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Government of Ireland

Project Marine Newsletter

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Prepared by the Marine Planning, Policy and Legislation (MPPL) Section
The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
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Introduction

The Marine Planning Policy and Legislation (MPPL) unit welcomes you to our third newsletter. We would once again like to thank those readers who provided us with feedback and suggestions for future topics, and we will do our utmost to include these in future issues. We're always appreciative of feedback, and can be reached at MSP@housing.gov.ie.

In Part 1 of this edition, we take a look at a milestone achievement in marine policy development as Ireland's first Maritime Area Consents for Offshore Wind Energy Projects were granted in December by Minister Eamon Ryan of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. The Department of Environment also provides an update on the public consultation on the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II (ORED II). Our Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine colleagues outline the recent announcement of EU funding that will benefit Ireland's seafood sector and our coastal communities, and MPPL team member Karina Fitzgerald reports from the recent MSP conference held in Barcelona, which was attended by members of the MPPL team and the Marine Institute. There is also some good news for the MPPL team as the Department's digital marine portal, marineplan.ie, is nominated for 2 awards, and Part 1 concludes with news of some recent marine appointments.

Part 2 begins with a round-up of regional marine news, where we outline local maritime developments and initiatives funded by various Government Departments. We've a very interesting article from Irish Lights detailing a Lighthouse-based and all-island tourism initiative, which will assist Ireland's tourism product. Professor Jerry D. Murphy of the Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine at Cork University provides us with his view of offshore wind energy, a topic we will all become more familiar with over the coming months and indeed, years. Part 2 concludes with news of a joint collaboration between Irish Lights and Met Eireann, utilising the latest marine technologies to develop coastal predictive modelling systems for tidal, storm surge and wave forecasting for Ireland.

Part 3 begins with a short report of the Marine Institute's and University of Galway's Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit (SEMRU) recently published Ocean

Economy Report for 2021 – and we would very much recommend our readers to read the full report (linked in article). While the report details the challenges faced by marine industries and communities in recent years, it also outlines economic rebounds in terms of outputs and employment during 2021.

Once again, our Maritime Attaché colleague Eoin Leahy returns with his ‘View From Europe’ column, providing us with updates on EU Marine policy and in this article, he details his own very packed schedule since the previous issue! We also take a look at an important Safety at Sea training initiative for fishers recently held by BIM and the RNLI in Donegal, focusing on the importance of wearing Personal Floatation Devices (lifejackets) in the event of going overboard.

Part 3 concludes with a report of Coastwatch Ireland’s exhibition and event recently held in Wexford County Council’s offices to mark World Wetlands Day.

Recent Legislative & Policy Developments

This section of the newsletter highlights significant legislative and marine policy developments recently announced.

Ireland's first Maritime Area Consents for Offshore Wind Energy Projects Granted

In December 2022, Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan, issued Maritime Area Consents (MACs) to the first phase of seven offshore renewable energy projects, in what represents a significant milestone in the delivery of offshore wind in Ireland. Coming on the back of the publication of the country's Climate Action Plan 2023, this confirms the government's commitment to delivering on our climate ambitions and enhancing the State's energy security.

The award of MACs ensures that only projects with the greatest viability to deliver Ireland's ambitious energy targets can progress into the planning system. The award of a MAC follows a comprehensive assessment, by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, into each project's financial and technical competency. This approach enables all Phase One projects to begin their pre-planning application engagement with An Bord Pleanála.

The award of a MAC also enables Phase One projects to participate in the ORESS 1, the first auction for offshore wind under the Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS). ORESS 1 is expected to procure approximately 2.5GW of electricity generating capacity.

Speaking following the award of the State's first offshore energy MACs, Minister Ryan said:

"With the award of Maritime Area Consents (MACs) to seven Phase One projects, we have given Ireland's most viable and well-advanced offshore energy projects the opportunity to progress through the planning system and reach development. This is a significant milestone on the pathway to decarbonising our energy supply and securing energy independence."

"These first Maritime Area Consents (MACs) have been carefully drafted to promote the speedy and efficient deployment of offshore renewable energy, while ultimately protecting the State's rich and unique maritime resource, in line with the principles of the National Marine Planning Framework."

Projects which have been granted a MAC will be required to apply for development permission and secure a route to market within set timeframes, ensuring project progression and maximising benefits to the State. Phase One projects are also required to pay an annual levy to the State – under the terms of their MACs.

The grant of Phase One MACs follows the opening of the MAC assessment window last April, and the publication of the ORESS Terms and Conditions in early November 2022. It was enabled by the enactment of the Maritime Area Planning Act last year, and indicates the strong commitment across Government to deliver a secure pipeline of offshore renewable energy projects in the State, which can meet our Climate Action Plan targets. [Source: Department of Environment, Climate and Communications](#)

EU Adopts EMFAF Programme for Ireland

Our colleagues in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine were delighted to announce recently that the EU Commission adopted the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) Programme 2021-27 for Ireland.

Just over €258 million in funding has been set aside and will aid Ireland's seafood sector and our coastal communities. The EMFAF supports the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the EU Maritime Policy and the EU agenda for international ocean governance. Building on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2014-2020, it provides supports to achieve food security through the supply of seafood products, growth of a sustainable blue economy and healthy, safe and sustainably managed seas and oceans.

The new EMFAF Seafood Development Programme which will run up to 2027 envisages funding up to €258.4 million, which includes a €134 million EU contribution and a Government of Ireland contribution of €116 million.

[Source: https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-agriculture-food-and-the-marine/](https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments/departments-of-agriculture-food-and-the-marine/)

Public Consultation on the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II (ORED II)

Department of Environment, Climate and Communications

The draft Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II (ORED II) is Ireland's first **national-level spatial strategy** for our offshore renewable energy (ORE) future. It provides a high-level framework to support and guide the long-term, sustainable and planned development of Ireland's immense offshore wind, wave and tidal resources.

The ORED II is one of the key building blocks of the future, long-term model for the offshore renewable energy sector in Ireland. This long-term model and vision for offshore renewable energy in Ireland is called the Enduring Regime.

