



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage

43rd Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA24)

Blue economy, SEA and marine spatial planning

SEA of marine spatial plans in Ireland

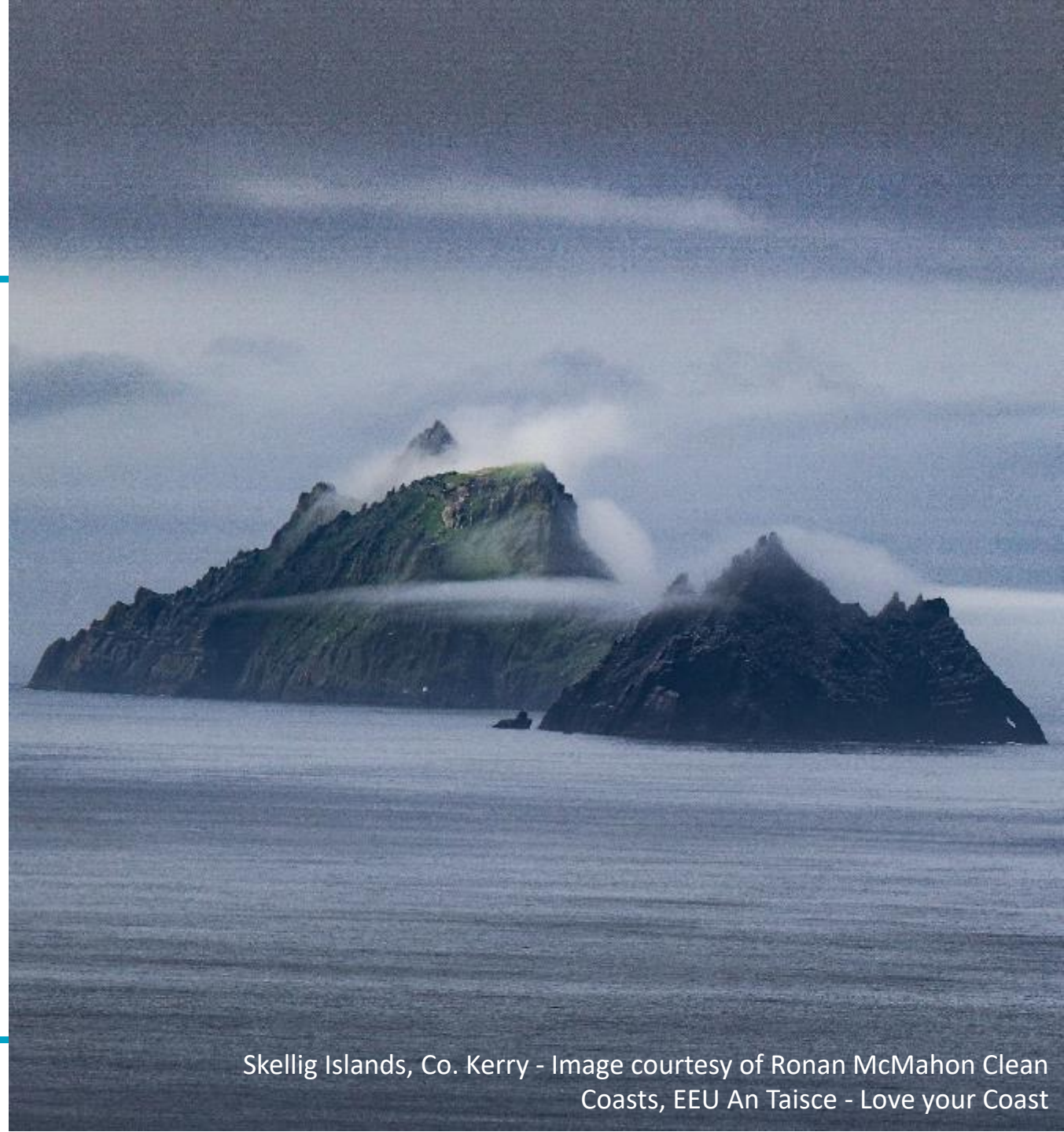
Tom Woolley, Marine Planning Adviser
Marine Planning Policy and Legislation

