

Marine Spatial Planning Needs of Marine Renewable Emerging Technologies

Discussion Document prepared by MRIA

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General Findings

- Broad welcome for MSP
 - Opportunity to implement a **clear planning system** for all activities
 - Some concern about ability to deliver given on-going delay with **MAFA**
 - Also concern over possible interactions with **designation of MPAs**
 - Need to integrate with **land and infrastructure (grid, ports etc.) planning**
- **Scotland** offers the best role model for MSP in Ireland
 - Clear, transparent and coordinated process
 - Regional Locational Guidance deemed useful
- Significant concern and confusion about what **data** is available to support MSP and its adequacy



Zoning

- Zoning identified as **critical** to MSP
- Should reflect **existing** uses and rights and facilitate multiple-use
- Needs to **link** with National Planning Framework and Local Authority planning
- For MRE, initial **priority** should be based on areas that are **resource-rich, adjacent to grid, environmentally acceptable** and suit commercial scale developers
 - Confusion between Test Sites and Initial Development Zones
- ‘Lessons learned’ **review** prior to additional zoning
- Zoning is **dependent** on enactment of MAFA (or equivalent) and consideration of grid planning (with EirGrid)

Buffer Zones

- Arises from concern over visual impacts
- For example, a **12M buffer** on east coast would rule out:
 - almost all **bottom fixed wind**
 - **tidal energy** development off Co. Wicklow
 - viable **floating wind** sites
- Would discriminate against **sub-surface devices** with minimal visual effects
- Development **beyond 12M** is not legally possible
- Should be **limited** to specific cases
- Should utilise Visualisation Techniques in planning / consenting process



Partnership Approach

- Perception is that **conflict** is inevitable
- Few marine planning systems internationally include **conflict resolution** measures
- Need for an 'honest broker' to foster **trust and acceptance** between communities, interest groups and developers
- Lots of **models** for engagement but none directly transferable
 - E.g. UK Coastal Partnerships, CLAMS, Public Participation Networks, Local Authority Waters Programme (formerly LAWCO), Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC), etc.
- Opportunity for **DHPLG** to consider this in NPF and MSP and perhaps 'pilot' approaches in conjunction with preliminary zones...



MRIA Recommendations

1. Introduce **Zones** for sector specific activities on a phased basis; taking account of existing activities, terrestrial planning system and physical resource
2. Carefully consider the need for **Buffer Zones** on a site-specific basis, approved by an independent panel using submitted visualisations
3. Encourage the DHPLG to consider the creation of **coastal partnerships** to facilitate better relationships between developers and other marine users/activities
4. Determine what **Data** is/isn't available, its reliability, accessibility and interoperability
5. Recognise the need for additional **Ports Infrastructure** and reflect this in National Planning Framework and MSP
6. An **urgent and critical need** for an effective, efficient and functional **licensing system**

Thank you!

