Offshore Grid Delivery Model Option Consultation – Ocean Energy

Offshore Wind Grid Development Consultation
Energy Division
Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 2
D02 X285

Dated; 1st July 2020

To whom it may concern,

Consultation to Inform a Grid Development Policy for Offshore Wind in Ireland

Please find attached our contribution for the Consultation to Inform a Grid Development Policy for Offshore Wind in Ireland.

If you have any queries, please do hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Ocean Energy.

3 Casement Square, Cobh, Co. Cork, Ireland.
t: +353 (0)21 481
e: info@oceanenergy.ie
w: www.oceanenergy.ie

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2. ***Points specific to the present Consultation***

i. In the design of the offshore grid parameters and the proposed development areas and associated Grid Development Policy, it is imperative that there is capacity on the onshore grid available at the West Coast for connections of wave energy devices. Both technologies could share the same infrastructure with benefit from the synergies.

ii. Ireland has a comprehensive development strategy for development of its marine resources. The Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP) published in 2014 (due for a full review in 2020) sees significant development of the ocean energy resource in the same timeframe as the Climate Action Plan and highlights specific areas suitable for deployment. These deployment areas for wave energy farms will largely occur at the West Coast. The designation of future development zones must take into account that the grid availability is poor with only Clare, West Kerry and North West Mayo having existing infrastructure close to the coast. Grid Development Policy should identify a specific roadmap for the provision of adequate grid infrastructure so that the marine energy resource utilisation is not constrained by inadequate grid planning, provision and policy.

iii. The development zones cannot simply be selected by distance from the shore as the water depth is of critical importance to wave energy devices (and floating offshore wind) because of the increased cost of moorings in deeper water. Off the West Coast the 50m. isobath is less than 5km in many places. Grid Development Policy must take account of the effect of increased capital and operational costs for developments further offshore.

iv. In relation to Marine Spatial Planning and Protected Marine Zones. The existence of development of offshore renewables creates a zone where fishing activity can be limited and the reef effect of the structures can enhance the marine habitat.

v. In order to facilitate development of the offshore resources there is a necessity to expedite the process for creating a robust Licencing and Permitting system. The implementation of the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill must be fast tracked to ensure the future deployments can proceed within the time frame required and in conjunction with a robust and fit for purpose Grid Development Policy.

vi. The *"enduring grid delivery model"* must be inherently flexible to accommodate developing technologies and circumstances. This flexibility should be exercisable in a timely and responsive manner.

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t: +353 (0)21 4816 780
f: +353 (0)21 4816 778
e: info@oceanenergy.ie
w: www.oceanenergy.ie

New Wave Technologies Ltd (Reg. No 523673), trading as Ocean Energy
Directors: John McCarthy, Anthony Lewis & David P. Donegan