26th of April 2024



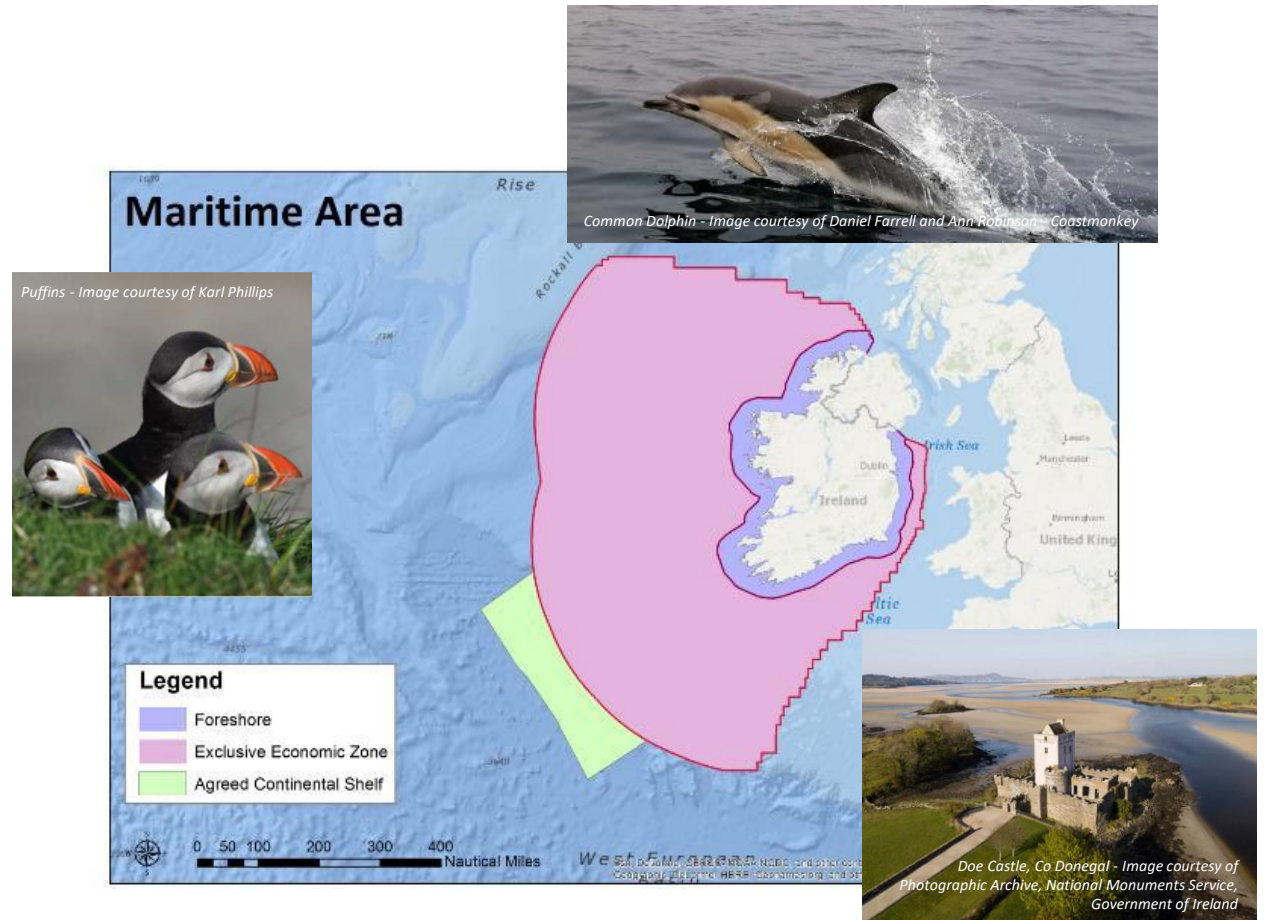
Overview

- Ireland's Maritime Area
 - Marine Planning
 - Basis of Marine Planning
 - Legislation
 - Ireland's marine planning system
 - The National Marine Planning Framework and MarinePlan.ie
 - Approach to assessments
 - Impact of assessments on MSP
 - Offshore Renewable Energy
 - Ambition
 - Strategic evidence plan
 - Designated Maritime Area Plans
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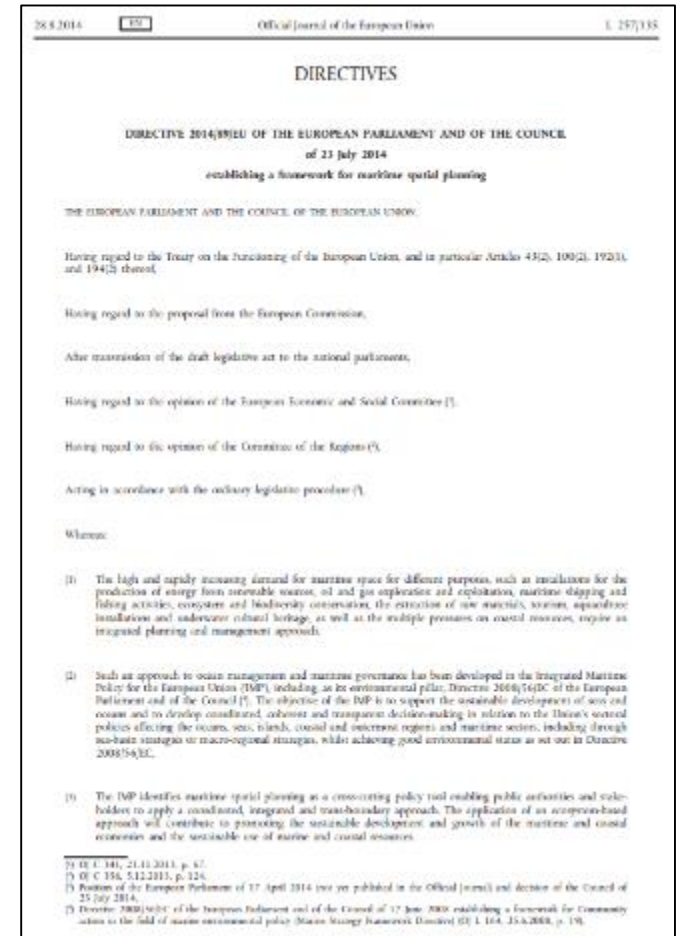
Ireland's maritime area

- Area $\approx 490,000$ km², Coastline $\approx 7,000$ km
- 75% of Ireland's population lives in a coastal county
- Roughly 500,000 pairs of seabirds breed annually around the island of Ireland
- Home to 400 fish and cephalopod species as well as 18 species of resident or regularly-visiting whales and dolphins, and occasional leatherback turtles
- In 2022 Ireland's ocean economy €7 billion in turnover; €2.85 billion (Gross Value Added)
- Employs approximately 33,500 Full-Time Equivalents (direct); 75,000 (direct + indirect)



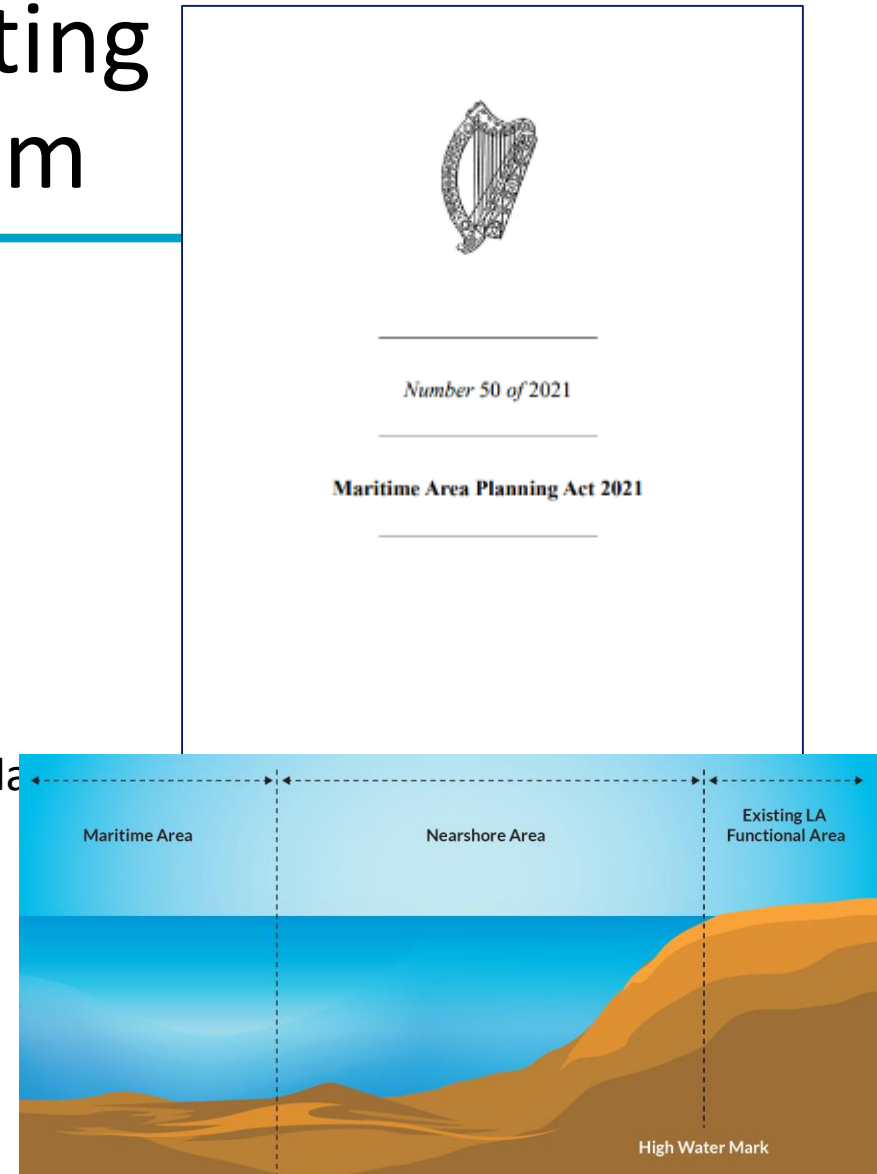
Basis of Marine Planning

- Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (2014)
- Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive
 - Transposed to the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018; provisions now in Maritime Area Planning Act (2021)
- Each Member State shall establish and implement maritime spatial planning
- Maritime spatial plans shall be established as soon as possible, and at the latest by 31 March 2021
- The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and to the Council, at the latest one year after the deadline for establishment of the maritime spatial plans a report outlining the progress made in implementing this Directive
- Identifies the SEA Directive in relation to plans and programmes



