

Date 5th March 2022

Offshore Wind Phase Two Consultation
International and Offshore Energy Division
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
29-31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 2
Do2 X285
By email phase2@decc.gov.ie

RE: Offshore Wind Phase Two Consultation

A Chara,

We would like to register our support for offshore wind, which will play a major part in realising the target of 80% renewable electricity by 2030 and thereby assisting Ireland decarbonise. This is absolutely critical if we are to demonstrate climate leadership internationally on the net zero concept.

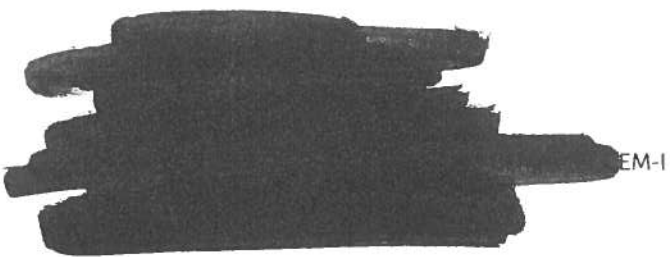
Naturally we would like this done without any adverse impacts on marine life, but it seems that often there can be positive benefits in terms of the absence of trawlers scouring the sea floor. Indeed bottom trawling (a fishing method that involves scraping the ocean floor with giant nets) has a double negative in that, not only is it a practice that impacts on stocks, it also releases as much carbon into the atmosphere as the entire aviation industry does - about a billion metric tons a year.¹ We believe offshore wind should have broader aspirations in mind that connect biodiversity, natural capital stocks and carbon sequestration. For example:

- Can we design our seascape such that 50% of marine areas are left alone such that fish stocks and marine life can recover? Offshore Wind might offer a means of such protection that, once the foundations or ocean bed tethering is in place, sea life is minimally impacted.
- Can we design in kelp forests for enhanced carbon sequestration? See [Sierra Club blog](#) on this for example, which states a thousand metric tons of CO₂ per year per square kilometre could be the sequestration potential. This could be very interesting considering Ireland is failing on afforestation targets with public objection to some sites

With 90% of Ireland's territory being marine, there is an incredible opportunity here to align natural capital, biodiversity and climate action ambitions. This can be done sensitively with the right marine expertise and carbon specialists.

We ask for accelerated development and support the ESB's submission to use existing onshore power station grid connections for offshore wind projects such that any requirement for possible new connections does not slow down progress.

Yours sincerely,



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¹ <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2021-2-summer/stress-test/can-farming-seaweed-put-brakes-climate-change>