



Offshore Wind Action Plan 2026

How Ireland can accelerate
offshore wind delivery



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Introduction

One year ago, Wind Energy Ireland (WEI) published the first edition of Ireland's *Offshore Wind Action Plan*, setting out the steps needed to accelerate the delivery of offshore wind energy and ensure Irish families and businesses can get the clean, affordable and secure power they need.

Events over the past year have only reinforced the importance of energy independence for a country like Ireland, which remains highly exposed to volatile fossil fuel markets and growing geopolitical uncertainty.

Progress

There has been progress over the past 12 months, and there is no doubt about the Government's commitment to the delivery of offshore wind energy. However, while there have been improvements across several key policy areas, uncertainty remains around the State's ability to translate ambition into delivery.

The Taoiseach's Offshore Wind Clearing House has given a sense of real momentum but persistent challenges remain in ensuring commitments become tangible actions.

Whole-of-Government Approach

We need a concerted and joined-up effort right across the policy system to enable the first phase of projects to be built and energised in the early 2030s.

Ireland is attempting – in the space of half a generation – to radically and permanently transform our entire energy system from how we generate electricity, to how we move and store it, to how we use it.

Achieving this transformation cannot rest with one single department or group of policymakers, no matter how committed they might be.

It requires sustained support across Government and the wider State system to ensure that every available resource is aligned behind a single overriding objective: The energy independence of our country.

Offshore wind and energy independence

This updated *Offshore Wind Action Plan* for 2026 builds on the original actions identified last year while reflecting the evolving nature of the offshore wind sector and the increasingly complex geopolitical environment in which projects are being delivered.

It highlights the key successes achieved over the past 12 months and sets out a series of actions which will strengthen Ireland's efforts to accelerate offshore wind delivery in the years ahead.

Key successes of the last 12 months

While the pace of delivery for offshore wind can at times be frustrating it is important to recognise the progress and the achievements of the last 12 months. These include:

- The Taoiseach established the **Offshore Wind Clearing House** to focus on the delivery of the five east-coast Phase One projects. This has already had an impact in tackling longstanding roadblocks in planning and grid policy.
- The Phase One projects continue to move through the planning system and we expect to see the **first planning decisions** in Q3 and Q4 of this year.
- We had a successful and competitive auction for the 900 MW **Tonn Nua** site off the coast of Waterford and the project has already been awarded its Maritime Area Consent.
- Work is well underway to develop the **new national map of future offshore wind** energy projects aiming to deliver by 2040 and feedback from industry on the process so far is very positive.
- Record investment has been committed in Ireland's **electricity grid** which has the potential to ensure consumers get the full benefit from the development of offshore wind energy.
- The **Accelerating Infrastructure Taskforce** was established, leading to the publication of the Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plan, along with the Critical Infrastructure Bill.
- The Large Energy User connection policy from the CRU and the **Large Energy User Action Plan (LEAP)** from the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment (DETE) were both published – giving greater certainty for industry around Ireland.
- The final progress report was released on **Powering Prosperity**, Ireland's offshore wind industrial strategy, to be followed by a broader, more holistic, Green Growth Industrial Strategy later this year.



Four Key Pillars

Our Offshore Wind Action Plan identifies four key pillars.