Maritime Area Planning Act: Creating a Coherent Marine Planning System

- Significant reform of marine management in Ireland
- Places Marine Planning Policy Statement on statutory footing
- Underpins statutory marine planning including the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) – **includes requirement for SEA**
 - The NMPF informs all decisions in the maritime area including policies, programmes, plans, authorisations and regulation
- Creates opportunity for Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs)
- Creates Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA)
- Changes determination processes – new roles for MARA, Coastal Planning Authorities (CPAs) and national planning body An Bord Pleanála (ABP)
 - State Consent –Maritime Area Consent (MAC) - MARA
 - Development Management – CPAs and ABP
 - Licensing of activities - MARA
 - Enforcement – CPAs & MARA
- Enables creation of statutory guidance
- Creates requirement for a maritime authorisation database



Structure of the Maritime Area Planning Act

Part 1: Preliminary
and General

Part 2:
Marine Spatial
Planning

Part 3:
Maritime Area
Regulatory Authority

Part 4:
Maritime Area
Consent

Part 5:
Marine Licencing

Part 6:
Enforcement

Part 7:
Miscellaneous

Part 8:
Planning Act
Amendments

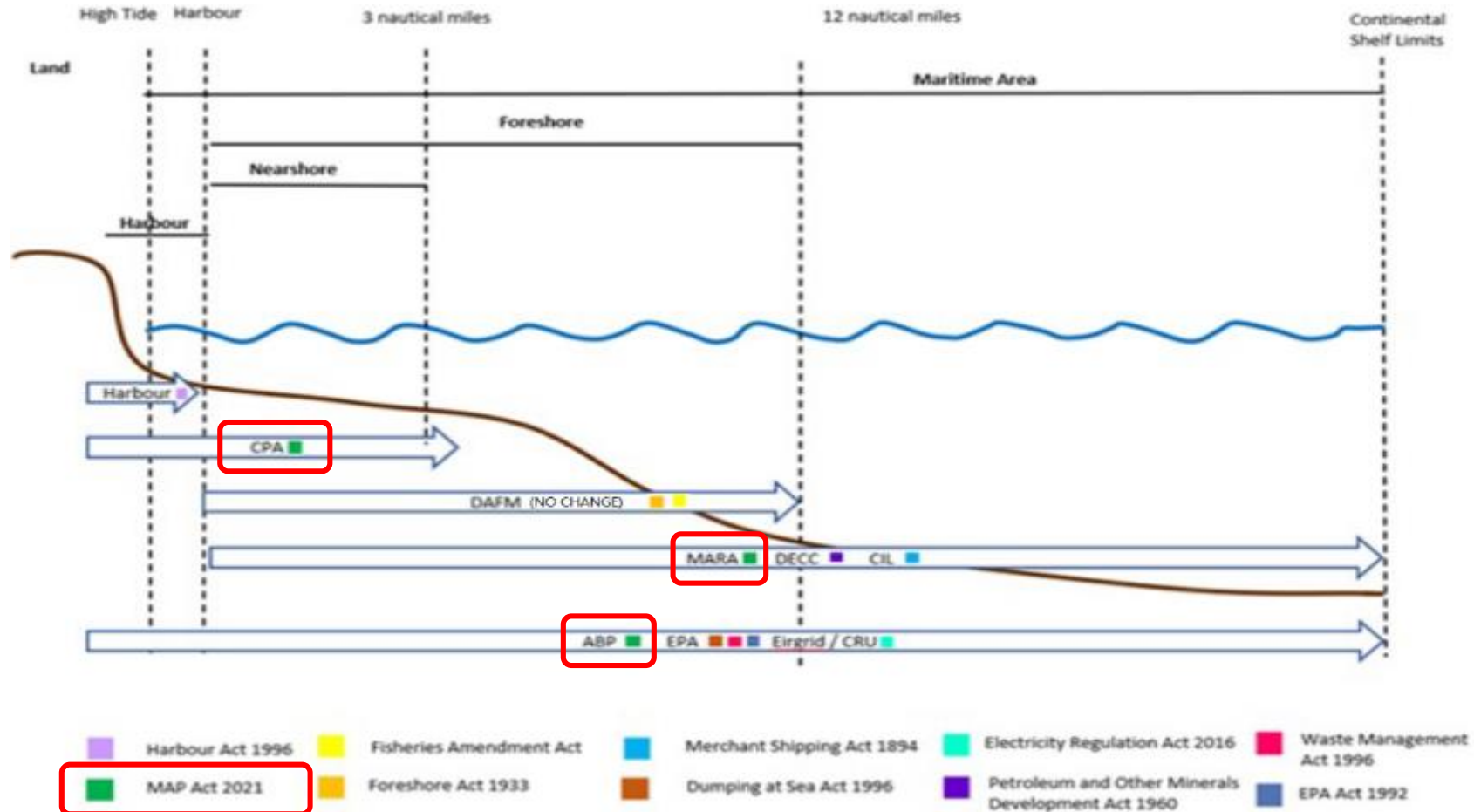
Part 9:
Foreshore Act &
consequential
amendments



Number 50 of 2021

Maritime Area Planning Act 2021

Maritime Area – Who does what where?



Marine planning in Ireland

1. Marine Planning Policy Statement (MPPS)

- Sits at top of marine planning framework in Ireland
- Sets out the principles and priorities of Government in relation to marine planning
- Adopted in 2019 on non-statutory basis - update underway due Q 4 2023, will give MPPS statutory effect



2. National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)

- Ireland's first National Maritime Spatial Plan (meets EU MSP Directive 2014/89/EU requirements)
 - Long term planning framework for how we use, protect, enjoy seas – out to 2040
 - Sector by sector planning policies (aquaculture through to ORE to waste water)



3. Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs)

- Formal designation of specific areas in our seas for ORE will require the development of DMAPs
 - Statutory, spatial management plans for ORE under the Maritime Area Planning Act of 2021 (MAP Act)
 - All ORE development beyond Phase 1 (i.e. Phase 2 and Future Framework) will take place in DMAPs
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NMPF - Structure

- Two categories:
 - Overarching: Set out under three Sustainable Development Pillars i.e. **social, environmental and economic**,
 - Sectoral (16 Chapters: Aquaculture – Wastewater)