Under the Enduring Regime, the State will ensure that the economic, environmental and societal benefits of ORE are realised for everyone. This includes choosing the right offshore technology to use in the right places through the ORED II. There are other key steps in building the enduring-regime such as the Hydrogen Policy, Interconnector Policy and Economic Assessment, which are currently being progressed. The ORED II will be key in setting out the framework for where offshore renewable energy will be developed in the future, as part of the enduring regime.

ORED II is key to:

- Meeting our future energy demands
- Transforming our economy and industry
- Achieving net-zero carbon emissions
- Protecting our environment
- Shared use of our seas

The Right Offshore Technologies, In the Right Places

The draft ORED II outlines the proposed criteria to identify the most optimal areas in our seas for ORE development as part of the enduring regime – known as Broad Areas of Interest. These are large areas of the maritime space that have been

identified as technically suitable for future ORE development through the OREDP II assessment. Further analysis will refine the Broad Areas of Interest into smaller geographical areas, ahead of formal designation for future ORE developments. This analysis may include environmental or economic assessments, and consultation with stakeholders. Formal designation of these areas for ORE will require the development of statutory Designated Maritime Areas Plans (DMAPs) under the Maritime Area Planning Act, 2021. These will be statutory, regional spatial plans for ORE.

The draft OREDP II has been developed by a core team including the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI). The core team has been supported in its work by the OREDP II Advisory Group, Steering Group and Data Advisory Group who provided expert input to the draft plan.

The draft OREDP II is now the focus of a **public consultation** launching on [Gov.ie/OREDPII](https://gov.ie/OREDPII) on the 24th of February 2023 running until 20th April 2023. Members of the public and relevant stakeholders are invited and encouraged to provide their views on the draft OREDP II, including in relation to its proposed implementation and review, the data management process, the DMAP process, and the associated environmental reports. They can do so by filling out the online survey.

In order to raise awareness of the OREDP II, a series of public consultation events and informal community outreach events will take place around the country at the below locations and online. Members of the public wishing to participate in the workshop events must **register online in advance** at gov.ie/OREDPII.

Additionally, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications will have an information stand for the OREDP II consultation at The Skipper Expo, Limerick – February 24th and 25th.

ORED P II In-Person Consultation Workshop Events

Advance registration required

Ringaskiddy, Co. Cork – Centre for Marine and Renewable Energy – March 6th 2023 14.00

Killybegs, Co. Donegal – Tara Hotel – March 13th 2023 14.00

Foynes, Co. Limerick – Foynes Yacht Club – March 14th 2023 @ 2pm

Ros a Mhíl, Contae na Gaillimhe – Coláiste Chamuis – 23ú Márta 2023 14.00 (As Gaelige)

Dundalk, Co. Louth – location TBC – March 24th 2023 11.00

Arklow, Co. Wicklow – location TBC – April 14th @ 11am

Informal Community Outreach Events

No registration required

Castletownbere, Co. Cork

Ballycotton, Co. Cork

Dunmore East, Co. Waterford

Kilmore Quay, Co. Wexford

Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Balbriggan, Co. Dublin

Westport, Co. Mayo

Dingle, Co. Kerry

In addition, four online consultation events are also planned, with dates and times to be confirmed. These online events are planned as follows:

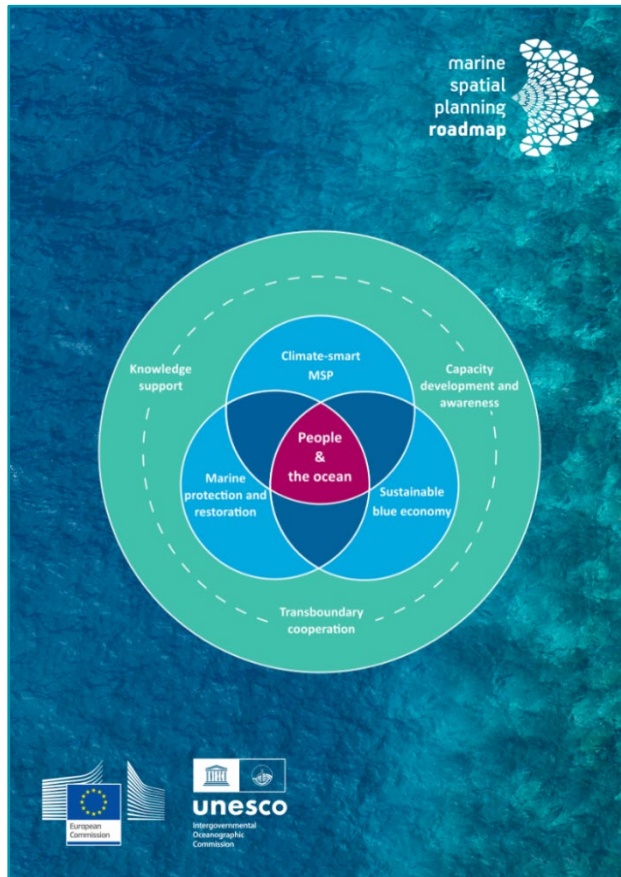
- General Information Session
- Session for Environmental NGOs
- Session for Maritime Industry Stakeholders
- Session for Fisheries Stakeholders

Following the conclusion of the public consultation process and consideration of all submissions, the draft OREDP II will be finalised and published in the summer of 2023. **Source:** Department of Environment, Climate and Communications

International Conference on MSP in Barcelona

Karina Fitzgerald

Marine Planning, Policy & Legislation Section
Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage



The European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) held the 5th International Forum for Marine Spatial Planning (MSP forum) and the 3rd International Conference on MSP from 21 to 23 November 2022.

Held in Barcelona, more than 500 participants from over 90 countries registered to attend the events. Ireland was represented by the Marine Planning Policy and Legislation team and the Marine Institute. The 5th MSP-

forum kick-started the series of events, which were based around an interactive platform, and highlighted the importance of cooperation in the context of transboundary MSP and sustainable blue economy.

The conference was structured around six priority areas of the updated MSP roadmap, which is divided into 3 cross-cutting pillars (knowledge support, capacity development and awareness, transboundary cooperation) and 3 thematic pillars (climate-smart MSP, marine protection and restoration and sustainable blue economy). The Conference provided an opportunity to take stock of existing experiences in MSP and exchange best practices. The challenges and opportunities to achieve the MSP roadmap priority areas were discussed in depth.