1. Deliver the Phase One Projects



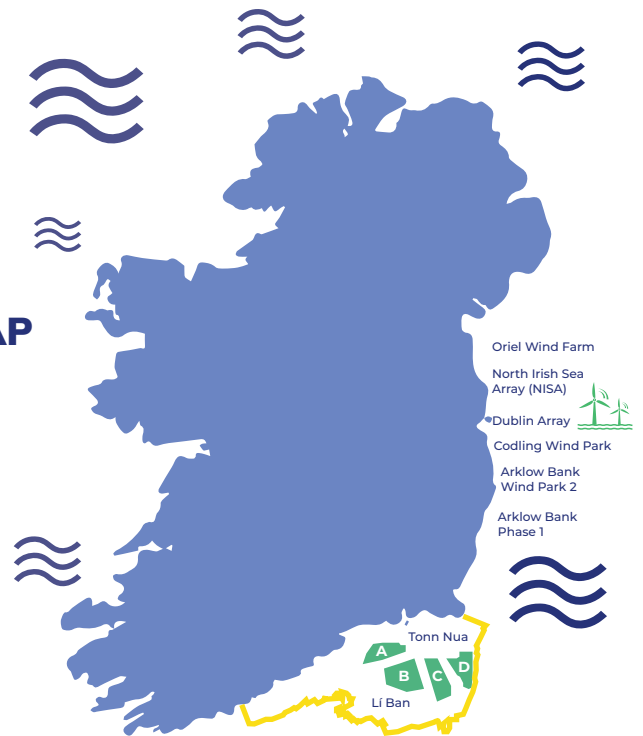
2. Maximise the South Coast DMAP



3. Enable our Industry's Future – the National DMAP Process



4. Build the Enablers



These four pillars are the right strategic framework for Ireland's offshore wind ambitions and reflect the key priorities required to deliver a successful offshore wind sector.

The following sections will explore what has been achieved under each of these pillars and conclude with a set of updated priority actions for 2026.



1. Deliver the Phase One Projects

Without the delivery of the five east-coast Phase One offshore wind projects, there is no offshore wind industry in Ireland.

Every effort must be made to strategically and actively support these projects at each step of the way until turbines are in the water and exporting clean, affordable, electricity to Irish consumers.

The establishment by An Taoiseach of the **Offshore Wind Energy Clearing House** has focused specifically on tackling critical issues with the Phase One projects by engaging relevant departments and State agencies.

This has included proactive engagement on grid contracts, planning policy challenges and licensing for projects.

All five Phase One projects are in the planning system and have received substantial Further Information Requests. All

projects have either already responded or will respond to these requests in 2026.

Therefore, we expect we will see planning decisions for at least two of the Phase One projects by the end of 2026.

This would be a major milestone for the Irish offshore wind market, enabling these projects to move into construction as we approach 2030. Critical to this will be the undeterred commitment from An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) to ensure decision timelines for these projects are met.

Even with these positive steps over recent months, we cannot take the foot off the pedal. It is imperative that we continue to work across Government and industry, through the Clearing House, Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce, and wider forums with all relevant stakeholders to remove barriers to delivery and see these projects safely built and operational.

Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Delivery date
The Clearing House and Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce must maintain consistency and frequency of engagement as the key mechanisms to support project delivery.	Clearing House: Department of Taoiseach Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce: DCEE	Clearing House: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DCEE - WEI and Phase One Projects - All relevant Government departments and State bodies OWDT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WEI and Phase One Projects - All relevant Government departments and State bodies 	Ongoing
An Coimisiún Pleanála to deliver on commitment to planning decision timelines, with first consents delivered from September 2026 onwards.	An Coimisiún Pleanála	DHLGH DCEE	Q3 2026
Ongoing proactive engagement and collaboration between Phase One projects, EirGrid and the CRU to agree and finalise all grid agreements and specifications.	EirGrid CRU	Phase One Projects	Q4 2026
Government must actively engage with the Seafood and ORE sectors to deliver and support a robust National Framework Agreement between the fishing and ORE industries which will enable both industries to thrive.	DCEE DAFM	WEI Seafood representatives	Q2 2026
All relevant Government departments and State agencies to work with industry to publish, support and deliver the National Safety Implementation Roadmap for Offshore Wind in Ireland.	WEI	All relevant Government departments and State bodies	Q3 2026

2. Maximise the South Coast DMAP

The South Coast DMAP (SC-DMAP) was formally adopted in October 2024, following an extensive, transparent and very positive public consultation and stakeholder engagement process by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE) over an 18-month period. This culminated in a competitive auction for the Tonn Nua site in November 2025.

However, there remains no definitive plan for how the remaining sites will be progressed and there is no clarity on grid capacity in the region beyond the 900 MW commitment for Tonn Nua.

Lí Ban

While recent indications point to the Lí Ban site being progressed via a CfD auction, like Tonn Nua, work is still ongoing to set out the specific approach for the auction and grid connection.

In late 2025 WEI worked with our members to consider several options for how to progress Lí Ban, assessing the merits and challenges of each, and identifying the range of dependencies required for those options to be viable.

The outcome of EirGrid's south coast grid options assessment is the key to unlock the Lí Ban site.

Before a final decision is made EirGrid and DCEE must engage with industry at the optioneering stage, to discuss the various options, timelines and associated costs which have been identified.

Our members need to understand what may, or may not, be possible to ensure the most viable and workable option is selected.