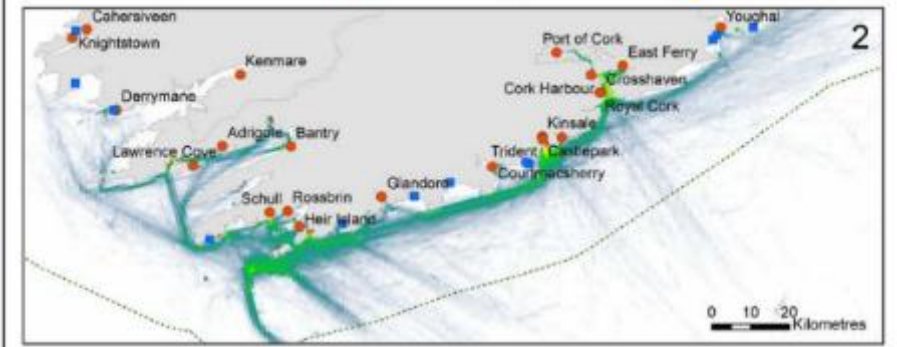
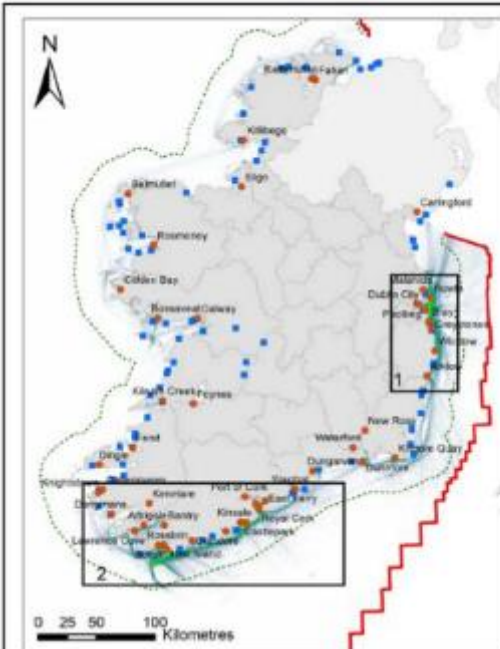
- Chapter structure:
 - Vision/Objectives
 - Planning Policies
 - Key References
 - Background Text
 - Stakeholder Stories
 - Photos
 - Maps



The NMPF - Our view: Bord Iascaigh Mhara

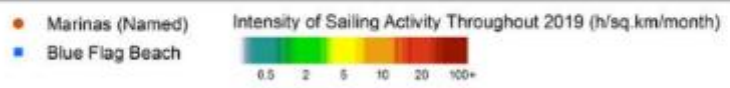
BIM helps to develop the seafood industry by providing technical expertise, funding and business support, training and promoting responsible environmental practices. The NMPF is important for the fishing and aquaculture sectors to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of marine resources, and to protect the biodiversity that supports high quality seafood production. BIM are currently developing Natural Capital accounting - the emerging environmental management tool - for the seafood sector. BIM will benefit from data gathered as part of the NMPF; this work may assist with the more widespread adoption of Natural Capital approaches to inform future marine planning decisions.





These maps are to be used for reference only. Please refer to the www.marineplan.ie to explore the most up to date National Marine Planning Framework data.

Sport and Recreation Trends and Features



Credits: An Taisce: Blue Flag Beaches (2019), EMODnet: Sailing Vessel Density (2019); MaREL, Marine Irish Digital Atlas, Irish Sailing: Marinas (2020).



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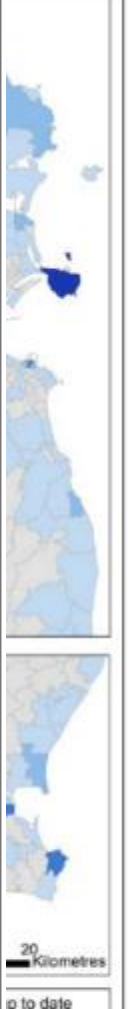
the shoreline (2018);



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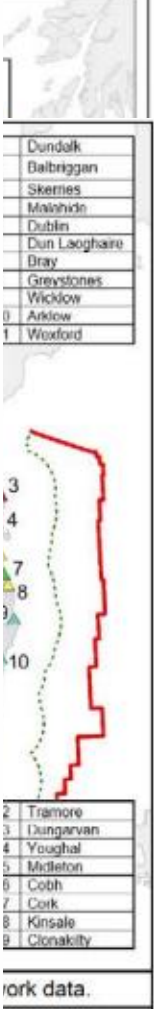
VS: National Heritage Area (2017);



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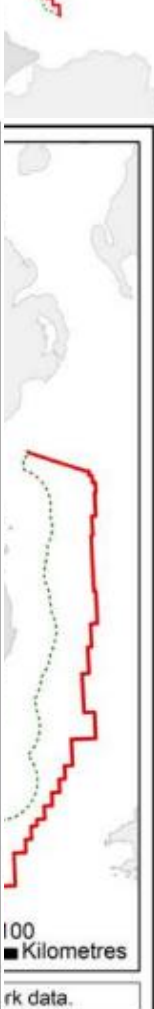
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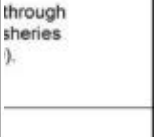
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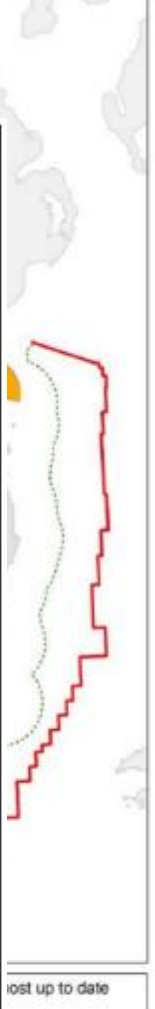
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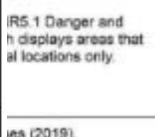
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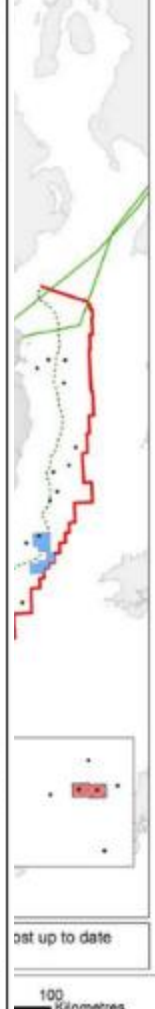
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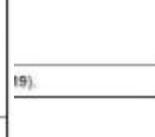
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Activities Map (BETA)

The map here will display marine activities. All activities are off by default and you can turn on each activity layer by clicking the eye icon. The legend for each layer is available once the layer is turned on. You can choose to turn on and off as many layers as you need but there will be slower response times when everything is turned on or very busy layers are resolving.