Accelerating MSP is among the goals of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030. The 'Ocean Decade' aims to

support improved ocean planning through a stronger MSP knowledge base, data-sharing tools and infrastructures that integrate socio-economic and environmental data to help create a holistic approach to managing ocean and coastal areas.

Some of the key observations made at the conference include ‘one size doesn’t fit all’ when it comes to MSP, there is ongoing need for knowledge, capacity building and social science, recognition for the importance of indigenous/local knowledge. In terms of climate smart MSP, political will is crucial, engaging coastal communities and building trust is important and planning options need to be addressed at meaningful scales.

With regard to marine protection and restoration it was recognised that restoration must be embedded through a transition to sustainable resilient and equitable blue conditions. We need to employ blue carbon approaches, prevent the degradation of ecosystems and create enabling conditions for meaningful restoration. Restoration must be embedded through a transition to sustainable resilient and equitable blue conditions. MSP provides the framework to deliver this.

The opportunities presented by MSP to achieve a balance between nature protection and blue growth need to be harnessed.



Karina Fitzgerald, Juliet Fitzpatrick, Tom Woolley (all Marine Planning) and Caitriona Nic Aonghusa (Marine Institute) attended the conference.



Caitriona Nic Aonghusa chairing one of the sessions in Barcelona.

Ireland's First Marine Digital Hub Nominated for 2 Awards



Excitement is brewing within the Department following the recent announcement that Ireland's first marine spatial planning portal www.marineplan.ie has been nominated for two awards.

The first is the prestigious **Annual Civil Service Excellence and Innovation Awards** now in its 8th Year with the Department nominated for an award in the **"Digital First"** category for our Marine Spatial Planning Public Access Tool.

Competition includes the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The award ceremony will take place on Thursday March 30th next in St. Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle.

The second nomination is for **ESRI Ireland's 3rd Customer Success Awards**. The Department has been nominated for a **Mapping & Visualisation** award. In their deliberations for nominations the judging panel has recognised the Department for its outstanding work in GIS and commitment to making a difference to citizens and communities we serve. The award recognises organisations who demonstrate excellence in understanding locations and relationships with maps and visual representations.

Marineplan.ie is a digital tool that links planning within the maritime area and the relevant policies for each marine sector or activity listed in the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). The interactive web portal has three main areas: Activities Map; Activities and Policies Map. Recently it added a new MSP Hub which contains information on all Government Departments and agencies with a role in the maritime area, as well as the latest news and updates on marine planning in Ireland, available in both Irish and English.

Spearheading the development of marineplan.ie since its inception is Assistant Principal Juliet Fitzpatrick. “We are delighted with the nominations and honoured that the hard work and dedication from all concerned has been recognised. My thanks to our internal and external project teams, ESRI Ireland and the Marine Institute for their commitment and enthusiasm in bringing MarinePlan.ie to fruition.”

You can access the digital hub here on www.marineplan.ie



Pictured at the Nominee Day and announcement of the awards in Collins Barracks at the end of January were: Michelle Roche (GIS, SDAU), Juliet Fitzpatrick, MPPL and Tom Woolley MPPL



Maritime Industry Appointments

Denis Crotty Appointed Senior Projects Advisor with Green Rebel

Since our last newsletter, Denis Crotty has been appointed Senior Projects Advisor with Green Rebel – an Irish company specialising in site investigations for offshore wind energy projects.

Denis has 30 years of executive engineering and construction contracting experience in Europe, the Middle East and Australia, including 20 years within energy: oil and gas, power and petrochemicals. He has also worked with Kentz Group, SNC Lavalin and Actavo.



Denis, who commenced his new role in September 2022, will bring his international expertise to support the transition to offshore wind energy and the historic Crosshaven Boatyard. He will lead the charge in exploring Crosshaven Boatyard's potential to support the offshore wind sector while preserving the historical foundations and creating benefits for the local community.

Have you any appointments you would like featured in an upcoming edition of Project Marine Newsletter?

If so, contact us with a short biog, photo and send it to msp@housing.gov.ie and put “**Appointments Page, Newsletter**” in the subject box.

Regional News

Other Government Departments and organisations work in tandem with our local authorities in improving our Maritime/Coastal areas. The following articles are just some examples of the excellent work they have carried out. We here in the Marine, Planning, Policy & Legislation Section are happy to further promote the work of all these organisations and wish all parties concerned every continued success.

Dublin/Laois/Meath/Sligo/Limerick

Smart Ring Buoys to Save Lives and Improve Water Safety



Water Safety Ireland and the Department for Rural and Community Development launched last October an innovative Smart Ring Buoys project aimed at saving lives on our waters. Smart Dublin worked with technology partners Civic Integrated Solutions Ltd, mSEMICON Teoranta and ZiggyTec Ltd to develop this life saving technology. The deployment of this new low-cost sensor technology will provide real time alerts when life buoys are stolen or tampered with.

This problem is an issue for Councils across Ireland and 600+ sensors will now be installed in eight local authorities including: Fingal County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dublin City Council, Laois County Council, Meath County Council, Sligo County Council and Limerick City & County.

The Smart Ring Buoy technology works through low-cost sensors paired with a mobile, map-based platform with real time monitoring. It will alert Water Safety officers when ring buoys are tampered with or go missing and ensure their timely replacement. This is an essential and lifesaving action as a stolen ring buoy could mean a stolen life.

Source: www.dublincity.ie

Cork

New Coastal Erosion Project Agreed for Cork



Representatives from all bodies at the new project launch

A revolutionary new partnership has been agreed that will see the entire coastline of County Cork assessed and mapped for coastal erosion.

Cork County Council and MaREI, the Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Research Centre for

Energy, Climate and Marine at University College Cork (UCC) have arranged a three-and-a-half-year project which will see researchers conduct a detailed review of the 1,199km Cork coast to assess areas that are vulnerable to coastal erosion.

The projects outputs will inform the future planning of coastal management along the Cork coastline and the development of coastal management activity in the future. It will comprehensively collect and capture all existing available data relating to coastal erosion along the county's coastline and map it in a specific geographic information system.

