



An Roinn Comhshaoil,  
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide  
Department of the Environment,  
Climate and Communications

# The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Research and Innovation Survey — Public Consultation

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.



**An Roinn Comhshaoil,  
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide  
Department of the Environment,  
Climate and Communications**

## **Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications Research and Innovation Strategy — Public Consultation**

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications has set out a vision of a climate neutral, sustainable, and digitally connected Ireland. This will involve leading ambitious climate and environment action across Government and society together with a fundamental shift in sustainable resource use and a transformation of our energy system while at the same time delivering world-class connectivity and cyber security. The Department has identified research and innovation as important enablers of its goals, and is one of a group of five Government Departments which invest significantly in research and innovation. Impact 2030, the national research and innovation strategy, outlines a strong role for the Department in delivering on Strategic Objectives in Climate, Environment and Sustainability (including Energy), and in Digital Transformation (including cyber security). During 2023, the Department is now developing its inaugural Research and Innovation Strategy.

Please complete this survey by 5:30 pm on Friday 11th August.

**Note 1: There are no mandatory consultation questions. Fields can be left blank if you do not wish to answer a particular question.**

**Note 2: Responses to each of the consultation questions is limited to 2000 characters.**

**Note 3: Copying and pasting text into the boxes directly from Microsoft Word may cause user experience issues. To avoid this, it is recommended to 'paste as plain text'.**

**Note 4: You can download a PDF copy of your completed survey after you have submitted it.**

\* Please enter your name

*Text of 5 to 200 characters will be accepted*

\* Please enter your email address

\* Please enter your occupation

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please enter the name of that organisation.

*200 character(s) maximum*

Job Title (if applicable)

What gaps do you see in the Department's current research and innovation activities? How should we address those gaps in the Department Research and Innovation Strategy?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

We would like to see inclusion of dissemination activities as an integral part of the strategy; all funded research and innovation should be disseminated via reports on a central website, and we suggest an annual conference highlighting progress, results and lessons learned. This is critical to ensure outputs can be used by industry, and provides a level of scrutiny/oversight into the delivery of research.

What actions can the Department take to identify future trends in the areas under our remit?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Overall, SSE believes that industry involvement in designing research and innovation briefs, and input to the work itself, can ensure that research is relevant to the practical delivery of policy, and takes advantage of industry knowledge and experience from other jurisdictions. This should create a positive feedback loop between Department, industry and research community. SSE welcomes industry forum-type engagement as a means to identify and discuss issues, recognising that arrangements may need to be put in place where sensitive technical or commercial information is under discussion.

Are there specific thematic areas relevant to the Department's remit which you would like to see more research and innovation activity in? How can this be achieved?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

- The technologies to deliver net zero power system are available or at advanced stages by OEMs.
- Many of the research/study areas called out in CAP23 are helpful – e.g. identifying candidate areas for district heating, feasibility study for CCS. SSE supports their delivery ASAP.
- In general SSE is of the view that a more holistic approach to research and innovation should be taken in the energy sector, both in terms of the scope of matters considered and the disciplines involved. For example, research on potential generation mix in the SEM to facilitate net zero, and taking account of potential future interconnection, would be useful to plan the system of the future from a technical and commercial point of view. This should look at the capacity and flexibility services required and assess the value delivered by particular services. From this, we should develop market signals, and support schemes where necessary, to deliver and sustain those technologies. From this work it would then be useful to identify pathways to net zero, interim targets for technologies and to identify and address barriers to delivery. Targets and support schemes for many renewables technologies are well-developed, but we will need to design market and/or support mechanisms to deliver e.g. low carbon flexible thermal (carbon capture and storage, hydrogen etc), DSM, negative emissions technologies, demand side management and long duration storage. Enduring market or support mechanisms are preferable, but bespoke innovation funding may be necessary to get some technologies off the ground. We have seen innovation funding used successfully in GB to stimulate the formation of low carbon industrial clusters, which is an approach worth consideration for Ireland.
- SSE believes that Agencies and Consenting bodies will need research to make consenting and permitting decisions on these new technologies e.g. research to inform the development of design standards or guidelines

Have you views on the impact of disruptive technologies such as AI, Quantum and 6G as part of the digital transformation agenda and the implications of these technologies for the Department?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

How can the Department better communicate its research and innovation needs?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

- As above, SSE believes that regular industry engagement can assist in communication of needs and priorities, developing a positive feedback loop between relevant players.
- All funded research and innovation should also be disseminated via reports on a central website, and we suggest an annual conference highlighting progress, results and lessons learned.

How can the Department work more effectively to source evidence from the national research and innovation community to support its work in policy development, policy implementation, and the uptake of new technologies?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

How can the Department engage more effectively with all stakeholders in the national research and innovation system? If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please state how the Department could more effectively engage with your organisation.

*2000 character(s) maximum*

-◆As above, SSE believes that regular engagement with industry can assist.

Should the Department seek to grow its capacity to carry out in-house research? If yes, how can this be achieved?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Are there examples internationally of Government strategies on research and innovation in climate, communications / digital, circular economy, cyber security, energy or environment that we should examine? If so, can you provide details?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Are there any other matters you wish to raise in relation to the development of the research and innovation strategy?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

-◆Given the cross-border nature of the Single Electricity Market, an all-island approach to research and innovation is welcome where possible, to deliver a shared vision of net zero SEM.

## **Contact**

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