

Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce

Terms of Reference

May 2022

Context

The Annex of Actions to the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2021 sets out 1,175 measures to be undertaken to deliver the Government target, as set out under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030 and set the State on the pathway to net-zero by 2050. The CAP sets out target decarbonisation ranges for our key economic sectors. It is now vital that there is a relentless focus on policy implementation and delivery of the CAP actions and the key societal outcomes within defined timeframes. The invasion of Ukraine has increased the State's commitment, in step with the European Union, to accelerate energy system decarbonisation.

Within this context, the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communication has decided to accelerate delivery in a number of key areas and as agreed at the Cabinet Committee on Environment and Climate Change on 21 February 2022, the Minister is establishing a number of cross government/agency delivery taskforces, to accelerate and drive delivery in key programme areas, including offshore wind.

The work of the offshore wind delivery taskforce is framed by the overarching objective of deploying 5GW of offshore wind energy by 2030, as part of the Government's objective of up to 80% of Ireland's electricity being met from renewable sources by 2030. There is a further commitment in the Programme for Government to develop a longer-term plan setting out how Ireland will develop at least 30GW of offshore floating wind power in our Atlantic waters.

Medium term outcomes

Within our 5GW objective, medium-term/interim outcomes will guide the initial work of the delivery taskforce and the system wide acceleration of offshore wind development. The proposed outcomes include ensuring that -

- At least 5GW of offshore wind is procured and consented (or significantly progressed through planning) by 2025 and on track for delivery by 2030;
- All aspects of the regulatory framework related to the construction and operational phases of offshore wind projects, including the safety framework, is fully scoped, developed and in place by end 2023;
- All Grid projects required for 2030 are designed and going through consenting process and on track for delivery of 2030 targets;
- The potential economic and societal benefits from establishing the offshore wind industry are maximised (ports/supply chain/jobs);
- A strategy and implementation plan is developed for ORE development beyond 2030; including key milestones for floating offshore wind.

- The supply chain and skills capability, including ecological and environmental, is in place for maximisation of benefit to Ireland and to guarantee delivery success; and
- Alignment in the development of the Offshore Renewable Energy sector with work being progressed to improve and protect marine biodiversity through designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Marine Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and implementation of the Birds, Habitats and Marine Strategy Framework Directives more broadly.

Objectives of the Taskforce

The key objectives of the Taskforce are to -

- Develop a consolidated plan, collating all activities underway across departments and agencies to ensure delivery of offshore wind and related targets as set out in the Programme for Government and Climate Action Plan;
- Identify all aspects of work on the critical path, identify gaps, any areas of duplication, opportunities, potential for synergies and proactively manage risks and constraints to drive and ensure delivery.
- Identify opportunities for alignment and to accelerate delivery of medium-term outcomes;
- Ensure the potential economic and societal benefits from establishing the offshore wind industry are maximised.;
- Ensure consistent messaging to the public and all stakeholders on what is happening regarding offshore wind energy and the benefits that will be delivered;
- Ensure alignment in the development of the ORE sector with work being progressed to improve and protect marine biodiversity through designation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), Marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Marine Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and implementation of the Birds, Habitats and Marine Strategy Framework Directives more broadly.

Outputs

The key outputs of the Taskforce will include –

- The development of a singular, system wide strategy and project plan setting out a road map for all of the activities required to meet the medium-term outcomes identified;
- Comprehensive oversight of activity against the delivery plan to support detailed reporting on delivery.

Membership

The membership of the Taskforce will be composed of senior representatives from key departments and agencies with responsibility for delivering offshore wind related actions under the Climate Action Plan. A list of invited members and key areas under the remit of that organisation is set out in the Appendix.

Other stakeholders may be invited to attend the meetings of the Taskforce from time to time.

Meetings of the Taskforce

- The Taskforce will meet approximately every six weeks or as agreed by members and meetings will take place remotely, unless otherwise agreed. The meetings will be chaired by Mr Matt Collins, Assistant Secretary - Energy, DECC.
- DECC will organise the meetings, draft notes of the meetings and circulate documents in advance. Members will be given at least one week's notice of every meeting, and a draft agenda will be circulated at least 3 working days before the meeting. Members will be invited to propose additional items to be included on the agenda.
- All actions, decisions, recommendations and key discussion points will be recorded in the minutes. Draft minutes will be circulated to each member for review within two weeks of the meeting
- Members shall revert with any proposed amendments to the draft minutes within one week of receiving them, following which minutes will be finalised within one additional week.

Support Services

To support the Taskforce in developing the delivery plan and driving its implementation, DECC will provide advisory support services which will include project management expertise. DECC is in the process of seeking consultancy services to assist the Department in the application, enhancement and broadening of its Strategic Delivery Framework. The successful tender will, *inter alia*, support and advise DECC and the Taskforce in –

- creating a consolidated Offshore Wind Project Plan bringing together all related activities across departments and agencies;
- establishing a programme management function to support the Department and Delivery Task Force to identify activities on the critical path;
- overseeing and reporting on delivery using project management best practice.

Terms of Reference

The Taskforce shall run until the end of 2023 or a shorter period should all of its work be completed.

Any decision to extend the term of the group and/or review the terms of reference will be made by agreement with members.

Appendix – Invited Member Organisations

| Dept/Agency | Area of remit |
|---------------------------|---|
| DHLGH | Marine policy, Marine Environment, NPWS, MARA |
| DTransport | Ports |
| DETE | Supply Chain |
| Enterprise Ireland | Supply Chain |
| DFHERIS | Skills |
| DPER | Finance/NDP |
| DRCD | Communities |
| CRU | Markets/Networks regulation & Licencing |
| EirGrid | Grid connection/development |