A monitoring and modelling programme will also be developed in order to acquire a greater understanding of the coastline behaviour and use this information as a possible precursor to engineering works.

The research project team will liaise with the Office of Public Works, the Climate Action Regional Office, the Geological Survey of Ireland and other lead agencies to build on existing studies and collaborate with related projects currently underway.

Source: www.corkcoco.ie

Waterford

Ardmore Coast Guard Station re-opened



Minister Naughton and Senator John Cummins with volunteers

Pic: Ardmore Coast Guard

Last November saw the official re-opening of Ardmore Coast Guard Station after an extensive €200,000 refurbishment project. Minister Hildegard Naughton TD, who until the cabinet re-shuffle before Christmas had special responsibility for the Irish Coast Guard joined volunteers

in Ardmore to mark the reopening of the Coast Guard station. The Ardmore Coast Guard Unit has a long history in the provision of search and rescue and can trace its origins back to the 1890s.

The unit has drone capability as well as the search function and works closely with its flank stations – Bonmahon and Youghal. This is important due to the varying coastline in the area which includes beaches, rock shores and cliffs. Cliff rescue cover is also provided in the area with the Bonmahon unit equipped for cliff rescue. Their area of operations extends from Dungarvan to the east and extends west over towards Youghal. The team comprises 17 dedicated volunteers delivering the Coast Guard service in their community.

Refurbishment work was completed by the OPW on behalf of the Irish Coast Guard and included window replacement, painting, flooring and external improvements to the yard. Work was also carried out on the original 'rocket' house for use in storage and training. The visit coincided with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Irish Coast Guard last year.

Source: www.gov.ie/en/organisation/departments-of-transport/

Shining a Light on the Success of Ireland's All-Island Lighthouse Tourism and Heritage Initiative



Dave Ward

Commercial Manager, Irish Lights

Great Lighthouses of Ireland (www.greatlighthouses.com) is an all-island tourism initiative developed by Irish Lights.



Pictured at Loop Head at a recent 'Great Lighthouses of Ireland' partnership gathering and event in Co Clare, in conjunction with Clare County Council and Fáilte Ireland.

Launched in 2015, Great Lighthouses of Ireland brings together all the lighthouses around the coast that are open to the public under one unified brand and partnership that collaborates to welcome visitors from around the world and give them an insight to our shared lighthouse heritage at the heart of local coastal communities.

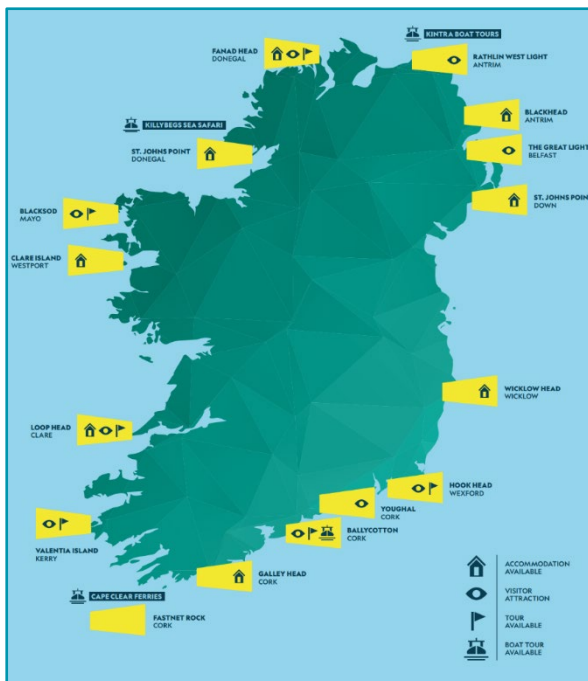
Currently representing 17 entities, including local authorities, community groups and government agencies, actions are aligned with Government policy in areas such as tourism heritage and rural development on the island of Ireland, North and South. For such a young brand and partnership much has been delivered with strong performance up to 2019, with visitor numbers increasing year on year and many development opportunities being realised.

An independent socio-economic review in 2018 confirmed that Great Lighthouses of Ireland delivered an economic benefit impact of €16.86m and supported 409 jobs in wider coastal communities. In 2019, 143,580 visitors and guests spent money and time at a lighthouse and all partners were planning for growth particularly from overseas markets in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching consequences for the tourism sector, however initiatives over the last two years have

consolidated the partners' commitment to being an exemplar in delivering sustainable maritime and tourism experiences.

There is evidence of an increased demand for slower, more sustainable rural travel and visitors seeking experiences that minimise their impact on the environment and contribute to the local economic wellbeing.

The Great Lighthouses of Ireland brand identity, marketing collateral and website content was refreshed in 2021, which is helping to drive consumer interest and business. The Great Lighthouses of Ireland partners are optimistic for the future and are working to making a difference within each community and destination they are part of.



It is the intention of Irish Lights, together with Great Lighthouses of Ireland partners to collaborate with Fáilte Ireland and other tourism agencies, destination stakeholders and coastal communities to further develop the initiative to include new and exciting visitor activities that both enhance and extend dwell times in the regions. Such activities may include a mix of Lighthouse Blueway trails, Adventure island experiences or a dedicated lighthouse 'Camino' style walking routes. One interesting concept

is the idea of the 'Seven Lighthouse Wonders' which would be a package of seven engaging experiences for people to enjoy around the area of the lighthouse like sea kayaking, hiking tours, Dolphin watching or scuba diving among just a few.

Web: www.greatlighthouses.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/greatlighthousesofireland>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/gtlighthouses>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/greatlighthouses/>

“What Will We Do with All That Wind?”

Jerry D Murphy

Director of MaREI, the SFI Centre for Energy, Climate and Marine Professor Chair of Civil Engineering in University College Cork



The revised Climate Action Plan includes for a target of 7 GW of offshore wind, and 2 GW of green hydrogen production from wind, by 2030. Members of the North Seas Energy Co-operation together with the European Commission agreed a non-binding target of 260 GW of offshore wind capacity in northern European seas by 2050

(The Dublin Declaration). In July 2021 the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) was established, and in December 2022 seven projects were awarded marine area consent which allows them to participate in an auction for an offshore renewable electricity support scheme. This is expected to secure 2.5GW of offshore wind by 2027. These developments are absolutely essential for decarbonisation of electricity and electrification of transport and heating sectors.