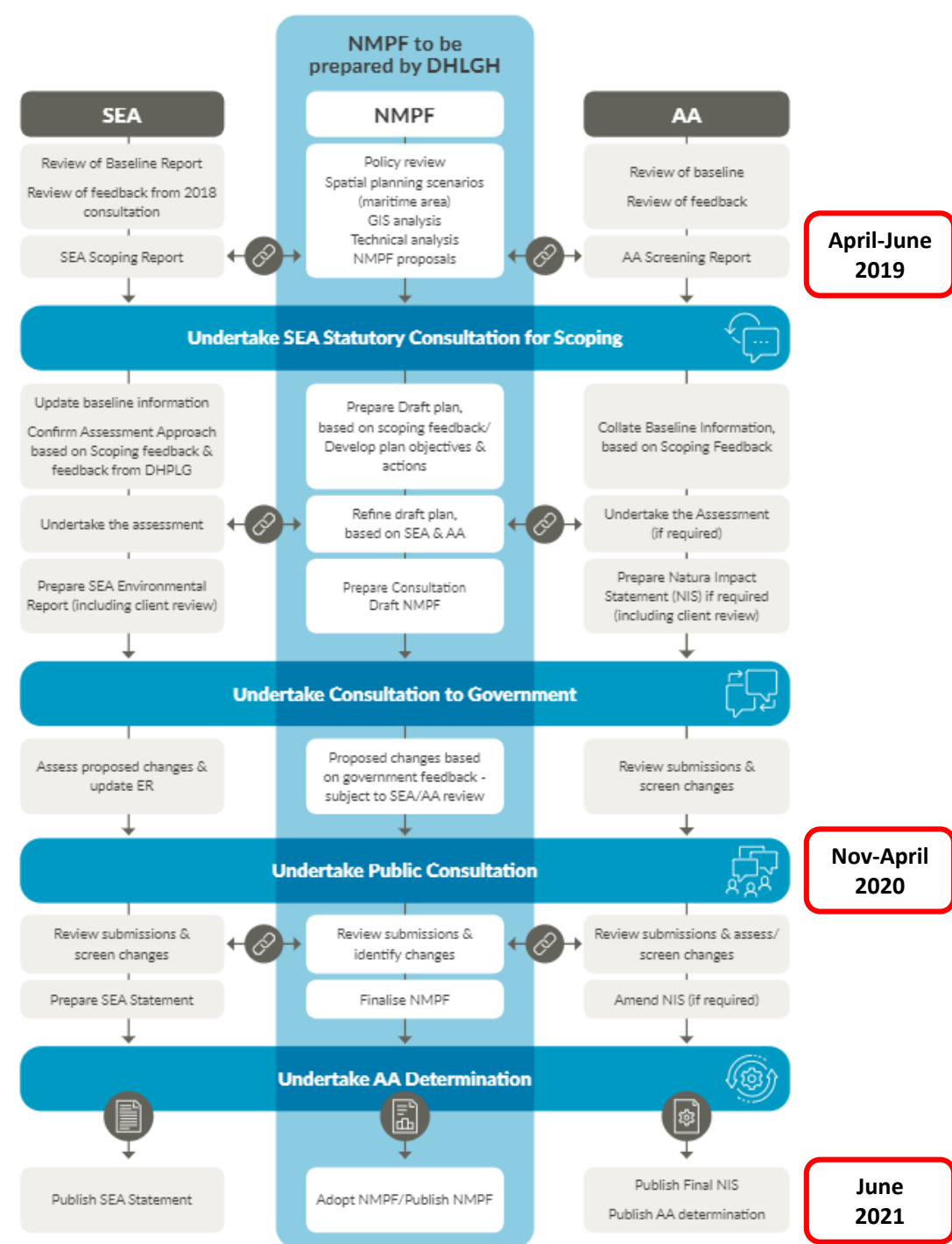
Please Note: The Layers and Legend lists may take a few moments to load. Some layers will not display until zoomed in (these layers appear listed in grey text until available).

The map displays the Republic of Ireland with various marine activity layers overlaid in purple. Major cities like Dublin, Galway, Limerick, and Cork are marked. The map includes a search bar, zoom controls, and a home button. An inset map shows the location of the main map area within the British Isles.

Layers	Legend
<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries - Ports, harvesting, distribution	
<input type="checkbox"/> Heritage Assets	
<input type="checkbox"/> Protected Marine Sites	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ports, Harbours and Shipping	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ports of Ireland	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limits of Pilotage Districts	
<input type="checkbox"/> Popular Destination	
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequently Used Routes (300 gross tonnes and above)	
<input type="checkbox"/> National Ferry Route	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limits of Harbours	
<input type="checkbox"/> Ferry Port	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cargo and Tanker Vessel Density	
<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger Vessel Density	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sport and Recreation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sea-floor and Water Column Integrity	
<input type="checkbox"/> Seascape and Landscape	

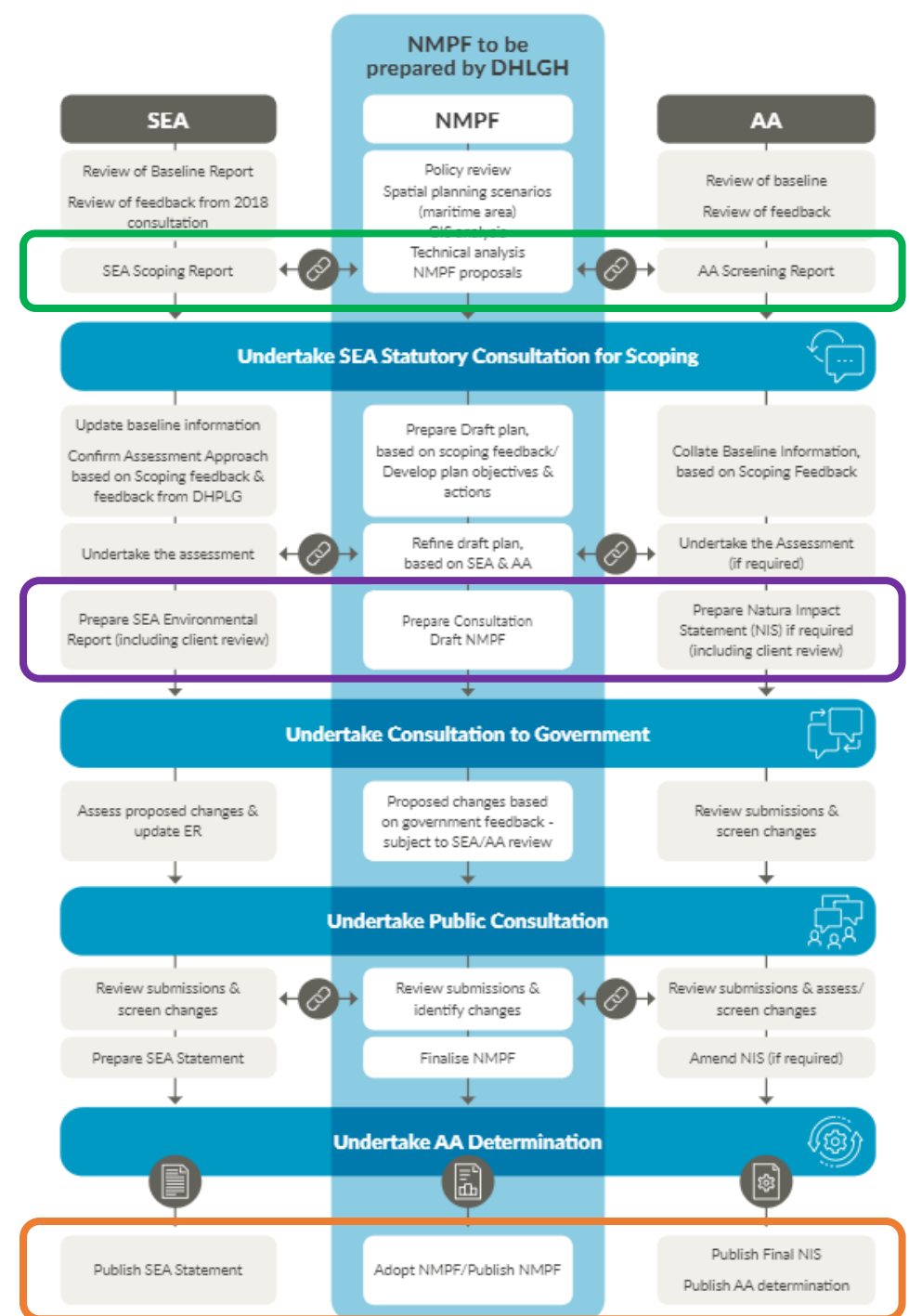
NMPF Assessments

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) were carried out on the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF)
- It was an iterative process, with the NMPF updated in relation to the assessments at particular points (see p.16 of the NMPF)
- Services delivered by single consultant. Competition for service provider run through OJEU