A decision must be made in the first half of 2026 to provide visibility to the market on credible pipeline opportunities, while not hindering the development of ongoing projects such as the Phase One offshore projects and Tonn Nua, or the parallel progression of the National DMAP.

The critical importance of grid and route-to-market certainty is vital, to understand how the next site will move forward.

Manannán and Danu

Further assessment will be required to consider how best to progress the remaining sites in the SC-DMAP, noting that the Competitive MAC Framework developed by MARA opens up options for how these sites may be progressed.

This will be dependent on grid capacity and opportunities for demand growth in the southeast region more broadly.

Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Delivery date
Hold a workshop between DCEE, EirGrid and industry to discuss optimum route-to-market design for Lí Ban.	DCEE	EirGrid MARA WEI	Q3 2026
To enable an auction for Lí Ban to progress in 2027, commence consultation and engagement on the detailed auction design and terms and conditions in 2026.	DCEE	EirGrid CRU MARA WEI	Q3 2026
EirGrid to share details on the wider grid capacity assessments they have done of the southeast region.	EirGrid	DCEE	Q3 2026
Meaningful engagement between industry and the SC-DMAP Implementation Board to feed into the Implementation Plan and specific workstreams.	DCEE	WEI	Q3 2026

3. Enable our Industry's Future – the National DMAP Process

WEI welcomes the engagement on the development and implementation plans for a National DMAP around Ireland's coastline which will accommodate both fixed and floating offshore wind.

Every effort should continue to be made to expedite the delivery of the National DMAP and industry welcomes every opportunity to engage with DCEE.

We would ask that DCEE facilitate further workshops or similar opportunities for engagement during 2026, to ensure that all appropriate levels of feedback and expertise is provided by the ORE industry, and to allow for effective collaboration ahead of the formal draft plan being published for consultation, expected in early 2027.

We believe that significant lessons have been learned in the SC-DMAP process that should help to frame a more appropriate approach for future offshore planning. In principle, industry supports a plan-led process where Government manages the DMAP and ongoing process (e.g., MAC). Government should also be central to identification and underpinning of route to market opportunities (e.g., ORESS, clustering of energy demand). Industry should have responsibility for obtaining sites through competitive State-

run processes, carrying out relevant surveys and securing planning permissions.

A delivery-oriented development model, which supports projects to achieve Financial Investment Decision, must be adopted by the Government as part of the long-term strategy for offshore wind in Ireland.

To achieve this, we need to change our approach to ensure that a MAC and development permission come **in advance of ORESS** or alternative routes to market. This delivery-oriented model can take place in perfect complement to the plan-led marine spatial planning model. It is simply an adjustment to the sequencing of the development steps.

The National DMAP is expected to include the identification of at least two sites for floating wind demonstration. It will be important that a clear plan is produced to facilitate this commitment, in consultation with industry.

When initial sites have been identified for both fixed and floating wind, these should be shared with industry. To maximise delivery of the sites identified, it will be important to ensure a robust delivery plan is developed in parallel to the spatial plan.

Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Delivery date
Proactive ongoing engagement with ORE industry ahead of draft DMAP publication – share indicative sites for fixed and floating wind with industry for review.	DCEE	WEI	Q4 2026
Use the existing joint Future Framework forum to develop a delivery plan for the N-DMAP sites alongside the spatial plan.	DCEE	DETE DoT EirGrid IDA WEI	Q3 2026
Government and industry to work together to agree and develop a dedicated plan to progress floating wind demonstration sites.	DCEE	DETE WEI	Q1 2027







4. Build the Enablers

Demand – Who are the customers?

To maximise the SC-DMAP, WEI have previously recommended that DETE create a specific 1 GW+ demand strategy for the southeast region to create customers for sites B-D of the SC-DMAP.

This action is still required and should be done in partnership with the IDA and other relevant stakeholders. This will be critical to maximise the benefit to Ireland of the energy from the SC-DMAP sites and to provide tangible opportunities to develop the remaining sites of the SC-DMAP. This action would be a natural next step following the publication of the Large Energy User Action Plan in early 2026 and the Large Energy User connection policy at the end of 2025.

With respect to the National DMAP, once initial areas of potential development for offshore wind are identified in the process during 2026, DETE, IDA and other key stakeholders must progress similar **GW-scale coastal Green Energy Park demand strategies across multiple regions, to complement these offshore wind sites.**

Consideration should also be given to longer-term export opportunities, once domestic demand has been maximised.