The industry should also lead to a massive investment in infrastructure for Ireland, significant employment for our Engineers and should, if managed correctly be a major stimulus of the Irish economy. How much of the value created by this investment will accrue to Ireland? The 2030 target of 7 GW is equivalent to 467 number 15 MW turbines in our waters in 7 years' time. A 15 MW turbine has an overall height of approximately 345m (hub height 150m, 75m under water and rotor diameter 240m). Where will the steel be produced? Where will the wind turbines be fabricated and assembled? Can our ports cater for turbines with rotor diameters of 240m? Do we have the cranes with the capacity to pick up 15 MW turbines? Who will install these devices in our oceans? We need to avoid the scenario where all this is done overseas without the use of Irish ports or industries.

Another consideration relates to what we do with the energy we will produce? We will initially satisfy our own electricity requirements including the electrification of as much heat and transport as possible. We should produce electricity, at a very minimum, to a level to satisfy peak demand of electricity with excess of demand

converted to green hydrogen via electrolysis. The energy resource is of such a scale that we will export; but do we export electrons or molecules? Do we export electricity via high voltage direct current (HVDC) cables to the UK and Europe? Do we export hydrogen by pipeline as a gas, or in liquified form by ship?

There is a huge demand in Europe (exasperated by the war in Ukraine) for natural gas (CH_4) and, due to the climate emergency, there is a particular demand for renewable hydrogen molecules. Natural gas (CH_4) is used to produce ammonia (NH_3), which had a worldwide production of 150 million tonnes in 2021, and methanol (CH_3OH) with worldwide production of 110 million tonnes in 2021. If we wish to maximise value to Ireland, should we not create new industry in Ireland? We used to produce ammonia in Cork until 2002; could we now produce green ammonia to help in decarbonisation of agriculture. We used to produce steel in Cork until 2001; we could produce green steel in a process which replaces coal with hydrogen. We could produce methanol as a decarbonised shipping fuel. This would further involve capture of CO_2 from our industries, in particular biogenic CO_2 from our extensive food and beverage industry. We could utilise CO_2 separated from methane associated with our targeted 7.5 TWh biomethane industry.

MaREI will research pathways to use the power of our ocean winds for the betterment of society. We will co-design with industry and communities, the science needed to inform policy for large scale electrification of energy, and the evidence needed to assess optimum uses of hydrogen in circular economy, energy, and environmental systems to create sustainable transport fuels (for ships, trucks and planes) and chemicals (such as ammonia, methanol) and maximise value to Ireland.



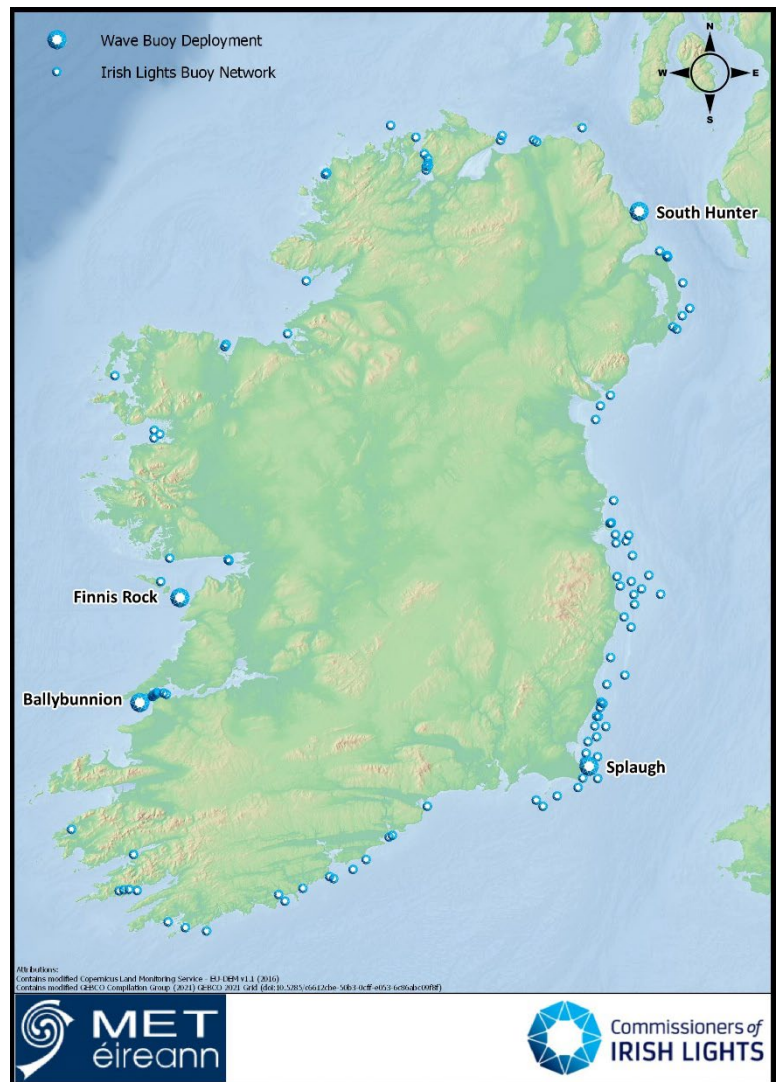
Lighting the Way for Safer Seas/Navigating the Stormy Seas/Weather

Met Éireann and Irish Lights are undertaking a joint collaboration that will enhance our understanding of Irish Coastal Waters, with the aim of improving safety for coastal inhabitants and mariners.

Safety of Irish citizens has been at the heart of Irish Lights and Met Éireann since their establishment. The seas and ocean that surround Ireland are changing due to the impact of climate change and both organizations are adapting by developing new additional services. In line with the government's Climate Action Plan and The Status of Ireland's Climate Report 2020, a better understanding of the coastal waters of Ireland, North and South is needed including the wave conditions around the coast.

The trial project started in 2020 and has involved adapting existing navigation buoys operated by Irish Lights with new wave sensors, providing quality controlled near-real-time meteorological and hydrographic data for the benefit of stakeholders in coastal areas.

