



# Offshore Wind Action Plan

How Ireland can accelerate  
offshore wind delivery



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# Introduction

The Irish Government's longer-term plans for offshore wind energy are at serious risk.

There is no foresight of opportunities beyond the Phase One projects and the 900 MW ORESS Tonn Nua project, which is creating a fog around the future of the Irish offshore wind market. It is also abundantly clear now that Ireland will not meet its initial target to have 5 GW of offshore wind deployed and connected to the electricity grid by 2030.

## Building Irish offshore wind

Without the undeterred commitment by both industry and Government to see these initial projects realised, there remains no offshore wind industry in Ireland.

Clarity and certainty are needed on timelines to facilitate and de-risk longer-term investment decisions that will be required to maintain Ireland's competitiveness in the global offshore wind market.

A roadmap containing consistent future development opportunities, to follow the initial projects, must be clearly set out. A stop-start approach, shifting Government policy and continuous periods of peaks and troughs will not attract consistent investment and commitment to the Irish market.

## Significant progress made

We must acknowledge that considerable progress has been made by our Government over the previous 3 years, with the first offshore auction held in 2023 awarding over 3 GW of new offshore wind capacity and plans for a second auction later in 2025, the development of Ireland's first sub-national marine spatial plan for

offshore wind which identified 4 sites off the South Coast of Ireland for future offshore wind development, and the publication of an Industrial Strategy and Future Framework policy to support the long-term development of the industry in Ireland.

However, it is also true that developing the policies is not enough, it's the follow through and timely delivery of actions as approved and set out in these policies that is paramount. In many cases the relevant Government departments and State agencies responsible for enabling the development of offshore wind energy remain severely short of staff and resources.

But this does not change the fact that we continue to lose time and that, today, we are less than 5 years away from 2030 and still have no new offshore wind projects being built off our coastline.

## Ambition to deliver

We can – and will – develop offshore wind farms, but it's increasingly unlikely that will happen before the end of this decade. If we want to have a chance in the early 2030s to deploy and scale up to meet our 20 GW target for 2040, increase our energy security, reduce our carbon emissions, and provide affordable and competitively-priced energy to the citizens and businesses of Ireland and further afield, that will depend on what our political leaders – both in Government and in Opposition – do now, as we reach ever closer to 2030.

Wind Energy Ireland have identified four key areas which must be prioritised across Government and industry alike, and have identified what needs to be done, by whom and by when to support the development of the offshore wind pipeline and provide long-term consistency, certainty and market stability.

