of revised plans.



Appendix 1: Summary of MSP Directive

Article	Title	Summary
1	Subject Matter	MSP to promote maritime economies, sustainable development and sustainable use of resources, taking into account land-sea interactions and transboundary cooperation.
2	Scope	Directive applies to marine waters, but not to coastal waters or areas covered by terrestrial planning, military requirements and in accordance with UNCLOS.
3	Definitions	Definitions for purpose of the Directive.
4	Establishment and implantation of MSP	Member States to establish MSP to take into account land-sea interaction, governance, institutional, particulars of the marine region, existing and future uses and may include existing policies.
5	Objectives of MSP	Promote sustainable development applying an ecosystem based approach with reference to energy, maritime transport, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, extraction of raw materials, preservation of the environment and resilience to climate change.
6	Minimum requirements for MSP	Appropriate procedures should be put in place to contribute to the maritime spatial planning objectives and plans should be reviewed at least every 10 years.
7	Land-sea interactions	Formal and informal processes should be used to take account of land-sea interactions without interfering with Member States existing terrestrial planning codes.
8	Setting up of MSP	Spatial and temporal distribution existing and future activities should be considered and can include aquaculture areas, fishing areas, installations and infrastructures for the exploration, exploitation and extraction of oil, gas, and other energy resources, of minerals and aggregates, and for the production of energy from renewable sources, maritime transport routes and traffic flows, military training areas, nature and species conservation sites and protected areas, raw material extraction areas, scientific research, submarine cable and pipeline routes, tourism and underwater cultural heritage.
9	Public participation	Ensure public participation and consultation at an early stage.
10	Data use and sharing	Data should be used and shared in accordance with the INSPIRE Directive.
11	Cooperation among Member States	Border Member States should cooperate to ensure a coherent approach is taken to MSP across marine regions. Existing mechanisms and regional sea conventions should be used.
12	Cooperation with third countries	Cooperation with third countries.
13	Competent Authorities	Member States should specify competent authorities for purposes of implementing the MSP.
14	Monitoring and reporting	Member States to send their published plans to the European Commission and other Member States concerned and report on implementation of the Directive.
15	Transposition	Directive to be transposed and competent authorities to be identified by 18 September 2016 with plans to be in place by 31 March 2021.
16	Entry into force	Entry into force date.
17	Addresses	Addresses for Presidents of European Parliament and European Council.

Appendix 2: Project Milestones – Stages in the plan making process

Stage	Milestone	Timeframe
Activation Stage	Establish and resource MSP function in Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government	Immediate – complete
	Identify and initiate contact with key stakeholders	Now – end 2017
Development Stage	Establish MSP Inter Agency Group	End November 2017
	Develop road map – <i>Towards a Marine Spatial Plan</i>	Publish before end 2017
	Initiate contact with broader external stakeholder group (e.g. energy industry reps, fisheries, coastal communities etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In writing before end 2017 ● Regional workshop/stakeholder fora Q1 2018
	Prepare issues paper (this phase includes collection, mapping and analysis of data on current conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publish September 2018 ● 2 month consultation
	Prepare draft MSP (including Environmental Assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To Minister/Government Q2 2019 ● 3 month consultation
Finalisation Stage	Prepare final MSP (including Environmental Assessments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To Minister/Government Q2 2020 ● Publish and notify European Commission – Q3 2020
Implementation and Review Stage	Implementation and review	2020 onwards



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