The data from Irish Lights navigation buoys will be used by Met Éireann's Flood Forecasting Division to develop coastal predictive modelling systems for tidal, storm surge and wave forecasting for Ireland. The acquisition of near-real-time data will prove beneficial to the Flood Forecasting Division before, during and after coastal



flood events. This meteorological and hydrographic information provided by Irish Lights will support stakeholders to make impact-based decisions and take actions that protect against the loss of life and to mitigate against damage to property and the environment.

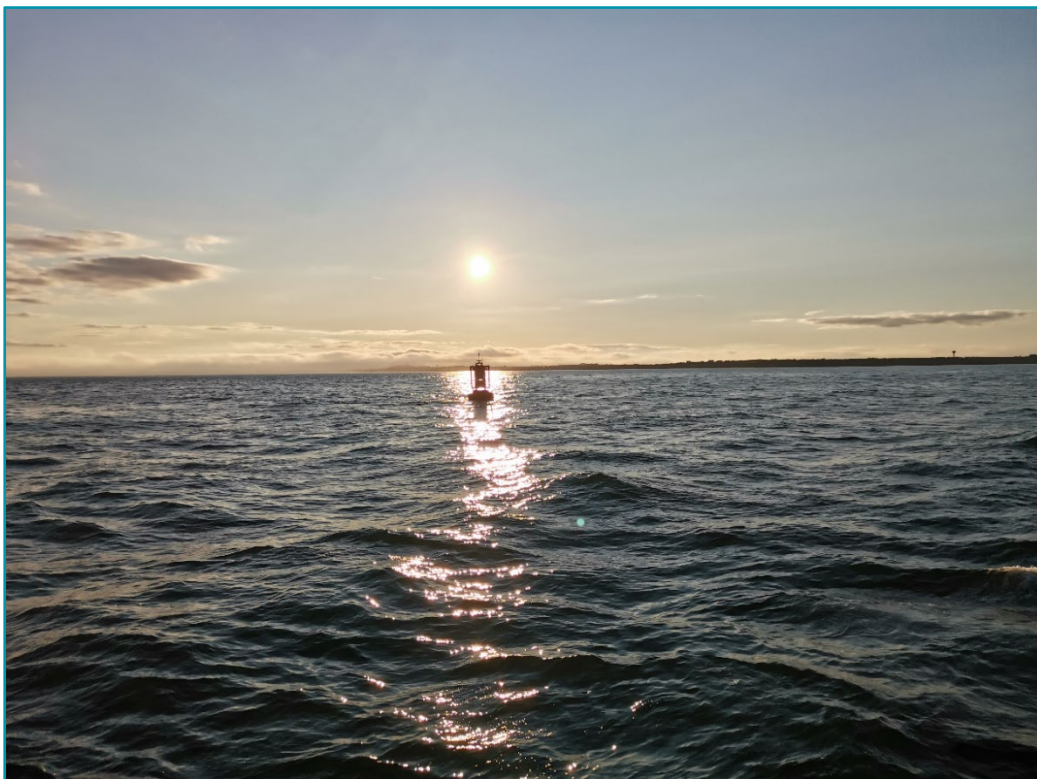
The four Irish Lights Wave buoys which are part of the trial are Ballybunnion buoy (Shannon Estuary), Finnis buoy (Galway Bay), South Hunter buoy (Larne) and Splaugh buoy (Rosslare).

At present this data is openly available in near real-time at the following websites:

- Met Éireann - <https://www.met.ie/forecasts/marine-inland-lakes/buoys>
- Irish Lights - <https://www.irishlights.ie/technology-data-services/metocean-charts.aspx>

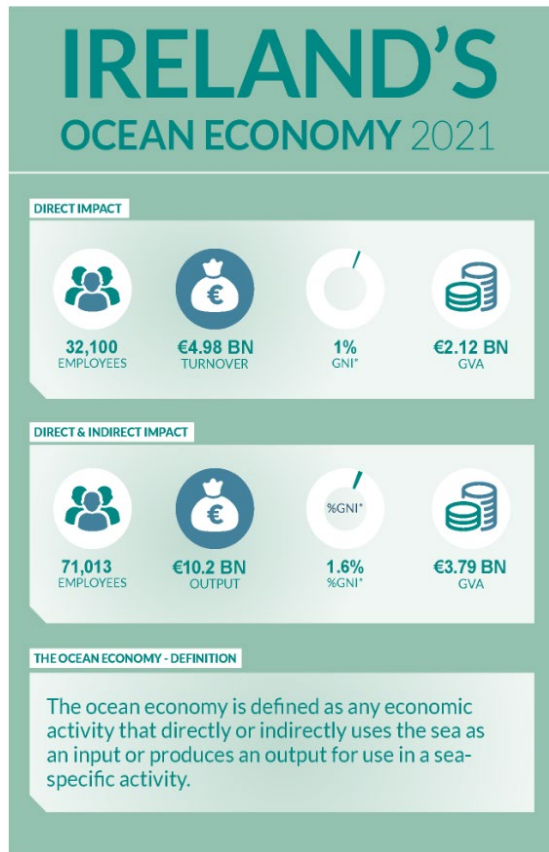
The near real-time wave data will provide current wave conditions at deployment locations to end-users.

If successful, we would hope to expand this project to other coastal sites, further enhancing our understanding of the seas and coasts around the island of Ireland and continuing to improve the safety of our coastal and marine areas.



Ireland's Ocean Economy Report Published

December 2022 saw the Marine Institute in partnership with the University of Galway's Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit (SEMRU) release the latest update on the performance of Ireland's Ocean Economy.



The report provides an update on Ireland's ocean economy across three main economic indicators: turnover, gross value added (GVA) and employment, and provides an analysis of trends over the last five years. The update shows that Ireland's ocean economy in 2021 had a turnover of €4.98 billion, with a direct economic contribution, as measured by GVA, of €2.1 billion. Taking into account indirect GVA generated from ocean related activity in Ireland total GVA is €3.8bn, representing 1.6% of national output. Brexit effects on trade and fisheries as well as the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly on marine tourism and the international cruise industry

meant a significant reduction in ocean economy output value in 2020.