Key Steps

- SEA Scoping Report and AA Screening Report
 - Concluded whether or not full assessment was required
- SEA Environmental Report and Natura Impact Statement (NIS) for consultation
 - Informed consultation in Government then with public
 - Consultation included formal notification of neighbouring countries – transboundary consultation
- SEA Statement, Final NIS and AA Determination
 - The main purpose of this SEA Statement is to provide information on the decision-making process for the NMPF in order to illustrate how decisions were taken
 - The SEA Statement records how the recommendations of both the Environmental Report and the Natura Impact Statement, as well as the views of the statutory consultees and other submissions received during consultation have influenced the preparation of the final plan
 - The SEA Statement also provides information on the arrangements put in place for monitoring and mitigation
 - AA Determination signed by Minister responsible for MSP



Influence of SEA on the NMPF

- SEA Environmental Report and the NIS specifically suggested mitigation measures to offset negative impacts identified
- Included general measures such as:
 - additional text clarifying obligations in relation to protection of European Sites (designations)
 - detailed clarification on definitions and wording of policies
 - inclusion of supporting text to support plan implementation e.g. particular evidence that might be considered at project stage when the plan policies are applied
 - identifying where marine plan policy consideration might be integrated into other assessment processes for decision making e.g. Environmental Impact Assessment for larger proposals
- Iterative approach – changes made throughout:
 - Some suggestions were included in the draft plan prior to statutory consultation in 2019/2020 as part of the iterative interactions between the plan and environmental teams
 - Following the consultation feedback, mitigation measures proposed in both the NIS and SEA Environmental Report were revisited by the plan team and further changes were made
 - Difficult to give explicit changes attributed wholly to SEA from start to finish as changes to the NMPF related to the SEA were made alongside changes in response to stakeholder consultation
- Use of external consultant a good way to draw upon up-to-date perspectives from other policy areas, legal judgements, best practice etc.
- An iterative process carried out alongside plan making with SEA and AA documents published alongside plan documents for consideration helped build confidence in our process amongst stakeholders



Wind Turbine, Arklow Bank

Offshore Wind Energy in Ireland

Phase 1

to contribute to 5GW by 2030

Phase 2

to provide remainder of 5GW by 2030

Future Framework

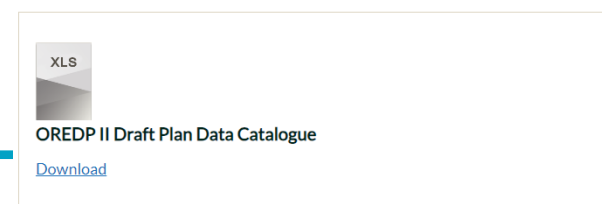
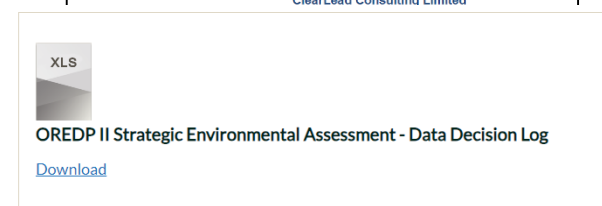
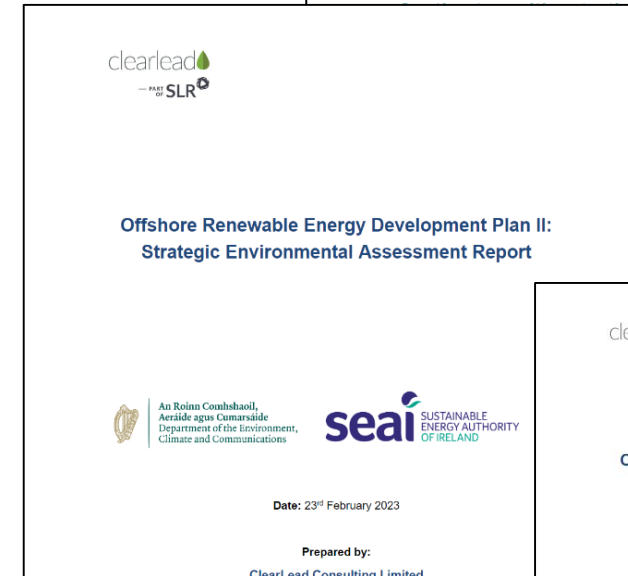
Long-term plan deploying post-2030

- Phase 1: developer-led model in terms of site selection for projects
 - All development beyond Phase 1 (i.e. Phase 2 and Future Framework) will take place in State-selected sites involving designation of specific areas in our seas for ORE development (Designated Maritime Area Plans – DMAPs)
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Offshore Renewable Energy

- Strategic evidence

- In 2023 evidence was gathered and analysed to guide long-term development of ORE including fixed and floating offshore wind technologies
 - Offshore Renewable Energy Plan II
- Key objectives:
 - Assess the resource potential for ORE in Ireland's maritime area
 - Provide an evidence base to facilitate the future identification of Broad Areas most suitable for the sustainable deployment of ORE in Ireland's maritime area
 - Identify critical gaps in marine data or knowledge and recommend prioritised actions to close these gaps
- <https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/7ad6f-the-second-offshore-renewable-energy-development-plan-oredp-ii-public-consultation/>



OREDP II – Outputs of detailed analysis

Development of SEA objectives and impact pathways

Generalised assessment criteria

Assessment of models e.g. economic, and ID mitigation

GENERALISED summary of impacts pre and post mitigation

G16 Appendix 4 Workbook 2: Fixed Wind Assessment

An Roinn Comhshaoil, Aeráide agus Cumarsaide
Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