Grid – Reaching these customers

WEI recommend that identification of customers, and reaching these customers, should take place in tandem with the site selection process for offshore wind projects. This should feed into the spatial planning process to ensure offshore wind plans are aligned with a strategic grid design for Ireland or are export oriented projects.

Clarity is urgently required on EirGrid's proposed future Strategic Network Plan and how this will ultimately feed into long-term grid capacity building to support increased renewable energy generation and to facilitate new electricity demand growth, which in turn become future offtake options for offshore wind.

Overall, a clear and coherent plan needs to be put in place for Ireland which considers interconnection, offshore grid, private wires and a plan-led approach to developing new industrial centres which will utilise Ireland's offshore wind development. **This plan must be co-developed alongside DCEE, DETE and industry.**

Ports – Building the projects

For several years WEI have been stressing the need for an updated National Ports Policy and to see **strategic investment going into port infrastructure to ensure ports are ready to build out and maintain offshore wind farms off Irish coasts.**

Consultation on this revised policy has been significantly delayed, and it remains unclear what amendments will be made to the final policy for investment options to support viable port business cases. While there have been very positive announcements for a number of port sites across the island of Ireland, including port upgrades underway at the Port of Cork and Belfast Harbour, there currently remains limited appropriate infrastructure to build offshore wind.

Port capacity is an acute hurdle for expanding offshore wind build out across Europe. By 2029 it is expected that the planned rate of offshore wind installation will outstrip port capacity, even taking new expansion plans into account.

If there are no Irish ports which can support offshore wind requirements in time, it is now becoming a very real possibility that ports outside of Ireland will not be able to accommodate Irish projects either.

It is therefore imperative that the expansion of at least two Irish ports is prioritised, with consideration for both fixed and floating wind. The prioritisation should accelerate and secure the necessary licences to move through the planning system and onto construction. We risk the loss considerable economic benefits to the State from offshore wind if we do not.

Enabling Ireland's Supply Chain & Workforce

Ireland's offshore wind ambitions present a key opportunity to build a resilient and competitive domestic supply chain and workforce. To maximise the economic benefit to Ireland and to ensure timely project delivery, the State must prioritise policies which enable Irish enterprises to participate across the full offshore wind lifecycle.

Actions set out in *Powering Prosperity* have, very positively, led to the establishment by Enterprise Ireland of Propel Ireland. This will focus on accelerating offshore wind innovation and supply chain development, working to position Irish companies to capitalise on significant domestic and international opportunities.

The Skillnet Offshore Wind Academy (SOWA) plays a critical role in supporting training and workforce development for Ireland's offshore wind industry. As Ireland continues to accelerate the development of its offshore wind sector, ensuring we have a skilled and future-ready workforce is critical to delivering on our national ambitions.

Key Government policies have set out commitments to provide more upskilling and training opportunities which will support new entrants to consider careers in offshore wind. To achieve these commitments requires targeted funding to be built into annual Government budgets to ensure that these skills development opportunities can be designed, developed and delivered.

Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Delivery date
Prioritise the development and implementation of a 1 GW+ demand strategy for the southeast region to provide a viable route to market for offshore wind, including a detailed plan from EirGrid for a southeast renewable energy hub.	DETE	IDA EirGrid DCEE WEI	Q4 2026
This should be followed by the development of GW-scale Green Energy Park demand strategies across multiple regions (aligned to the National DMAP), which should complement EirGrid's wider and long-term grid capacity building studies, build on the large energy user action plan and the IDA's strategy for next generation sites.	DETE	IDA EirGrid DCEE WEI	Q3 2027
EirGrid's Strategic Network Plan should be consulted on and finalised as a clear national priority.	EirGrid	CRU WEI	Q4 2026
Finalise the National Ports Policy, following consultation, enabling State investment into ports to support credible and robust business cases for offshore wind delivery and maintenance.	DoT	IMDO DCEE DETE WEI	Q4 2026
Government to ensure appropriate funding is allocated to the Skillnet Offshore Wind Academy to design, develop and deliver the necessary training and upskilling to attract new entrants into the industry.	DFHERIS	Skillnet Ireland WEI	Q4 2026
Industry to work closely with Enterprise Ireland and DETE on the development of supply chain initiatives and supports through Propel Ireland.	Enterprise Ireland WEI	DETE IDA	Q4 2026



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