Commenting on the results, co-author Prof Stephen Hynes, Director of SEMRU at the University of Galway stated, "The latest figures demonstrate that it has been a very turbulent period for Ireland's ocean economy in the two years since the publication of the last report in the series. Against the backdrop of the immense challenges that have faced the sector we have seen a rebound in terms of output and employment in 2021. It continues to be a period of transition for Ireland's ocean economy as the marine industries innovate in the face of new policies and measures aimed at dealing with the impacts of the climate and biodiversity crises."

Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Charlie McConalogue TD, said, "I am delighted to receive this latest SEMRU (University of Galway) and Marine Institute

report on Ireland's Ocean Economy, which provides such useful data on the value of our marine industries and sectors. The marine sector and the employment it provides in crucial areas such as Ireland's fisheries and seafood sector, under my own area of Ministerial responsibility, are crucially important contributors in maintaining the viability of our coastal communities. This interesting and timely report demonstrates that the marine sector as a whole has experienced significant challenges over recent years in common with international trends but is now slowly recovering. It will be particularly interesting to see if the current trends continue into 2023 and future years. We look forward to the next report and hopefully to a resurgent and vibrant marine sector both here in Ireland and internationally."

The report also reviews demographic change in Ireland's coastal economy, as well as highlighting developments in marine natural capital accounting. Natural capital accounting/ecosystem accounting views nature and ecosystems as assets, which provide a stream of ecosystem service benefits to society. The report highlights the importance of healthy marine ecosystem services to the ocean economy industries and Irish society more widely. In doing so it discusses the latest advancements in ocean environmental and economic accounting and how the Marine Institute and the University of Galway, in partnership with the CSO, are in the process of developing such accounts for Ireland.

Welcoming the report, Dr Paul Connolly, CEO of the Marine Institute said, "The ever-growing demand for more integrated advice and services has seen an increasing demand for economic data and evidence that will support the state's governance of our maritime area. This work, carried out in partnership with University of Galway, and other state organisations such as the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), is delivering a robust analytical framework to inform marine and maritime policies and planning, delivering a more equitable and sustainable ocean and coastal economies."

Ireland's Ocean Economy Report 2022
is available on the Marine Institute's
website at www.marine.ie



Marine Institute
Foras na Mara

A View from Europe



Eoin Leahy

Maritime Affairs Attaché

As summer gave way to autumn, the pace in Brussels picked up after the summer recess as the Czech Presidency set about its agenda. On the Integrated Maritime Policy side, our focus was on developing Council Conclusions on International Ocean

Governance, which went through many rounds of negotiation, trying to strike a balance between high ambition and what was achievable across the differing views of 27 member states. Topics such as deep-sea mining were the main area of contention and it is something we are likely to hear more of in the coming years.

At home in Ireland, I was delighted to attend the naming ceremony for the Marine Institute's new Research ship, the RV Tom Crean in Dingle in early October.

Ministers McConalogue and Foley attended and it was a great opportunity to see our maritime community come together for such a positive occasion.

The other good news that week in October was the announcement from the European Commission that Ireland's bid to host European Maritime Day in 2025 was successful. This will be another opportunity to showcase the best of Maritime Ireland so expect much more information on this and a call to get involved in the coming months.

During the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon in June, I learned of a state visit from Portugal to Ireland. Given our close maritime ties with Portugal, I was keen to get a Maritime element on the agenda for this visit. Through the Irish Embassy in Lisbon, DFA and the Marine Institute, we were able to secure this with the Tom Crean paying its first visit to Dublin to receive some very important guests! President De Sousa from Portugal and President Higgins were welcomed on board by Minister McConalogue for a tour of the ship and lunch followed by an informal exchange on Maritime topics of mutual interest.

After this busy month, the focus then turned to planning a high-level launch of the Atlantic Arctic Lighthouse of the Mission Ocean under Horizon Europe. We had

secured this important EU Commission event for Ireland, which was held over three days in the National Maritime College in Cork in late November. There were two days of side events, which focused on citizen engagement, and demonstrations of how the Mission could work in practice. There were also important signatures to the Mission Charter such as the City of Cork becoming the first city in the Atlantic to sign the Mission Charter along with Marine Institute, Fair Seas, The Ocean Race, The Tara Foundation and others. This led into the high-level segment on the last day, which was attended by President Higgins, Deputy DG of DG Mare Kestutis Sadauskas, Pascal Lamy - former Commissioner and DG of WTO, Lord Mayors, Ambassadors and senior maritime leaders from home and across the EU.

The following week saw me moving south to Cadiz for the Atlantic Strategy annual stakeholder platform conference. This event is the highlight event for the Atlantic Strategy where we discuss all things Maritime and Blue Economy, hear from the pillar coordinators on the 4 key thematic areas, plan for 2023 and host an awards ceremony for the outstanding projects under this strategy across the sea basin. It was also a good networking event to meet counter parts. Portugal has now taken over the chair for 2023 and has a busy year planned, with a Ministerial level event on the cards for October in Porto.

To round off the travel for 2022, the Czech Presidency invited us to Prague for the final EU Maritime Security Strategy meeting of the year where we focused on brain storming for the impending update of the EUMSS this year. A visit to the EU Space Agency HQ was a highlight on this trip.

Now that I'm back in Brussels after Christmas, planning is underway for 2023. The main key topics are European Maritime Day planning, hosting a national coordination meeting on the Atlantic Strategy, the update of the EUMSS, a possible new EU regulation on Ocean Observation, planning for the Our Ocean Conference in Panama in March, working to ensure Ireland as a key stakeholder in the Mission Ocean, discussions on a new Atlantic Cooperation Initiative that the US has launched, a bilateral meeting with the Commission in Ireland on Maritime Surveillance as well as the other unexpected items that come across my desk reflecting this interdepartmental role here in Brussels.

Thirty-Five Fishers Attend BIM/RNLI Man Overboard Sessions in Donegal

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, in partnership with the RNLI, welcomed 35 fishers to Man Overboard sessions in the Errigal Training Centre, Falcarragh, Co. Donegal at the end of January 2023. The sessions are designed to provide fishers with the experience of falling into cold sea conditions, wearing full work clothing and



Ben McBride, McBride Fishing, Garvan Meehan, BIM National Fisheries College Greencastle, Principal, and Frankie Horne, Instructor, RNLI.

without their Personal Floatation Device (PFD), or lifejacket as they are commonly known. This is then followed by the same experience with a correctly fitted PFD.

