



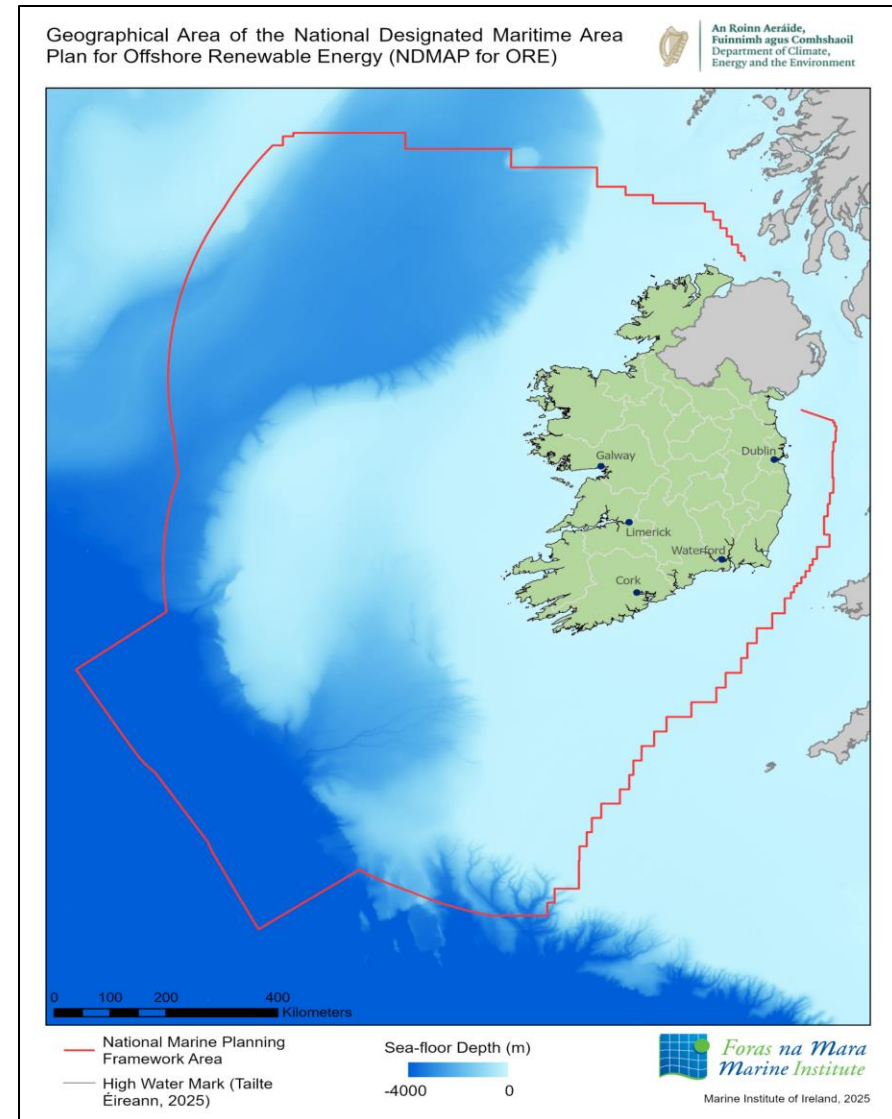
An Roinn Aeráide,
Fuinnimh agus Comhshaoil
Department of Climate,
Energy and the Environment

Policy Implementation for Impact *A Plan-led approach to delivering ORE ambition*

Philip Nugent, DCEE

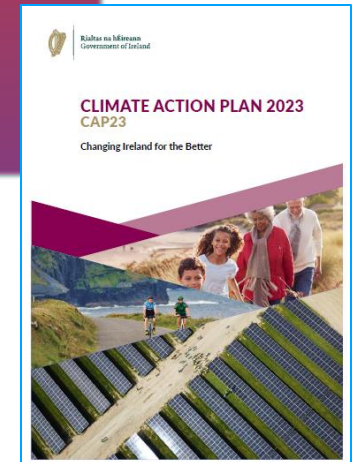
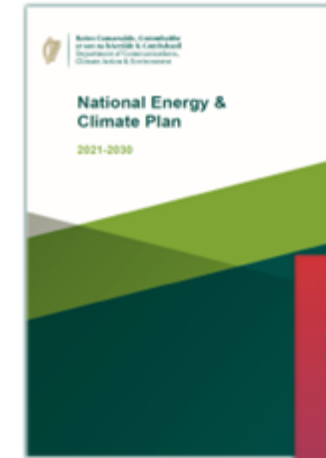
ORE – DCEE Role

- Agree targets (based on evidence and ability to deliver, EU Directives, Programme for Government, broader CAP targets (51% RES))
- Policies and Measures to reach targets
- Input into NECP, CAP, NMPF, NPF.
- Policy statements, Legislation etc.
- Forward Planning for ORE (DMAPs).
- Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme (ORESS).
- Cross-Government Offshore Wind Task Force.
- International energy governance (EU, NSEC, COP, IEA, IRENA)
- Etc. etc, etc.....



