

Author: Donegal County Council

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Which consultee type in the list below best describes you? Other: Local Government

# **Observations:**

Theme:	Route to Market
Title:	Route to Market for Donegal / North
	West

This policy framework is welcomed and sets out the proposed pathway for the development of offshore renewable energy including wind, wave and tidal energy that will assist in achieving Ireland's long term climate goals.

#### Grid

The mean wind speeds off Donegal are recorded as the highest in Europe with subsequent higher output and return on investment, the Continental Shelf off the north west coast and the deep-water port at Killybegs and the cluster of world class marine engineering businesses in Donegal means that this region has a strong comparative advantage in this sector and as such an important role to play in achieving Irelands climate goals.

However, unlike other regions in Ireland, Donegal has severe **grid curtailment** in terms of the route to market for energy produced offshore as there is no high capacity connectivity to the national grid in Donegal and this is a critical impediment to the development of this sector for the benefit of Donegal and the wider North West including the North West City Region.

In addition, Donegal has no gas network and this too adds another critical disadvantage for route to market for energy produced. It has been identified that the existing gas network presents an opportunity to transport green hydrogen and this will again reduce Donegal's opportunity in terms of route to market.

The draft Policy Framework notes that energy generated from ORE projects must be delivered to demand centres and as such ORE development must be aligned with onshore and offshore grid in domestic grid and interconnection export.

The Ten Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) provides a roadmap for the strategic development of grid infrastructure and it is essential that this Plan includes provision for the development of at least a 220KV line in Donegal for various reasons including the following:

- 1. To give the market confidence that this essential grid connectivity will be in place to facilitate route to market options for energy produced.
- 2. To enable Donegal and the North West City Region (4th largest urban agglomeration on the island of Ireland, a demand centre with a population of approx 350,000) to grow sustainably and to avail positively from the natural resources off our coastline.
- **3.** To facilitate the just transition of the fisheries sector which has been so negatively impacted by the loss of quotas as a result of the UK EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement arising from Brexit, to complementary industries including ORE.

Theme:	Infrastructural
	Alignment
Title:	Ports

Donegal has a number of key ports, piers and harbours that will have a significant role to play in supporting the development of the ORE sector. In particular, Killybegs which is a deep water port and the largest fisheries harbour in Ireland has developed a world class marine engineering base with a number of businesses currently serving the ORE sector in the UK and across Europe.

Byrne Looby, commissioned by Killybegs Harbour Development Group in association with Donegal County Council, Donegal Local Enterprise Office and Enterprise Ireland, prepared a technical study to investigate the feasibility of enhancing port facilities at Killybegs Harbour.

This study investigated how the existing industries in Killybegs can be sustained and enhanced with a view to attracting complimentary industries to Killybegs with a prime focus on the vessel construction and maintenance industry and an extension of the Main Quay.

The study found that in Killybegs there is a requirement for investment in a number of key areas including a pier extension and associated wave attenuation structure as well as dry docking facilities for large vessels.

Dublin Offshore in their report on 'The Growth of Onshore to Offshore Wind - Atlantic Region Wind Energy and Supply Chain Study' found that Killybegs was one of only three ports in the Atlantic Region that presented strongly in terms of its capability to service the offshore wind sector and noted that the planned infrastructure developments at the Port would further enhance Killybegs capability.

It is recommended that the emerging National Ports Policy recognises the role of Killybegs Port in servicing the Offshore Renewable Energy sector given its natural advantage as a deep water port, its strategic location in the North West and the base of world class marine engineering businesses located in close proximity to the port.

#### Theme: Title:

ORE Delivery DMAPs

The Plan led approach adopted by Government to the development of this sector is also welcomed. There is a need to ensure that this sector is developed in sustainable and planned way meeting the needs of a range of key stakeholders including local fishing communities, coastal communities, NGO's and developers.

In this regard, there is a need for the swift development and deployment of **Designated Marine Area Plans** (DMAPs) including off the North West. There is concern in relation to the timeline for the deployment of DMAP's the first of which is being prepared off the South Coast and is taking in the region of 16 months. In this regard, it is

Theme: Title: General Comments Research and Development and Innovation

Research, Development and Innovation will play a key role in positioning Ireland as a leader in Offshore Renewable Energy.