Although the conditions are controlled and undertaken under the watchful eye of experienced RNLI trainers, they provide a realistic experience, simulating the impact of how work clothing, oilskins, and boots affect a person's buoyancy, coupled with challenging sea conditions. The sessions also underpin the importance of having and following your Man Overboard recovery plan.

Peter McBride of the family-run, Mc Bride Fishing company had a number of crew attending the session and has urged as many fishers as possible to undertake this experience.

"McBride Fishing has three state of the art vessels that allow us to supply crab all year round to our markets. This often means fishing in difficult sea conditions and the safety of our skippers and crew is of paramount importance to us. Wearing a correctly fitted PFD and knowing what to do if someone accidentally hits the water are vital to avoiding loss of life. These sessions allow fishers to experience the shock

of striking cold water, unsupported by their PFD's and to realise how limited their chance of survival might be if this situation was real."

BIM's Skills Development Director, Ian Mannix, said:

"Having participated in this class myself recently, it really brought home the extreme difference wearing a PFD makes. Without a doubt, it is essential for surviving at sea. We are delighted to be able to partner with the RNLI in delivering these classes free of charge to Irish Fishers. Both BIM and the RNLI have a shared goal of a safety at sea. The experience compliments and builds upon the existing mandatory three-day Safety Training offered by BIM in both its National Fisheries Colleges in Donegal and Cork and our two mobile coastal training units."

Frankie Horne, Fishing Safety Manager, RNLI, delivers the course and he said:

"As fishers, one of the most important things we can do is be prepared for an 'Accidental Immersion' whereby we unintentionally end up in the water. RNLI data analysis shows that most Fishing Fatalities from accident immersion are because we cannot stay afloat or be recovered in time. 109 fishers lost their lives in Irish and UK waters between 2008 and 2017, going about their daily work. Of these, 47 fatalities were a result of accidental Immersion, Man Overboard (MOB). When you go overboard. Capable people, become incapable very quickly. Be Rigged and Ready."

Potential participants must have their BIM Mandatory Safety Training completed and be over 16 years of age.

To register your interest contact:

Lisa Hollingum

E: Lisa_Hollingum@rnli.org.uk

M: +353 87 1138126

More information can be found at:

<https://bim.ie/news/manoverboard-bim-rnli/>

www.rnli.org/manoverboard



Ben McBride of McBride Fishing exits the pool after his man overboard session

Coastwatch Celebrates World Wetlands Day – 2nd Feb 2023



Coastwatch's programme of events on World Wetlands Day being officially opened

A fabulous programme of events was organised recently by Coastwatch in the County Hall of Wexford County Council to mark World Wetlands Day.

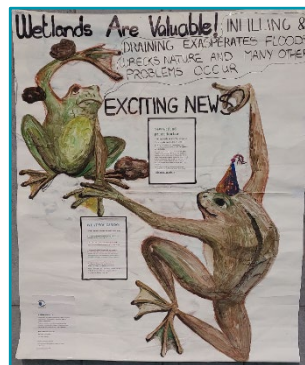
Karin Dubsy and team organised a number of speakers which included a Keynote address by Dr. Tobias Salathé, Senior Advisor to the Ramsar Convention - an intergovernmental treaty which provides framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and its resources.

Officially launched by HE Thomas Nader, Austrian Ambassador, other speakers were:

- Nóirín Cummins, Manager Rosslare Municipal District
- Cllr Jim Moorehouse, Rosslare Municipal District
- Karin Dubsy, Coastwatch
- Tom Enright, CEO Wexford County Council
- Brian Trench, Science Communicator/Author
- Jana Cox MSc, Coastal Sediment Transport PhD Candidate, Utrecht University

- Karina Fitzgerald, Marine Planning, Dept. of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
- Conall O'Connor, Marine Environment, Dept. of Housing, Local Government & Heritage
- Gerry Forde, Senior Engineer, Environment Section, Wexford County Council
- Kathleen Kinsella, Coastal Farmer, Bannow Bay Ramsar site
- Eamonn Hore, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Services, Wexford County Council.

Following the speeches, patrons were treated to a trip to notable wetlands areas in Wexford before returning and enjoying the extremely informative exhibition, which incidentally is going on the move. Any hosts interested in highlighting their own issues in a similar future exhibition are welcome to contact Coastwatch.



For more information on Coastwatch, go to www.coastwatch.org

Concluding Note From MPPL

We Welcome Your Input!!!

We continue to receive a positive reaction to our new quarterly publication and so again from all of us here in the Marine Planning, Policy & Legislation team, we thank you for taking the time to contact us and providing us with your feedback.

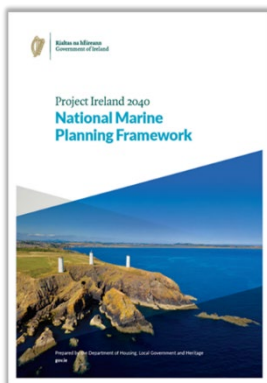
If you have any more feedback or indeed any articles you would like to contribute, please contact us at mpp@housing.gov.ie.

Another newsletter will issue in early Summer 2023.

Have You Any Marine-Related Photos?

We at MPPL are always interested in marine-related photography, so please feel free to submit your marine photos to us and we will feature the best ones in future editions and make sure your name appears with them. Send them on to mpp@housing.gov.ie

NMPF Copies Still Available



Our National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) is still available. The NMPF is Ireland's first national framework for managing marine activities and outlines the Government's vision for how we want to use, protect and enjoy our seas in the years up to 2040.

The NMPF and all relevant details of its development history can be viewed at this link:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a4a9a-national-marine-planning-framework/>

Should you wish to acquire a hard copy of the NMPF, please email mpp@housing.gov.ie and we will be happy to post one out to you.

Requests for a copy of the NMPF “**as Gaeilge**” will also be facilitated.

- The Marine Planning Policy and Legislation Team

For more updates or info, go to www.marineplan.ie

gov.ie/housing

The Department of
Housing, Local Government and Heritage



Rialtas na hÉireann
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