# Summary of Actions

#	Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Target Date
1	Roundtable discussion on WEI Offshore Wind Action Plan following publication. To include representatives from DECC, DETE, MARA, and EirGrid	WEI	DECC, DETE, MARA, EirGrid	Q2 2025
<b>Deliver the Phase One Projects</b>				
2	A dedicated roundtable workshop is required between the Phase One projects, EirGrid, the CRU and DECC to improve ongoing negotiations related to grid contracts and proactively agree on appropriate steps to progress towards a workable grid regime.	DECC	EirGrid, CRU, Phase One Directors	Q2 2025
3	The dedicated Phase One Forum which was established under the Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce (OWDT) needs improved strategic direction, not just to highlight key issues facing the projects delivery, but to collectively agree the solutions and tangible actions which are to be delivered, who is responsible, and a dedicated timeline for when this must be met.	DECC		Q3 2025 - Ongoing
4	All relevant Government departments and agencies with a role to play in supporting the delivery of the projects must be required to attend and participate in the Phase One Forum and wider Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce, with the appropriate level of seniority.	Taoiseach's Office	DECC	Q3 2025 - Ongoing
5	A gap analysis should be done on all agencies engaged in the planning process for offshore wind projects to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the ongoing engagement required on these applications.	Taoiseach's Office	DECC, DHLGH, ABP	Q3 2025
<b>Maximise the South Coast DMAP</b>				
6	Hold a full-day, in-person, joint workshop between DECC, EirGrid, the CRU and the offshore wind industry to understand the full suite of pre-auction material for ORESS Tonn Nua, improve clarity on data made available by State bodies and to implement the necessary arrangements to facilitate completion of the auction in 2025. Following this, a four-person joint industry, DECC, EirGrid and CRU committee should meet weekly to track progress and to report directly to the Minister.	DECC	EirGrid, CRU and WEI	Q2 2025
7	Options must be considered for how to progress sites B-D in the SC-DMAP. The critical importance of grid and route-to-market certainty is vital. The SC-DMAP Implementation Board and associated plan must be in place to progress development of these sites.	DECC	EirGrid, DETE, MARA	Q3 2025
8	Options for grid capacity for a project of at least 1 GW must be provided for Site B. EirGrid's ongoing capacity studies for the southeast must be delivered as a matter of priority and clear timelines for conclusion of this work must be communicated to industry. A suitable competitive process should be designed accordingly. (Linked to Action 20)	EirGrid	DECC, DETE	Q4 2025
9	Clarity will be required from DECC on the ORESS State Aid extension timelines to understand whether it is possible to facilitate a further auction through the existing scheme.	DECC		Q2 2025
10	Progress must be made on the design and development of the Competitive Maritime Area Consent (MAC) Framework with MARA for sites C&D. This should include consultation and agreement of appropriate steps for this process with industry in 2025.	MARA	DECC, WEI	Q4 2025
11	Clarity will also be needed on the specific viable offtake options to progress sites C&D. A dedicated focus group, under the SC-DMAP Implementation Board, should be established, specifically to address route-to-market and grid capacity in the region. This group should include representatives from the offshore wind industry, DECC, DETE and EirGrid.	DECC	DETE, EirGrid, WEI	Q4 2025
12	DECC should obtain State Aid approval for the next RESS process, to fall into place immediately following the deadline date for the existing scheme and any agreed extension (see action 9).	DECC		Q1 2026

#	Action	Responsible	Supporting Stakeholders	Target Date
13	Action should be taken to extend the term of the SC-DMAP as the current 6-year timeframe is not sufficient to ensure development of all sites at current pace of delivery.	DECC		Q4 2025
<b>Enable our Industry's Future – The National DMAP Process</b>				
14	Commence work on the National DMAP immediately and in parallel with development of Sites B-D of the SC-DMAP. This should not deter from progressing the delivery of the Phase One and Tonn Nua projects. Sites identified in the National DMAP with viable offtake options should be facilitated to proceed as soon as possible.	DECC	DPER, EirGrid	Q2 2025
15	Resource Government teams to deliver what is required by the set timelines and create greater efficiencies to expedite the DMAP process, taking lessons learned from SC-DMAP experience.	DECC	DPER	Q2 2025 - Ongoing
16	Identify and agree with industry the most appropriate method for allocating sites for future projects.	DECC	MARA	Q3 2026
17	Deliver a strategy for locating future electricity demand in locations which maximise the use and value of the offshore wind sites identified in the National DMAP.	DETE	DECC, EirGrid	Q4 2026
18	Adopt a delivery-oriented development model for offshore wind farms which supports projects on delivering Financial Investment Decisions.	DECC		Q1 2026
19	Produce a clear plan via the National DMAP process to facilitate at least two sites to be developed for floating demonstration.	DECC	DETE, MARA, WEI	Q1 2026
<b>Build the Enablers – Demand, Grid and Ports</b>				
20	Create a 1 GW+ demand strategy for the South-East region to provide a viable route to market potential for sites B-D of the SC-DMAP. This should complement EirGrid's capacity studies in the region, as set out in action 8.	DETE	DETE, MARA, WEI	Q1 2026
21	Progress GW-scale coastal Green Energy Park demand strategies to be rolled out across multiple regions which complement National DMAP identified offshore wind sites.	DETE	IDA, DECC, EirGrid	Q4 2026
22	A clear and coherent grid plan must be put in place within the next 12 months which considers options for interconnection, offshore grid bootstraps, private wires and a plan-led approach to developing new industrial centres which will utilise Ireland's offshore wind development.	EirGrid	DECC, CRU, WEI	Q2 2026
23	Complete consultation and finalise the National Ports Policy to facilitate ports which enable offshore wind farm delivery and maintenance.	DoT		Q3-Q4 2025
24	Prioritise the expansion of at least two Irish ports which facilitate offshore wind. Accelerate and secure the necessary licences, move through the planning system and secure the necessary investments to enable construction.	DPER	DoT, MARA	Q4 2025-Q4 2026