seai SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY

OREDP II Strategic Appendix 4 Workbook 2: Fixed Wind Assessment

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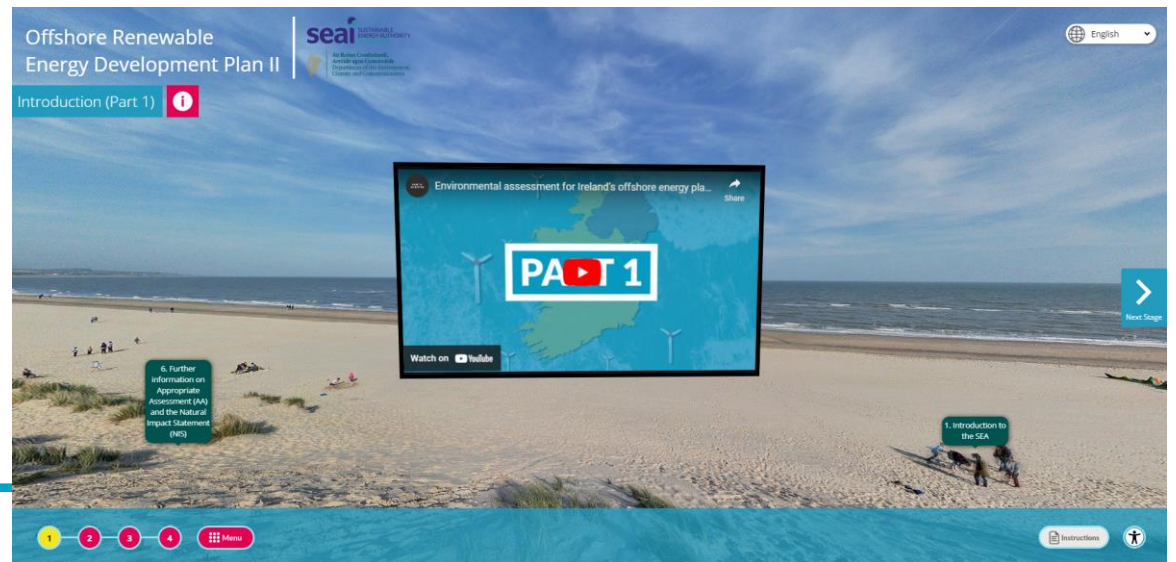
Front Page | Disclaimer | SEA Framework (updated) | Assessment Criteria | Summary Table | Consolidate

Notation		Description	
Degree to which baseline conditions may change (significance of effect) compared with the future baseline situation			
Significant Positive		Significant Positive Effect: The OREDP II offers the potential to realise significant improvement in baseline conditions and/or physical opportunity to support achievement of defined SEA Objectives.	
SEA Framework	Assessment	Relevant data identifiers	Significance without mitigation
SEA 1	Protect the quality and character of the seabed and its sediments and avoid significant effects on seabed morphology and sediment transport processes.	Pen-rip-20	Significant Negative
SEA 2	Protect the integrity of coastal and estuarine processes.	MA-74, Bio-05 to Bio-18, Bio-23, Bio-24, Bio-25, Bio-26, Bio-44 and Bio-45	Significant Negative
SEA 3	Protect, maintain, and improve status of classified water bodies within the OREDP II area in line with requirements of the WFD and MSFD.	Water-02, Water-03	Significant Negative
SEA 4	Avoid pollution of the coastal and marine environment.		

SEA Objectives	Significance of OREDP II without mitigation	Significance of OREDP II with mitigation
SEA 1: Protect the quality and character of the seabed and its sediments and avoid significant effects on seabed morphology and sediment transport processes.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 2: Protect the integrity of coastal and estuarine processes.	Significant Negative	Uncertain
SEA 3: Protect, maintain, and improve status of classified water bodies within the OREDP II area in line with requirements of the WFD and MSFD.	Significant Negative	Uncertain
SEA 4: Avoid pollution of the coastal and marine environment.	Minor Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 5: Avoid, prevent or reduce harmful emissions to air, promoting air quality improvements through reduction of emissions As Low as Reasonably Practical (ALARP) (direct emissions)	Minor Negative	Minor Positive
SEA 6: Promote and prioritise use of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.	Significant Positive	Significant Positive
SEA 7: Minimise emissions of Green House Gases	Significant Positive	Significant Positive
SEA 8: Promote resilience to Climate Change	Minor Negative	Minor Positive
SEA 9: Reduce/prohibit release of marine litter to the marine environment.	Minor Negative	Neutral
SEA 10: Minimise generation and propagation of manmade noise within the marine environment.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 11: Promote energy transmission technologies and configurations which seek to minimise EMF within the marine environment.	Minor Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 12: Preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance biodiversity and ecosystems within the OREDP II area.	Significant Negative	Uncertain
SEA 13: Avoid significant impact to EU and National level designated sites, Qualifying Interests and protected species.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 14: Protect known wrecks and historic and cultural features of the OREDP II area.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 15: Incorporate opportunities to enhance cultural/historic knowledge and understanding.	Neutral	Neutral
SEA 16: Implement the requirements of the European Landscape Convention through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of Ireland's landscape and by integrating landscape into Ireland's approach to sustainable development.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 17: Avoid significant impact on human health and wellbeing.	Significant Negative	Minor Positive
SEA 18: Avoid disruption, disturbance or nuisance to local communities.	Minor Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 19: Protect marine material assets (including fisheries, shellfish, military activity and infrastructure) and resources.	Significant Negative	Minor Negative
SEA 20: Ensure continuity and safety of navigation	Minor Positive	Minor Positive

ORED P II Assessment Process

- A digital version of the OREDP II Environmental Report has been produced to support public consultation. Through a 360 degree digital environment and videos, the Digital Report explores the SEA, including its key findings, its process to date and next steps.
- <https://oredpii-sea-digitalreport.com/#>



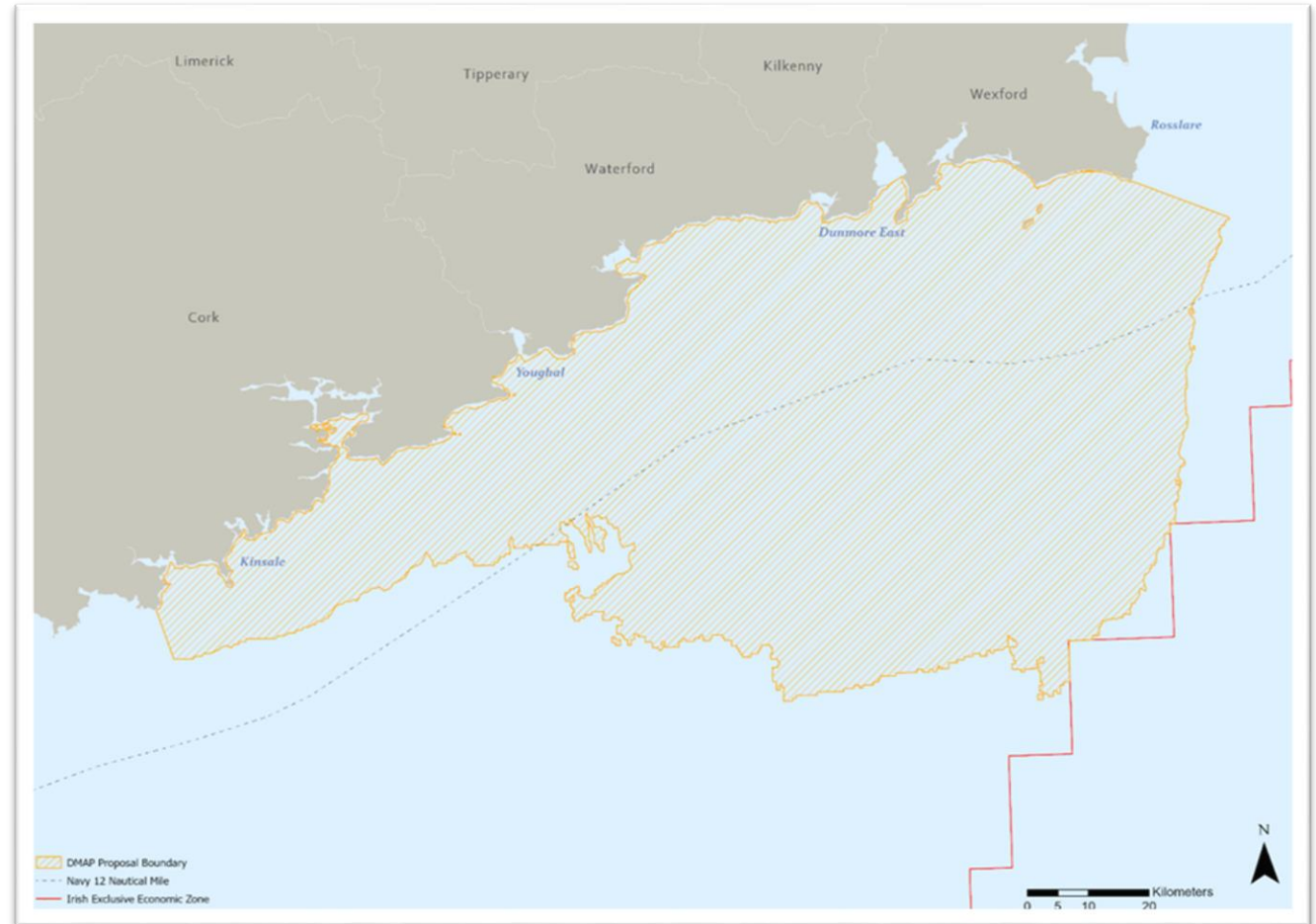
Policy Statement on Phase Two Offshore Wind

