



Draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy (SC-DMAP): Public Consultation

*Public Consultation on Ireland's first Designated Maritime Area Plan
for Offshore Renewable Energy off the South Coast*

Ireland has one of the best offshore wind and green energy resources in the world with potential to deliver a climate neutral future, significant positive economic and societal opportunities and benefits, and a better quality of life for all. The draft South Coast Designated Maritime Area Plan for Offshore Renewable Energy (SC-DMAP) is the first sub-national, forward maritime spatial plan for offshore renewable energy proposed by the State.

The draft SC-DMAP will provide for the sustainable development of offshore wind through consideration of environmental protection and existing marine users and activities, while maintaining, and where possible, enhancing marine biodiversity.

The draft SC-DMAP and its associated environmental assessments - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) - are available for public consultation from **3 May 2024 to 14 June 2024**. You are invited to make submissions during the six-week statutory public consultation period, which will inform possible future revisions to the draft SC-DMAP.

The closing date for submissions is 5.00pm on 14 June 2024. All documentation is available for download at www.gov.ie/southcoastdmap

This document can be sent by email to southcoastdmap@DECC.gov.ie or by post to:
International and Offshore Energy Division, South Coast DMAP Submission,
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, 29-31 Adelaide Road,
Dublin 2, D02 X285.



In the questions that follow, please share your views on how best Ireland can harness this offshore wind opportunity to maximise benefits for our climate, environment and communities.

Consultation Questions

1. Identifying Maritime Areas for offshore wind development

The draft SC-DMAP aims to promote the sustainable development and growth of the maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources. Government has used an ecosystem-based approach to identify four Maritime Areas within which fixed offshore wind farms may be located in the draft SC-DMAP area. This involves making spatial and policy assessments based on environmental, social and economic data and information, and integrating the views of stakeholders and the public throughout the process. The identification of Maritime Areas has sought to avoid and minimise potential associated adverse environmental impacts, including impacts on biodiversity, EU Natura 2000 sites, and other existing marine users. This has taken place through the comprehensive environmental and technical analysis.

Do you agree with the four maritime areas identified for future offshore wind development in the draft SC-DMAP? If not, why?



2. Sustainable development and environmental protection

The draft SC-DMAP will provide for the sustainable development of offshore wind through consideration of environmental protection, while maintaining, and where possible, enhancing marine biodiversity. A governance structure will oversee and monitor the implementation of the draft SC-DMAP including environmental impacts. Building upon and informing national, regional and local land and marine planning policy, policy objectives set out in the draft SC-DMAP will inform future decisions and assessments by relevant competent authorities on proposed offshore renewable energy projects and their enabling infrastructure, including for electricity transmission offshore and onshore. Any future offshore wind projects and associated transmission infrastructure within the draft SC-DMAP will also be subject to all necessary environmental assessment and State permits.

Do you agree that the draft SC-DMAP policy objectives and governance approach, including for environmental protection, will support and guide its sustainable and coherent implementation?



3. Promoting shared use of the sea

The draft SC-DMAP ecosystem-based approach aims to maximise opportunities for co-existence between offshore renewable energy and other marine users and activities such as aquaculture, commercial fishing and seafood activity, and tourism and recreation, as well as the protection of the marine environment and biodiversity. The draft Plan provides that mandatory permanent exclusions on additional activities or usages within Maritime Areas identified for future offshore renewable energy development should be not imposed save relating to safety or in other exceptional circumstances.

Do you agree that the draft SC-DMAP includes sufficient provisions for co-existence between offshore renewable energy and other maritime activities?

4. Maximising benefits for all

Independent economic analysis highlights that implementation of the draft SC-DMAP could generate significant economic and societal opportunities in Ireland, through inward investment and employment creation. The analysis also highlights that the majority of these benefits will be captured at regional and local level along the south



coast. Maximising these economic benefits and opportunities is a key objective of the SC-DMAP.

Do you agree that the plan-led framework set out in the draft SC-DMAP will effectively support and drive economic and employment opportunities, including opportunities along the south coast?