Policy Context

- Up to 80% RES-E by 2030.
- 5GW offshore wind by 2030 + 2GW floating wind which may be used for green hydrogen in development by 2030.
- 20 GW by 2040 and at least 37 GW by 2050.
- Carbon neutral economy by 2050.



Policy agility - Phase Two Policy – Plan Led Regime



- Acceleration to 5 GW via Plan-Led Regime
- All Future ORE development located in DMAPs
 - According to MAP Act Provisions
 - Initial South Coast DMAP
- Government to determine appropriate development sites via:
 - Comprehensive Public Participation
 - Environmental Assessment



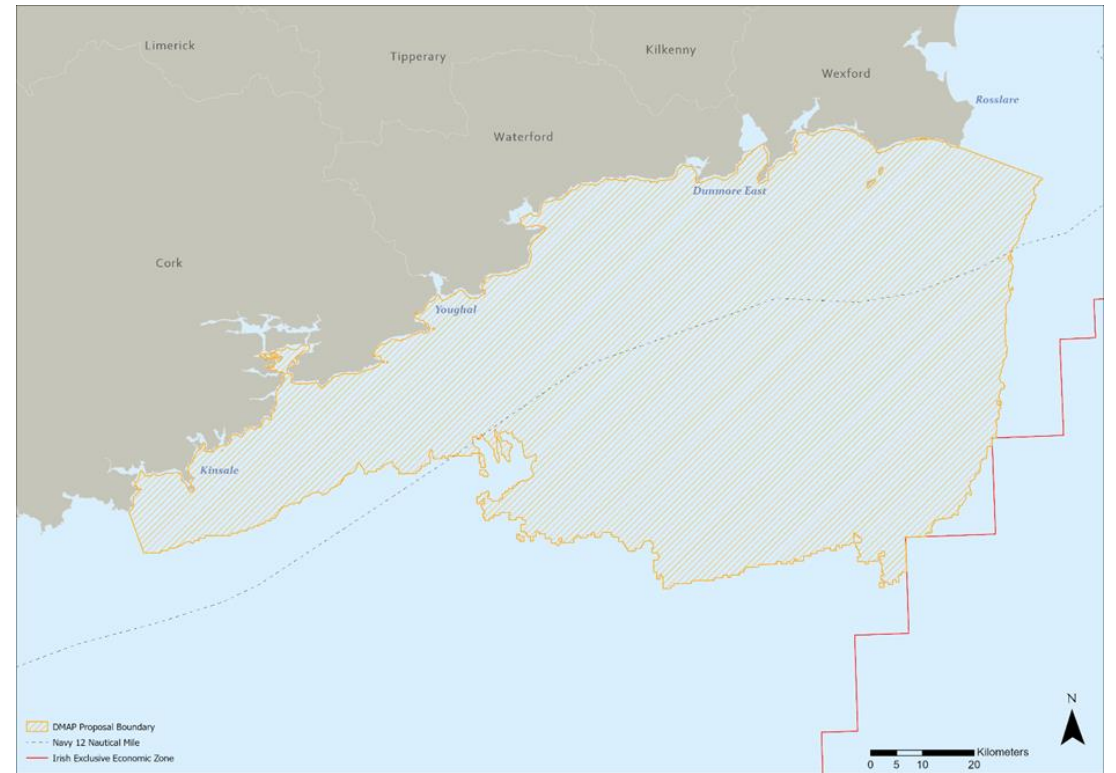
Designated Maritime Area Plans



- National Marine Planning Framework 2021
- Maritime Area Planning Act 2021
- DMAPs:
 - Sub-national forward spatial plans providing for managed, strategic, sustainable development in marine area.
 - Established with full consideration for the protection of marine environment and biodiversity, with comprehensive public participation.