# Four Key Areas

## 1. Deliver the Phase One Projects

Without the delivery of the initial Phase One offshore wind projects, there remains no offshore wind industry in Ireland, which will pose serious risks to Ireland's ability to meet 2030 renewable electricity targets and Government commitments. **Every effort must be made by the Irish Government and relevant State bodies and agencies to strategically and actively support these projects at each step of the way until the turbines are in the water and exporting clean, renewable electricity to consumers.**

The Government has previously stated that the Phase One projects have the full backing of the Irish Government to see these projects delivered, but unfortunately this is not always the reality experienced by the project teams.

While there have been positive steps, such as the projects entering the planning system, lengthy 'Requests for Further Information' (RFIs) were received by some of the projects. While we welcome that An Bord Pleanála has identified the need for ongoing engagement with relevant State agencies to support responses to the RFIs, many

of the concerns set out could have been dealt with and resolved by now had they been raised at pre-planning stage by the relevant bodies or if requested engagements were forthcoming in relation to consultation submissions.

As a consequence of these substantial RFIs, it is likely planning decisions will be delayed, where determinations may not be made until at least 2026, making it extremely difficult for projects to deliver by 2030. Therefore, it will be important to ensure that, as RFIs are responded to by each project, every effort is made to keep individual applications moving through the process.

We expect that issues and delays faced to date with respect to engagement were primarily because of resource deficiencies in the system. We would recommend that a review be conducted immediately to identify gaps across all relevant agencies and a plan be put in place to address this to ensure engagement is better facilitated.

## 2. Maximise the South Coast DMAP

Options must be considered for how to progress sites B-D in the South Coast DMAP (SC-DMAP) to provide visibility to the market on pipeline opportunities, while not hindering the development of ongoing projects such as the Phase One projects and Tonn Nua, or the parallel progression of the National DMAP. **The critical importance of grid and route-to-market certainty is vital.** The SC-DMAP Implementation Board and associated Implementation Plan must be in place to progress development of these sites.

### Tonn Nua

It is essential that Ireland's second offshore auction proceeds as planned in 2025 and awards a contract to build a 900 MW project within Site A – Tonn Nua, of the SC-DMAP.

Considerable work has been underway across Government, with the support of industry, over the past 12+ months to design the Terms and Conditions to facilitate this auction and work with key stakeholders, including EirGrid and the CRU, on the associated grid infrastructure to connect the project.

However, there remains too many uncertainties for the industry in relation to the specific timelines for the auction and numerous delays to provision of critical pre-auction information to support bid preparations. This has made it extremely challenging for offshore wind developers to be able to provide assurances to their shareholders, to engage with the supply chain and to secure necessary investments and approvals to proceed with auction preparations.

### Site B – Lí Ban

WEI believes that Site B of the SC-DMAP – Lí Ban, could be

progressed through an ORESS style competition or through a competitive MAC process.

Which of these is the better option is entirely dependent on how quickly the State can deliver critical information needed to inform the right choice. **The key question that must be answered for this site is the planned grid availability in the region for a project of the scale of 1GW+ from Lí Ban and when would the necessary grid upgrades be in place?**

**Grid capacity studies being carried out by EirGrid in the region should be expedited as a matter of priority.** Clarity will also be required from DECC on the ORESS State Aid extension timelines to understand whether it is possible to facilitate a further auction through the existing scheme.