- 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 marine areas for ORE development via:
 - Comprehensive Public Participation / PPS
 - Environmental Assessment and Technical analysis
- Plan Led Regime Approved by Oireachtas in May 2023



South Coast DMAP Proposal

- DMAP Proposal July 2023 - Study Area
- To identify areas for **Fixed Offshore Wind**
- Refinement on foot of:
 - Public Engagement: Aug-Oct 2023
 - Environmental and Technical Constraints Analysis
 - SEA and AA
- Balance Environmental Protection, Societal Acceptance and Technical Feasibility



Draft SC-DMAP To Identify

- Future Offshore Wind Development Pipeline
 - Forward Spatial Plan for the Maritime area to guide decisions by competent authorities
 - Does not pre-determine future consenting decisions
 - Project level EIA environmental assessment
 - Broad areas for 2030 and post 2030 deployments of Fixed Offshore Wind
 - Sea-depths c.50-75m; Spatial Flexibility for project level refinement
 - Policy Objectives regarding protection of environment, biodiversity and co-existence
 - Grid and non-grid connected projects
 - 900 MW development by 2030 – ORESS 2.1
 - Grid and non-grid connected projects for post 2030
 - NEXT STEPS 2024: Public consultation, post-consultation amendment, finalise SEA and AA processes, Oireachtas Approval
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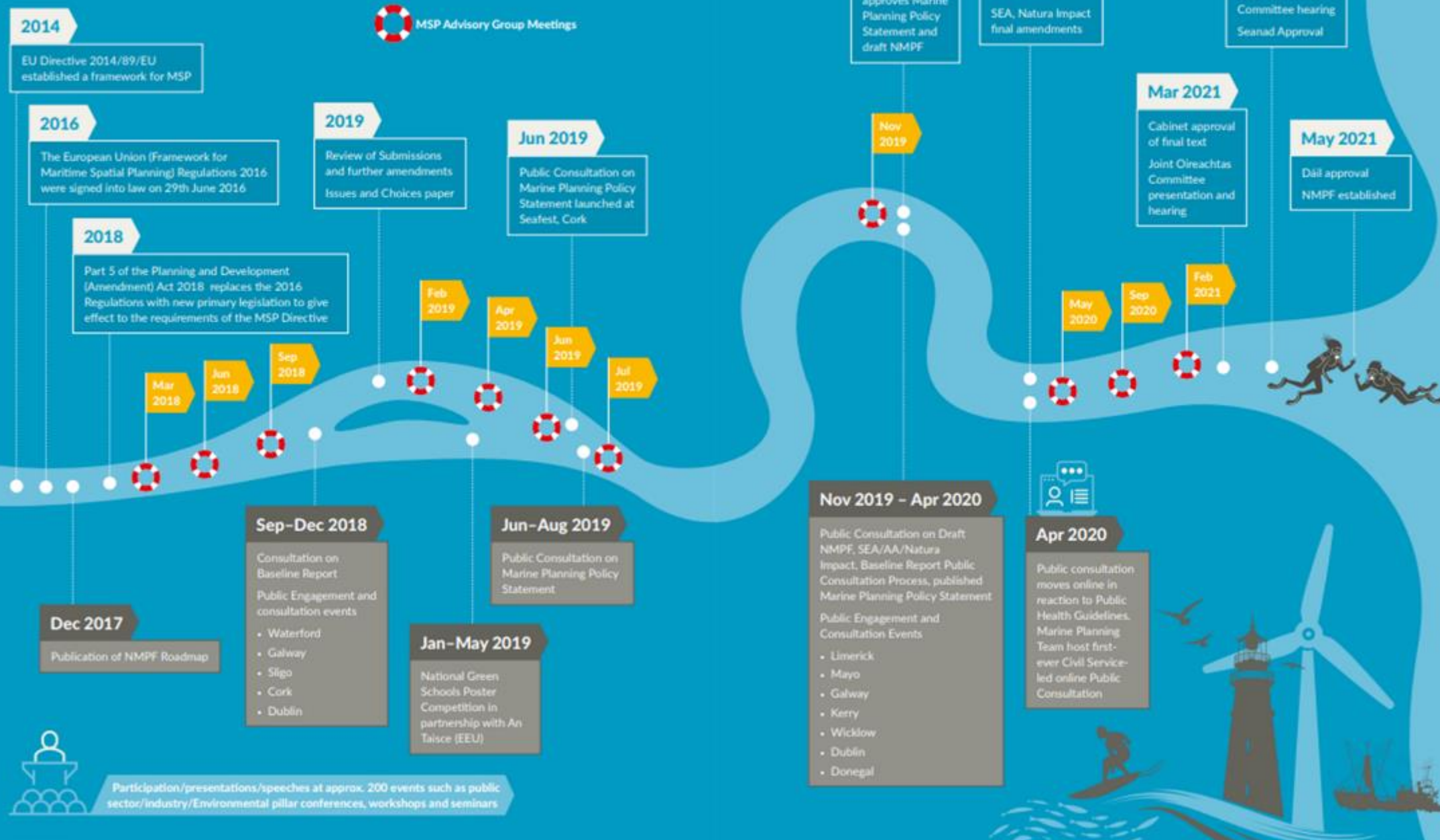
Thank you

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<https://www.marineplan.ie/>

Journey to the National Marine Planning Framework



The SEA process was integrated with the NMPF process - SEA documentation consulted upon alongside NMPF documents