South Coast DMAP

- DMAP Proposal July 2023 - Study Area
- To identify Offshore Wind development areas
 - 900MW or 2*450MW development sites
 - Further staged post-Phase 2 development
- Refinement on foot of:
 - Ongoing Public Engagement
 - Environmental Analysis



South Coast DMAP

- identifies:
 - DMAP Geographical Area
 - offshore wind development areas
 - Restriction/high risk areas for offshore wind development
- Further Considerations:
 - Proposed Co-existence of Offshore Wind with other marine activities
 - Measures to avoid/mitigate impacts on Protected Sites/Species/Habitats
 - Measures to avoid/mitigate impacts on other marine users
- Statutory consultation on Draft DMAP/SEA/AA

From developer-led to plan-led – What implementation issues needed to be addressed

- Unclear decision-making framework for regulators
- Spatial conflict (ORE vs. other marine users, including fisheries, shipping, defence, tourism and environmental interests) due to the absence of an agreed strategic spatial framework.
- Potential for individual projects to advance ahead of broader marine spatial planning, creating uncertainty regarding cumulative impacts on marine ecosystems, coastal communities and existing economic activities.
- Speculative site selection and competition for marine space without sufficient strategic assessment of grid connectivity, environmental constraints or system-wide infrastructure needs.
- Regulatory systems under strain as multiple large-scale projects progressed simultaneously through fragmented and overlapping assessment processes

From developer-led to plan-led – What implementation issues needed to be addressed

- Absence of clear sequencing and prioritisation mechanisms reduced predictability for developers, regulators, communities and investors.
- Pressures around public acceptance and community confidence, particularly where local communities perceived projects as emerging without sufficient prior spatial planning, policy clarity or public engagement.
- Aligning offshore renewable development with port infrastructure, onshore grid development and wider energy system planning due to the lack of an integrated long-term deployment framework.
- Risk of inefficient use of State and regulatory resources, with substantial effort expended on projects that ultimately faced viability, environmental or spatial compatibility challenges.
- Increased legal and procedural complexity regarding decision-making criteria, marine area prioritisation and interaction between emerging marine planning and legacy development proposals.

What the plan-led approach (SC DMAP) does

- Coherent, evidence-based strategic framework for offshore renewable energy (ORE) deployment.
- Enables earlier identification and management of environmental sensitivities, supporting a more ecosystem-based and sustainable approach to marine development.
- Improves coexistence between ORE and other marine activities through structured spatial planning and stakeholder engagement.
- Supports more effective management of cumulative impacts.
- Provides greater certainty and predictability for developers, investors, regulators and communities.
- Facilitates more efficient and coordinated regulatory processes.
- Strengthens public confidence and social acceptance by embedding consultation, transparency and community engagement earlier in the planning process.

What the plan-led approach (SC DMAP) does

- Enables better alignment between offshore generation, grid development, port infrastructure and wider energy system planning.
- Supports more efficient deployment of State and regulatory resources by focusing assessment and development activity within strategically identified areas.
- Reduces risks of speculative or poorly coordinated development proposals and promotes more orderly sequencing of projects.
- Enhances legal and policy clarity by establishing robust and transparent decision-making frameworks, spatial priorities and environmental safeguards.
- Supports achievement of national climate, energy security and industrial policy objectives.
- Provides a stronger basis for balancing climate action objectives with biodiversity protection and broader marine environmental commitments.

Key enablers – data and engagement

- DMAP approach is an example of policy implementation underpinned by evidence and public engagement.
- Early and sustained engagement enables greater understanding of policy, the limitations imposed by certain policy choices (need for trade-offs) and results in greater acceptance of need for choices to be made.
- Deep and genuine commitment to transparency through Cross-Government group.
- Cross-sectoral Marine Spatial Planning Advisory Group (8 years running).
- In person engagements with key stakeholders by sector.
- Regional public engagement and appointment of Community and Fishery Liaison Services.
- Time intensive but complex stuff – policy makers need to understand stakeholder concerns, address misinformation early, tailor policy to address real concerns.
- Empathy and credibility.

But is it working?

- So far, yes.
- ORESS Auction in 2025, 900MW, multiple bidders, favourable price
- Regulatory certainty – Marine Area Consent determination issued by MARA within statutory decision-making timeframe. DMAP cited as key basis for prompt process – clear and robust decision-making framework.
- Template for National approach to ORE DMAPs.
- Significant cross-sectoral buy-in to the plan-making process.
- Legislation under preparation to provide for making Marine Protected Areas through the DMAP process.



**An Roinn Aeráide,
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Thank
you

Surf Mullaghmore Sligo
Gary McCall An Taisce Love Your Coast