### Sites C & D – Manannán and Danu

It is WEI's view that Sites C and D of the SC-DMAP – Manannán and Danu - should be progressed through a competitive MAC process with the **specific route-to-market identified at the earliest possible opportunity.** To facilitate this, **progress must be made on the design and development of the Competitive MAC Framework by MARA.**

**Clarity will also be needed on the offtake options – grid, grid-limited or hybrid, non-grid/private wire – this will be dependent on the assessment of grid capacity in the southeast region and policies being developed for offshore grid transmission, private wires and green energy parks or demand growth in the region.**







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

WEI welcome the plans to develop and implement a National DMAP around Ireland's coast (east, south and west) which will **accommodate both fixed and floating offshore wind**.

Providing greater certainty to the market from this process will come with confirmation on the approach to seabed allocation, grid access and defined route-to-market for future projects.

**Every effort should be made to expedite the delivery of a National DMAP. The 3 key factors which should be built into the plan is an emphasis on:**

- 1. Resourcing the Government teams to deliver what is required –** from a financial and personnel point of view, noting the resources deployed to achieve delivery of the initial DMAP for the South Coast and extrapolating that to account for the level of resources that will be needed to deliver the next DMAP at a national scale. Work must commence on the National DMAP immediately and be completed as early in 2027 as possible. It should focus on utilising as much existing data as possible to inform the spatial planning, rather than carrying out additional survey work around the coast. Given the resource requirements, DECC should consider the management of the DMAP process being contracted out to external experts to support timely delivery.
- 2. Identification of method of allocating sites for future projects –** This should include sites for both fixed and floating offshore wind. WEI's recommendation is for this process to be done through a competitive MAC process.

- 3. Outline a complimentary strategy for locating future electricity demand –** to be outsourced to DETE, such as electrification, LEUs, and others in order to maximise the use and value of the offshore wind sites identified in the National DMAP.

**A delivery-oriented development model, which supports projects to achieve Financial Investment Decision, must be adopted by the Irish Government for offshore wind farms beyond ORESS Tonn Nua, and potentially Lí Ban, pending the clarity on grid access.** WEI propose a more appropriate pathway would be 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.

**Work should commence on the development of this National DMAP immediately, identifying sites for both fixed and floating wind, to be progressed in parallel with development of Sites B-D of the SC-DMAP and not deter or take away from progressing delivery of the Phase One and Tonn Nua projects. If sites identified through the National DMAP process have readily accessible grid capacity, they should be enabled to progress as soon as possible.**





## 4. Build the enablers

### Demand – Who are the customers

To maximise the SC-DMAP, WEI recommends that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment **create a 1 GW+ demand strategy for the southeast region** to provide a viable route to market potential for sites B-D of the SC-DMAP. This should be done in partnership with the IDA and other relevant stakeholders. This will be critical to provide tangible opportunities to develop the remaining sites of the SC-DMAP, ensuring credible offtake solutions are in place in advance to stimulate industry interest and secure the necessary investment.

With respect to the National DMAP, once initial areas of potential development for offshore wind are identified in the process during 2026, DETE must progress similar **GW-scale coastal Green Energy Park demand strategies which should be rolled out across multiple regions that complement National DMAP identified 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 net-zero grid design, or are export oriented projects.

Clarity is required on EirGrid's capacity studies for the South-East region, and considerations for project proposals for the Ten-Year Network Development Plan (TYNDP) 2026, and how these pieces of work will impact the SC-DMAP and opportunities to progress sites B-D.

**Overall, a clear and coherent plan needs to be put in place within the next 12 months which considers interconnection, offshore grid bootstraps, private wires and a plan-led approach to developing new industrial centres which will utilise Ireland's offshore wind development.**

### 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.**

While there have been positive announcements for a number of port sites, there remains a lack of appropriate infrastructure to accommodate offshore wind which is readily available.

Port capacity is seen as 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 in a position 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 and move through the planning system and onto construction, or we risk the loss of public buy-in for, and considerable economic benefits to the State, from offshore wind.**









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