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

[redacted]

* Please enter your email address

[redacted]

* Please enter your occupation

[redacted]

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

200 character(s) maximum

Loughs Agency

Job Title (if applicable)

[redacted]

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

Loughs Agency is of the opinion that research and innovation should be co-ordinated in an all island approach. Embracing an all island would allow for greater data sharing, expediate progress and reduce the risk of duplication of effort. In addition, rebalancing the funding of research and innovation will be key to succeeding in future as Invest 2030 outlines that 70% of research and development is carried out by indigenous firms, less than a third of investment is in research and development. The briefing paper on the EU's global approach to research and innovation recognises the "growing relevance of international cooperation in EU R&I" https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2022/733550/EPRS_BRI (2022)733550_EN.pdf

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

2000 character(s) maximum

It is imperative that collaborative working is facilitated between departments/agencies/institutions where there are cross overs and/or interactions between delivery/remit. Furthering collaborativee approaches in areas will help in identifying future trends. Loughs Agency have successfully collaborated on national and international scales through the Sea Monitor and STRAITS projects. Horizon scanning on a national and transboundary scale will be key in identifying emerging threats and opportunities.

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

Loughs Agency believe that there are opportunities to improve research and innovation activities in the areas of:
- impact of climate change on aquatic environments
- acoustic telemetry in terms of the movements/behaviour of migratory and highly mobile species with respect to marine spatial planning
- interactions between land-based activities and freshwater systems and mitigation approaches for negative impacts

As discussed above, Loughs Agency believe these areas (and others) ought to be approached collaboratively and at an All-Island scale at minimum.

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

Loughs Agency believe that the development of AI, Quantum and 6G could be transformative in the way that we currently carry out surveys and data analysisThe development and adoption of 6G technologies would deliver real time data from our telemetry equipment to our staff and stakeholders. 6G would allow our field staff to carry out previous hazardous surveys via drone and report data back to office based staff. The adoption of AI, Quantum and 6G would have wide ranging implications across the department and would require significant upskilling in staff to make the most of these new tools. Creating a cross disciplinary working group to learn how other sectors are using these technologies would lead to innovation. Loughs Agency also recognises the need for coherent and robust policy around the use of these technologies.

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

2000 character(s) maximum

> Loughs Agency believe that effective engagement and communication must consider all stakeholders from delivery to end users. Communication and engagement must include other departments/agencies/bodies /academia/NGOs and the Public. Communication must also be transboundary in order to benchmark against R&I in other jurisdictions and Member States.

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

> Loughs Agency is of the opinion that to more effectively source evidence, the department should work closely with the national R&I community members while also extending seeking to effectively build partnerships on wider international scales. Working closer with Northern agencies, Arms Length Bodies, and academia would create an all-island evidence base from which to source evidence.

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

> Loughs Agency believe the publication of clear research objectives from the department aligned with all of the departmental responsibilities, along with provision of associated funding would provide for more effective engagement.

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

Loughs Agency is of the opinion that the department should seek to grow its capacity to carry out in-house research. Loughs Agency suggests closer ties between departmental bodies and Arms-Length Bodies under its remit and Higher/Further Education. The Department can grow its capacity by creating a pathway from Further/Higher Education to research projects. This could be done through funded positions for graduates. This should be delivered using an all-island approach and on a international level through schemes such as ERASMUS. This would help the various Agencies combat talent loss and the perceived 'brain drain' of young people leaving for opportunities abroad whilst also welcoming talented graduates from abroad.

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

- EU Research and Innovation Strategy 2020-2024 (Environment and Climate is one of the Commissions 6 goals.) https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/environment_en

- 2030 Strategic framework for international climate and nature action https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2030-strategic-framework-for-international-climate-and-nature-action

- Strategic Framework for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Climate Change https://www.fao.org/3/am436e/am436e.pdf#:~:text=document%20has%20been%20prepared%20by%20the%20Global%20Partnership,concerted%20action%20on%20fisheries%2C%20aquaculture%20and%20climate%20change.

- Northern Ireland Innovation Strategy 2014-2025 https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/deti/Innovation-Strategy-2014-2025_2_0.pdf

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

2000 character(s) maximum

There is a requirement for prioritization of R&I within relevant fields of study rather than between them. Unrelated fields of study should not be competing for resources.

Contact

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