

Question 1

1(a). Has this section adequately identified the general key priorities for ORE delivery in Ireland? Are there additional priorities that should be integrated into the holistic, plan-led approach?

Positioning local government to follow through effectively on plans through committing qualified and capable resources;

Simplifying funding streams for necessary works to infrastructure so that consultancy support and significant effort is not required just to make an application;

Providing funding for admin support to coordinate skill building support, infrastructure works, and links between the supply chain and energy companies.

A dedicated port and harbour team within DAFM to engage with local actors would help ensure there will be no gaps in the plan to build capacity. It should include a process with a designated contact person for continuous exchange of communication between central and local government.

1(b). Has each key priority been adequately described and considered all relevant components?

Section 1.2.3.- Role of the State and role of industry makes no mention of local government as the primary driver of change at local level

Engagement with local government, as well as local groups such as the East Coast Offshore Renewable Network, would help bridge the gap between Government policy and real progress on the ground.

1(c). How best should the 2GW of non-grid limited offshore wind capacity be procured?

Extra weighting given to suppliers who show a low carbon impact would help smaller local companies, whose products and services won't have to travel as far, compete for tenders against larger international conglomerates, which would in turn help build capacity on this island to support this new industry in the long term.

1(d). What are your views on the design parameters for the successor scheme to ORESS, what else should/should not be considered?

Ongoing consideration for the east coast fixed wind should not be forgotten and should be supported in all policies along with building up floating wind.

It is hoped that fixed wind on the east coast will have reached a stable and predictable operating environment post-2030 and will be in a position to offer lessons to floating wind installations as they grow.

1(e). What frameworks and/or supports are required for alternate routes to market such as CPPAs, Power-to-X projects, interconnector-hybrid projects and export projects?

1(f). What additional capacities and responsibilities should be held by industry in the context of the plan-led approach?

1(g). How can Government facilitate a more comprehensive and streamlined engagement process with developers to ensure national ORE targets are delivered?

Ensure that all parties who will be affected are included fully in consultation and ongoing meetings and taskforce activity.

Local Government will be one of the primary engines of activity at local level supporting the growth of a new and uncertain industry, and should be included at all levels of policy development to ensure plans are fit for purpose and can be effectively implemented as envisioned.

While huge effort has gone into policy and regulatory development and engagement with developers, contact with local government has been minimal. Providing ongoing support and, crucially, funding, to the units within government that are expected to follow through and carry out all of the actions will be pivotal to successful implementation of key measures.

Question 2

2(a). What grid infrastructure should be of particular focus in facilitating the build-out of capacity to support ORE generation targets?

Provision of direct, rolling funding for ports operated by local authorities, including ports of regional significance that can support increasing capacity to allow the facilitation of increased traffic, including construction vessels.

Provide direct, rolling funding to local authority owned harbours to maintain and improve infrastructure to support the increased needs of the ORE industry, and to ensure harbours can support vessels that will be involved in construction and maintenance of ORE infrastructure.

Improved infrastructure can be transformative for the blue economy, providing opportunities for concomitant maritime activities such as fisheries, tourism, leisure activities, seagrass/seaweed harvesting, oyster seeding, etc.

Currently funding is only available when it is offered and for what is offered. An avenue for local government to proactively request funding for specific projects as needed would improve responsiveness to ORE industry needs and improve our ability to meet the national ORE targets that we have committed to.

2(b). In relation to National Security/Department of Defence interaction with ORE development, are there any issues you would like to highlight?

Wicklow Port is an ISPS area and may be requested to facilitate cross-collaboration on training exercises. Open communication and ongoing contact channels with Central Government on how the ORE industry will affect this and what should be done to ensure readiness without affecting security issues would be useful.

Question 4

4(a). What structures, measures, and interventions can the state and state agencies implement to assist in the development of a long-term, sustainable skills and workforce pipeline? Provide any recommendations on what the State can do to promote careers in ORE across a range of educational backgrounds and movement from other relevant sectors.

Simplified funding streams for development and skill building for O&M of turbines and all

ancillaries, infrastructure upgrades to support higher capacities, local network management

Support local triple helix networks collaborating to build skills, provide supporting infrastructure, and support local supply chains, including administrative support for local authorities to coordinate;

Freestanding and ring-fenced support for local authority driven ORE projects, regardless of funding under the same scheme offered in different sectors or industries.

4(b). Are you aware of initiatives in other jurisdictions or at a European level that would be relevant to Ireland's ambition of building a sustainable skills and workforce pipeline for offshore wind?

WEST - Wind Expert Support Toolkit: Helping local businesses explore and increase capability and understanding within the offshore wind sector;

EEEGR -East of England Energy Group: A not-for-profit trade body representing the energy sector and its supply chain in the East of England;

OWGP -Offshore Wind Growth Partnership: A long term business transformation programme for the UK offshore wind supply chain;

New Anglia LEP: works with businesses, local authority partners and education institutions to drive growth and enterprise;

ORE Catapult: established in 2013 by the UK Government and is one of a network of Catapults set up by Innovate UK in high growth industries. It is the UK's leading innovation centre for offshore renewable energy;

OPITO: global, not-for-profit, industry-owned skills body for the energy industry.

4(c). To what extent should an emphasis be placed on multipurpose sites for ORE delivery, including the colocation of devices? What Government structures should be developed to encourage and facilitate progress in this aspect?

Opportunities to improve biodiversity and reduce visual impact will be important. We should make sure measures are taken to improve or add to biodiversity, such as reef creation for oysters/mussels (supporting the work of NORRI among others), supporting seagrass growth which it turn removes carbon, etc.

4(d). How can Government ensure policy is kept in line with evolving technological innovation and developments in ORE devices? What structures and government procedures should be implemented to future-proof the ORE planning process and account for technological shifts?

Open channels and avenues of two-way communication to keep in regular contact with locals - local government, training providers, and the local supply chain - who are working to implement government measures on the ground.

We would recommend for government to work with research and development units in third level institutions to learn and understand what is coming next.

It would also be useful to look beyond Ireland at what has been done already in other countries, and the developers who have current plans off the Wicklow coast all have a wealth of experience they could offer.

Provision of funding streams to support development of skills and training facilities in Wicklow County Campus (Clermont) as provided for in the Mid East Regional Enterprise Plan and the County Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan.

Support for conferences run at local level to complement the conferences already being organised on a national basis.