The Alpha Innovation Centre which is currently co-funded by Enterprise Ireland and Donegal County Council under the auspices of Donegal 2040 DAC is engaging with marine focused businesses including marine engineering businesses through the Killybegs Marine Cluster to enhance their innovation capability and enable them to respond with agility to the opportunities emerging in the ORE sector.

The Atlantic Technological University's plans to establish an Ocean Innovation Centre at the Killybegs campus should be supported as this will have a key role in working with industry to drive commercially focused research and development across various strands of this sector.

Donegal County Council is currently in the process of establishing a Blue Economy Working Group for Donegal and a focus of this group will be the establishment of a sustainable ORE industry in Donegal and the North West region. This group will meet on 27 February and commitments have been received from a range of agencies to participate in this group including ATU, BIM, DoFAM, Marine Institute, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Údarás na nGaeltachta and ETB. This group will provide an important co-ordinating mechanism for the development of this sector. The group will also work closely with the North West Enterprise Plan to ensure that there is an effective industry informed approach to the work of this group.

## General Comments

Theme: Title:

## General Comments

Dublin Offshore - 'The Growth of Onshore to Offshore Wind - Atlantic Region Wind Energy and Supply Chain Study'

Dublin Offshore was commissioned to undertake a study looking at the potential for the development of the Offshore Wind sector of the Atlantic Region including the coast of Donegal could create upwards of 5,000 jobs by 2037.

The study, which was part funded by Donegal County Council along with other local authority partners and Enterprise Ireland and commissioned by the North West, West and Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plans and the Western Development Commission, presents offshore wind energy as a significant opportunity to generate substantial job creation and economic growth for communities along the Atlantic seaboard from Donegal to Limerick and playing a central role in achieving Ireland's climate ambitions and enhancing energy security.

To quantify the scale of the opportunity, the study found that by 2037 there could be upwards of 5,000 jobs supported directly by the offshore wind sector located off the western seaboard generating €400 million in gross value added (GVA) annually to the Atlantic region economy.

The study estimates that 90% of future new build offshore energy capacity in the Atlantic Region will be Floating Offshore Wind (FOW). The unique selling point of floating offshore is the ability to develop offshore wind farms in deeper water and with a more consistent wind resource, resulting in increased capacity generation.

The study also considered the key elements required for the development of a supportive ecosystem that will enable businesses and communities along the Atlantic coastal region to take full advantage of potential from this emerging sector.

The study calls for investment in high capacity grid infrastructure in the region and the development of an Offshore Wind Port Strategy along with the setting of clear targets by Government for offshore wind capacity targets beyond 2030.

It also recommends the inclusion of non-financial metrics, including supply chain, technology innovation and local impact in the ORESS process along with a greater focus on working with local businesses and industry to avail of emerging supply chain opportunities.

The need to develop a pipeline of talent for this sector through the provision of a range of education, training and skills development programmes was also highlighted as was the importance of stakeholder engagement and an aligned and supportive Planning Framework.

In its assessment of the suitability of key ports in the Atlantic region, the study found that Killybegs Port presented strongly in terms of its capability to service the offshore wind sector and noted that the planned infrastructure developments at the Port would further enhance Killybegs capability.

The study provides a clear analysis of the opportunities presenting for the Atlantic Region including Donegal. The study found that the proximity to the offshore continental shelf and the natural strategic advantage in terms of a sustained wind resource, makes Donegal an attractive investment location in the offshore wind sector.

The study sets out a number of recommendations including the clear need for high capacity grid connection of at least 220kv in order to ensure that there is certainty of route to market for the energy produced. This study also shows that the Atlantic Region including Donegal has the capacity to produce multiples of the current electricity demand on the island of Ireland and investment in technology innovations such as Green Hydrogen is needed to realise the export potential that exists.

## **Documents Attached:**

DECC-C2-6-606 - Growth of Onshore to Offshore Wind Atlantic Region Full Report.pdf

Boundaries Captured on No Map: