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An Comhchoiste um Fhiontar, Trádáil agus Fostaíocht
Tuarascáil maidir le Fuinneamh In-Athnuaite Amach ón gCósta
Márta, 2023

Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Report on Offshore Renewable Energy
March, 2023

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Réamhra an Chathoirligh/Chair's Foreword

The Committee was pleased to facilitate an examination of Offshore Renewable



Energy. The topic of offshore renewable energy was a key policy priority in the Committee's 2022 Work programme under a zero-carbon economy with particular relevance to aspects such as job creation and the development of skills and investment in green enterprise.

In reaching out to stakeholders to gain diverse perspectives on Offshore Renewable Energy, the written submissions and witnesses provided the Committee with an insight into several areas where they deemed it was most important to make improvements. There is significant capacity for transformation to clean, sustainable and renewable energy.

In a time of climate change and energy insecurity there is an opportunity for industry and coastal communities, working together, to develop a new industrial sector supporting regional development, creating thousands of jobs, and driving sustainable growth.

The Committee has made a number of recommendations for these areas and a copy of this report and recommendations will be sent to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Committee looks forward to working proactively and productively with the Minister to address the issues identified regarding the operation of the Offshore Renewable Energy and Ireland's commitments under the Climate Action Plan.

Ireland remains committed to achieving our ambitious target of having 80% of our electricity generated from renewable resources by 2030, with 5 GW coming from offshore wind. Offshore and renewable energy is a cross departmental goal involving various Departments.

In September 2022, a Committee delegation travelled to Belfast Harbour. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the officials and MLA's who engaged with us in such

a constructive way. The trip allowed the Committee to develop its understanding of offshore renewable energy, informed the Committee's view on the issue of future development opportunities around the coast of Ireland and facilitated an examination of the impact and costs of developing an offshore wind energy port.

I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the Committee to all the witnesses who attended our public hearing to give evidence and those who forwarded written submissions to the Committee.

The Committee appreciated the opportunity to discuss this important topic. I must thank Members of the Committee for their collaborative work in agreeing this report. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for its work on this report and all those who assisted the Joint Committee with its consideration of the issue.

I hope this report will help inform the potential in Offshore Renewable Energy and I look forward to furthering engagement on the matter.



Deputy Maurice Quinlivan T.D.

Cathaoirleach to the Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment

March 2023

Recommendations

1. The Committee recognises the benefits to be gained from offshore renewable energy in Ireland. Members agreed, however, that appropriate planning and consideration of sites must be implemented. The Committee recommends that further research and policy analysis is required in respect of the supports needed for the offshore renewables industry and the development of future infrastructure for projects.
2. The Committee recommends further exploration of the potential measures for Offshore Renewable Energy as it relates to the production of green energy and the opportunity of both fixed and floating wind energy.
3. The Committee recommends the provision of resources should be allocated to public data collection and research in the Offshore Renewable Energy environment in Ireland, and that research collaboration is supported.
4. The Committee recommends a more integrated approach to monitoring and development of Renewable Energy and that consideration should be given to establishing a separate Government Department for Renewable Energy to better address the challenges of climate change in relation to the Offshore Renewable Energy environment.
5. The Committee recommends active education, training and recruitment initiatives to increase the supply of essential skills in this industry.
6. The Committee recommends that local authorities work to empower local communities. This should include supports that reward coastal communities for enhancing and hosting wind energy.
7. The Committee recommends the establishment of a State body to develop and engage on offshore wind energy. This State body can be further supported by the development of an offshore delivery taskforce to create and support an action plan.
8. The Committee recommends the adoption of the four recommendations in the Skills for Zero Carbon report and supports the three asks of Wind Energy Ireland in their presentation to the Committee¹.
9. The Committee recommends that greater focus is given to exploring and enhancing the potential for domestic job growth in terms of research and development roles, as well as in respect of the development of technologies and equipment relating to offshore wind energy being advanced within the State.

¹ The four recommendations in the Skills for Zero Carbon report are on page 10 of this report and the three asks of Wind Energy Ireland is referred to on page 16 of this report.

Glossary

DECC Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

DETE Department of the Enterprise, Trade and Employment

DMAP Designated Maritime Area Plans

ECP Enduring Connection Policy

GW gigawatts

GE General Electric

kV kilovolt

MAC Maritime Area Consent

MAP Maritime Area Planning

MARA Maritime Area Regulatory Authority

MLA Members of the Legislative Assembly

MW Megawatt

NMPF National Marine Planning Framework

ORE Offshore Renewable Energy

ORESS Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme

PR5 Price Review 5

RES Renewable Energy Sources

RES-E Electricity generated from renewable sources.

Solar PV Solar photovoltaic

WTMT Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician

WEI Wind Energy Ireland

Overview

The Committee understands the importance of wind and offshore energy has only grown with time. Job creation, skills shortages and educational skills opportunities are areas of interest to the Committee.

Ireland is particularly well placed, especially around the West coast, to avail of wind energy. The opportunity to harness this resource can have a positive impact on achieving our climate action goals.

The topic of offshore renewable energy is a key policy priority in the Committee's 2022 Work programme under a zero-carbon economy. As part of this commitment, on September 22, members of the Committee visited Belfast Port to examine matters that come within the remit of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, with particular relevance to aspects such as job creation and the development of skills and investment in green enterprise.

The following strategic and sustainable goals of the Department are also of note:

Goal 1 - Achieve a strong recovery and sustainable economic development through business growth and jobs growth, resilience, and innovation (specifically in respect of developing policies with our enterprise agencies to create jobs, productivity growth, strong management and leadership, and drive transformation in employment intensive and locally traded sectors, with a focus on climate, digitalisation, and skills).

Goal 5 Advance the green transition in enterprise, honouring our Climate Action commitments.

Chapter 1: Meeting with Wind Energy Ireland and Green Rebel

Introduction

The Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment met with officials from Wind Energy Ireland and Green Rebel on 15 June 2022.

Officials from Wind Energy Ireland represent the whole supply chain. These members manufacture turbines, develop projects, and operate wind farms. They also include Irish engineering, transport, surveying, and planning companies. Together, the industry employs approximately 6,000 people.

Green Rebel was founded by environmental advocate and entrepreneur, Pearse Flynn, to provide an Irish based, complete offshore survey service, support offshore wind energy projects, and help Ireland achieve its climate objectives. Green Rebel act as a single point of contact and trusted partner throughout the project lifecycle, The Project Lifecycle is the sequence of phases through which a wind energy project progresses. It includes initiation, planning, execution, and closure.

The Climate Action Plan 2021 established a target of facilitating the connection of at least 5 gigawatts (GW) in offshore wind energy to the grid by 2030. The aim is to see Irish wind farms creating jobs in Ireland, supporting Irish businesses, providing training and education opportunities for Irish workers, and growing a thriving new industry.

Date	Witnesses
15 June	<p><i>Wind Energy Ireland</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Noel Cuniffe, CEO • Mr Justin Moran, Director of External Affairs • Ms Vanessa O'Connell, Head of Inis Offshore Wind and Vice Chairperson of the Offshore Supply-Chain Working Group <p><i>Green Rebel</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Kieran Ivers, CEO

Summary

Ireland's only existing wind farm, Arklow Bank became operational in 2004. It consists of seven wind turbines and was once one of the largest offshore wind farms in Europe.

In 2021, Arklow Bank applied for phase 2 expansion. SSE Renewables is developing phase 2 of Arklow Bank, a 520-megawatt (MW) wind park, 6 to 13km off the Co Wicklow coastline and at a cost of over €2 billion. It will build on the existing seven GE-owned turbines at the location. Once operational, the project will have the capacity to power almost 450,000 homes with green energy and offset over half a million tonnes of carbon emissions each year. Around 80 people will be employed long term at its operations and maintenance facility in Arklow harbour.

By comparison, as of 2019, there were 4,700 people employed in Scotland's offshore wind sector. Today there is almost 2 GW of offshore wind operational in Scotland and a further 8.4 GW in construction or advanced development.

In a time of climate change and energy insecurity there is an opportunity for industry and coastal communities, working together, to develop a new industrial sector supporting regional development, creating thousands of jobs, and driving sustainable growth.

Other European countries, like Poland and Britain, have put in place an industrial strategy and a sector deal between the domestic offshore industry and those governments. These bring together the offshore renewables industry, the relevant state agencies, and government departments to maximise the value of the industry domestically for clean growth, which includes a strong focus on building the domestic supply chain.

Ports have two key roles in supporting offshore wind energy. They can serve as an operations and maintenance base for an offshore wind farm. Larger ports with extensive infrastructure can provide construction or marshalling services. Several Irish harbours are suitable as operations and maintenance bases. Each base translates to approximately 80 full-time jobs. Each base is normally accompanied by extensive investment in local services and port infrastructure.

The Skills Gap

As an independent advisory group, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs issued its recommendations in the [Skills for Zero Carbon report](#), identifying actions across Government and industry to help to build the necessary scale and quality in skills supply to deliver on Ireland's renewable energy ambitions. Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications, Eamon Ryan TD expects that the Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce will place a significant focus on this area as its work progresses. In the meantime, the Government continues to encourage training and education supports through areas such as Skillnet Ireland, helping develop new career opportunities in the offshore renewable energy (ORE) industry. This will facilitate the workforce becoming an integral part of the offshore wind industry.

Skillnet Ireland have several initiatives for Irish businesses and workers. Some examples are set out below:

- The Climate Ready talent development initiative will support 1,400 Irish businesses and 4,000 workers in 2022 providing practical skills and insights to manage the challenges that transitioning to a low-carbon economy presents.

- The Green Tech Skillnet is a business network for companies of all sizes in the renewable energy and green technology sectors. It aims to foster collaborative work between network companies to enable the sharing of best practices within the industry. It is promoted by Wind Energy Ireland (WEI), the representative body for the Irish wind industry.
- The Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician (WTMT) Apprenticeship was launched in March 2022. This was introduced as there were no apprenticeships that provided the range of knowledge, skills and competencies needed for the role of wind turbine maintenance technician.

New wind farms will require hundreds of new wind-turbine technicians. Wind Energy Ireland with the support of Skillnet Ireland, train ten to twenty people each year with partners in Green Tech Skillnet. These projects will require thousands of qualified and highly skilled persons such as ecologists, marine biologists, electrical and marine engineers in an already challenged sector from a skills gap perspective.

Last year, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs published the Skills for Zero Carbon report. The report made several recommendations, including:

- co-ordinated planning for training within the renewable energy sector through partnerships between Government, industry, and training providers;
- the prioritising of training for jobs in renewable energy that are set to be in high demand, including marine planners, turbine technicians, hydrogen specialists and other technical roles;
- the expansion of existing maritime training to meet demand from the offshore energy sector; and
- engagement with the fishing community to give people with experience working at sea the option to transfer into the offshore wind sector.

Cross-Departmental Support

In late 2021, the Department of Transport published an updated policy statement that set out a strategy for commercial ports to facilitate offshore renewable energy. The Department also worked successfully with other EU Member States to amend the Connecting Europe Facility criteria to allow EU funding of port infrastructure for offshore wind.

Wind Energy Ireland recommends the establishment of the cross-departmental offshore wind delivery task force, which will include a focus on supply-chain issues. Officials contend Ireland has enough offshore wind power to power this country and export energy as both electricity and green hydrogen.

Wind Energy Ireland contends the industry is already experiencing a shortage of planners, marine biologists, ecologists, and tradespeople. They have suggested that there is a requirement for apprenticeships to begin immediately and partnerships to form with technological universities and third-level institutions around Ireland. They submit that this will require an action plan to be developed so that the challenges can be comprehensively addressed by the State rather than by each individual college, some of which have stepped forward on their own volition to try to develop apprenticeship and third-level programmes to service the needs of the industry.

Electricity demand will triple between now and 2050, predominantly as we electrify heat and transport. We are going to need around 25 GW of offshore wind energy purely for domestic purposes. The export potential opportunity that is off the west coast, is believed to be equivalent to around 70 GW to 80 GW of capacity. The establishment of a hydrogen supply chain will be very important to that over time. The electricity grid that is currently operated is not capable of managing this level of energy.

Green Hydrogen

Hydrogen will play a role in the long-term decarbonisation of Ireland's energy system, and green hydrogen offers synergies with Ireland's renewable electricity ambitions.

Hydrogen can be used in a fuel cell for a range of purposes, injected into the natural gas grid, or used to make synthetic liquid and gaseous fuels.

Green hydrogen technology can be used to support the rapid deployment of Variable Renewable Generation, enable renewable electricity to generate emission reductions beyond the electricity sector, and mitigate the issues of variability and storage associated with high penetration levels of wind and solar PV technology.

Wind turbines could also be directly connected to electrolysis systems, transforming wind farms into dedicated hydrogen production systems and thereby avoiding additional strain on the electricity grid.

Two years ago, the 2030 offshore wind target in Europe was 60 GW. It was recently announced that Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands will be developing 65 GW by themselves between now and 2030. Right across Europe, we are hearing that supply chain constraints are a big challenge. All the countries will need to pool together their resources and supply chains in the hope of meeting Europe's target.

Floating Wind Energy

Wind Energy Ireland has submitted and supports that floating wind energy is a huge opportunity for Ireland's south and west coasts. For floating wind energy to develop during this decade there will need to be a specific fund within the second renewable electricity support scheme auction for offshore renewables. The reason that this sector will need its own fund in the middle of the decade is that floating wind energy this decade will not be able to compete directly on price with fixed-bottom offshore wind energy, which will be the predominant technology that will be developed off our coasts this decade.

There are approximately 25 GW of offshore wind energy deployed in the world right now, and almost all of it is through fixed-bottom technology. There are other countries in Europe that can deploy fixed-bottom technology farther out to sea, but that is because they have much shallower waters close to their coastlines. Even off the east coast, Irish waters get very deep very quickly.

Fixed-bottom and floating requirements are different, so we need to prepare not just for what can be done today, but what can be done in the late 2020s and 2030s.

When it comes to costs specifically for offshore wind and for floating offshore wind energy, there is no pre-existing example in Europe for what the costs of developing floating offshore wind energy for commercial-scale projects will be. Britain and France are both in the process of developing and running auctions specifically for floating wind energy.

Grid Infrastructure

Ireland's grid infrastructure requires major development. The electricity grid was substantially developed in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s. Ireland has been benefiting from the capacity that was created in that grid for the past two decades, and it has helped to drive economic growth and employment in Ireland.

However, Wind Energy Ireland contend we are starting to reach a point where our electricity grid will need further levels of reinforcement, along the coasts, to deliver offshore wind energy and, in the midlands and other parts of the country, to deliver onshore renewables as well. This will require support for our grid infrastructure if Ireland is to have any chance of meeting our decarbonisation targets. Ireland will need more pylons, more underground cables, and more substations.

Establishment of a State body

Through a partnership between the ESB and Coillte, FuturEnergy Ireland has been established as a State company developing onshore wind energy and Bord na Móna is very much established as an onshore wind energy and solar developer as well.

Wind Energy Ireland suggests that if Ireland were to establish a State body to develop offshore wind energy, it would take time and resources to establish both it

and a regulator. This could significantly delay the development of a single offshore wind turbine for the next 10 to 15 years. Many of the projects around our coasts have been in development for years or, in some cases, decades, and those projects need to proceed.

Costs

Any offshore wind farm that is developed around Ireland will also pay a seabed lease, so revenue for the State will be generated from every offshore wind farm that is developed.

Community Benefit

Community benefit and ensuring that will be spread over the lifetime of the project is essential to the successful development of an offshore wind energy industry, but the community benefit fund as a requirement of the contract an offshore wind farm will get is related to the duration of the contract.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage recently appointed a chairperson for the Seafood Offshore Renewable Energy Working Group, which will bring together about 11 or 12 fishing organisations, representatives of the offshore wind sector and the Departments and State agencies that are relevant to this, such as Bord Iascaigh Mhara and the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine.

Ireland has a poor history in the context of benefiting from our own natural resources. A sectoral deal is not an off-the-shelf solution. It can only be achieved with collaboration between the Government, industry and officials. That should encourage the development of an indigenous supply chain, as well as foreign direct investment into Ireland.

Hydrogen strategy

A hydrogen strategy is in the process of being developed. As a country, we need to stimulate not just the supply of hydrogen, which is where the renewable energy comes in, but also the demand for hydrogen.

The cost of hydrogen will be driven by the cost of the renewables that are being developed. Providing more certainty to the development community for renewable electricity through having a planning system, a grid system and a supply chain that works, will facilitate the production renewable power and the transition to hydrogen. There are projects involving the development of hydrogen around Ireland. Wind Energy Ireland believe that hydrogen will play a big role towards the end of the decade and into the 2030s.

Employment Opportunity

The UK had a target of 30,000 jobs in the industry by 2030 and has already reached that target. The UK now envisages that this figure will be 100,000 by 2030. There will be enough work in the development of offshore wind energy in Ireland to provide opportunities for every significant port in this country. Even for some smaller ports and harbours, there are opportunities for them to be operations and maintenance bases. If an Irish supply chain is created to support Irish offshore wind farms, there is no reason those Irish companies will not be able to engage in building wind farms beyond Ireland's coastal areas in 15- or 20-years' time or less.

While the construction of an onshore wind farm can take between 4 and 8 years, considering all phases of the process, the construction of an offshore wind farm is estimated to take between 7 and 11 years.

The benefits of offshore wind are not concentrated within one area. The wind farms are all around the coast. There is opportunity to look to understand where we can develop clusters for innovation for the development of the supply chain. That is around areas such as Cork, the west, Foynes and the east. That cluster effect is important for having a national strategy, as well as for thinking about what we need in different parts of the country.

System integration is a challenge. Resourcing is also a challenge. These are key challenges for Ireland. It is a matter of resourcing within the industry as well as across the industry, for example with the likes of EirGrid, An Bord Pleanála and the environmental organisations.

In conclusion

Wind Energy Ireland delivered three asks to the Committee in response to a Member's question. These are set out below:

- The first ask relates to the need for the offshore delivery task force to sit down with industry to agree an action plan for how we develop our domestic offshore supply chain. We believe the supply chain is part of the task force's remit. We want to be at the table to try to explain the opportunities we have seen in other jurisdictions,
- The second ask is for more investment and strategic investment into port infrastructure. They reiterate port opportunities are being developed across Ireland in many of our ports. However, for them to be ready to help to deliver for 2030, they need investment now.
- The final ask relates to the Skills for Zero Carbon report. The report recommends the need to see an implementation group set up so that there is a co-ordinated response right across government and across all Departments to support developing the people, the training and the skill sets to be able to deliver on the opportunity.

In addition, officials from Wind Energy Ireland noted that what they hope to see from the Department is responsibility being taken for the jobs opportunity that offshore wind energy will bring.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment position

Following engagement with the officials from Wind Energy Ireland, the Committee wrote to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. The Department's position is outlined below.

Ireland remains committed to achieving our ambitious targets to have 80% of our electricity generated from renewable resources by 2030, with 5 GW coming from offshore wind. Offshore and renewable energy is a cross departmental goal involving various Departments.

The Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) has established a cross-Departmental Offshore Wind Delivery Taskforce to accelerate and avail of the longer term economic and business opportunities associated with the development of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) in Ireland.

The primary objective of this Taskforce is to develop a singular, system wide strategy and project plan setting out a road map for all the activities under way by Government Departments and Agencies. In that regard, its membership comprises senior officials from the Government Departments and Agencies that are vital to the delivery of Ireland's ORE ambitions.

Ireland will potentially need to build, on a phased basis, around four standard ORE port facilities (each capable of building 500 MW of ORE annually) that will act as construction and deployment ports over the next 25 - 30 years. In addition, smaller ports will be required for ORE Operation and Maintenance activities. Several ports and private entities are progressing plans to provide the facilities and infrastructure required to assist the ORE sector to develop in Ireland.

In line with the Policy Statement, the Department of Transport has set up a Ports Co-ordination Group that meets quarterly to ensure alignment of policy and to monitor progress for the delivery of ORE port facilities. Membership consists of the commercial ports, the Departments of Transport, Environment, Climate and Communications and Housing, Planning, Local Government and Heritage. The

Group can invite other stakeholders to attend meetings and present to the Group and it was agreed, at the last meeting of the Co-ordination Group, that Wind Energy Ireland would be invited to make a presentation at its meeting in September 2022.

Chapter 2: Committee Educational Travel Trip to Belfast Harbour

The Decision to take the trip

The Joint Committee held a meeting with Wind Energy Ireland on 15 June. Following this meeting, Ocean Winds extended an invite to the Committee to visit a floating offshore wind development in Aberdeen, Scotland. Wind Energy Ireland also extended an invite to the Committee to attend an educational visit of Belfast Harbour.

The Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment accepted the invite from Wind Energy Ireland and agreed to organise a travel trip for late September. It was agreed a trip to Belfast was the more agreeable option.

The trip allowed the Committee to develop its understanding of offshore renewable energy, informed the Committee view on the issue of future development opportunities around the coast of Ireland and examine the impact and costs of developing an offshore wind energy port.

The trip encompassed meetings with parliamentarians and officials with a presentation, briefing and discussion at Belfast Harbour including a visit to the nearby site to view the scale of the proposed land take in the next stage of the Belfast Harbour project.

Purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to gather information in respect of how Belfast Harbour supports wind energy to understand how other parts of Ireland could also support these developments.

In this regard, the trip enabled the Committee to further examine and explore the skills, labour, infrastructure, the levels and sources of investment and the enterprise, trade and employment related processes involved in establishing a wind energy base. In this regard, the trip provided the Committee with the following opportunities:

- To demonstrate the technology used in offshore wind developments and floating technology.

- To showcase an operations and manufacturing facility to support ongoing construction and maintenance off an offshore wind farm.
- To meet with Members of the Legislative Assembly of Northern Ireland (MLAs) to understand their experience of offshore wind and potential lessons for Ireland with the forthcoming establishment of the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA).

The delegation consisted of Deputy Maurice Quinlivan (Cathoirelach), Deputy David Stanton, Deputy Louise O'Reilly, Deputy Matt Shanahan and Deputy Francis Noel Duffy. The delegation was accompanied by Mr Daniel Hurley, Clerk to the Committee and Ms Ciara McAsey, Policy Advisor to the Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

The delegation would like to thank Chancellor Laurence Simms and his team in the Belfast Secretariat for their time and support to the Committee in their visit. The delegation appreciates the opportunity to engage with MLAs for the first time in person since before the Covid-19 Pandemic. The delegation was encouraged by the engagement and its ambitions for greater cross border co-operation relating to the potential benefits of offshore wind energy and welcomed the opportunity to exchange views.

The delegation also met with officials from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners who welcomed the delegation and gave a detailed presentation to the Committee on the history of wind energy production in Belfast. Officials presented their challenges, experience and plans for development of the site. The delegation also undertook a tour of the proposed expansion site and engaged in worthwhile question and answer session with the officials.

The delegation would also like to thank those who met the Committee for their time, openness and expertise, whose insights were critical to the delegation developing their understanding of the situation on the ground and adopting the conclusions outlined in this report.

Summary of Engagements

Informal Lunch with MLAs at DFA residence

Upon arrival in Belfast, the delegation had an opportunity to meet Members of the Legislative Assembly for an informal lunch to engage and discuss offshore renewable energy and the potential cross border benefits.

The engagement outlined the opportunities and challenges that exist in relation to developing offshore wind energy, the potential of tidal energy, skills gaps and key employment shortages affecting offshore energy. The engagement discussed the current energy crisis and the urgent need to increase energy security and the opportunities offshore wind will create in the development of a new industrial sector. These opportunities include in respect of employment, skills, regional development and driving sustainable growth.

The delegation highlighted the need for a whole-Island approach to the issue of offshore wind energy. Joint cooperation will be needed to support the energy targets required by 2030. The delegation welcomed the positive interactions with the MLAs on a range of issues.

The reception allowed for the exchange of a broad range of voices and views on the topic of wind energy. Some of the recurring themes from these discussions included support for achieving the 2030 targets and ensuring all opportunities are explored for regional development, skills education, and job creation.

The engagement was facilitated by Chancellor Laurence Simms and supported by the Irish Secretariat in Belfast in the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Presentation and discussion at Belfast Harbour Commission Building/ Wind Energy Site

The delegation was briefed on the general situation and landscape in the Belfast harbour area. Belfast Harbour is the only port currently in Ireland with the capacity to provide construction and marshalling services in addition to operations and maintenance bases. The geographic location of Ireland was highlighted as a prime location and the Committee viewed maps detailing future opportunities available in Ireland.

The delegation was briefed on the role and mandate of Belfast Harbour. The delegation was informed of the history of wind energy in Ireland and the stages, expenditure and planning required in the development of a D1 facility in Belfast Harbour. The briefing detailed the life cycle of a project from design to construction and on through to future development opportunities in employment, skills, training and supports.

Officials briefed the Committee delegation on Ireland's potential and opportunities for future projects. The presentation outlined current projected targets for upcoming phase one projects. The briefing highlighted the challenges in the scale of required land take and funding availability.

Attendance at Belfast Harbour for tour

The delegation received a tour of Belfast harbour to view the proposed land take for the next stage of the wind energy expansion in the development of a D1 Offshore Wind Terminal.

Officials outlined the potential for further expansion of the Belfast facility. In addition to the positive aspects of further developing Belfast Harbour. The delegation discussed potential issues that can arise in development, such as community support and availability of funding.

Chapter 3: Further Engagement

Engagement from Bord na Móna

The Joint Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment wrote to Bord na Móna to request a submission on Just Transition and Green Enterprise. This submission was received in December 2022.

Bord na Móna also recently announced a new partnership with Ocean Winds to develop wind generation capacity in offshore renewable electricity assets. This partnership is initially developing two projects focused on the Climate Action Plan targets for offshore wind development. The projects, Réalt na Mara off the coasts of Dublin & Wicklow, and Celtic Horizon, off the coasts of Wexford and Waterford, can provide more than 2,000 MW of offshore capacity to the Irish market by 2030.

The partnership

On 23 November 2022, Bord na Móna and Ocean Winds announced an exclusive Off-Shore wind partnership. The partnership brings together offshore wind energy expert Ocean Winds with Bord na Móna, one of Ireland's oldest commercial semi-state companies working in energy technology, to combine their efforts in leveraging Ireland's offshore wind power resources. The long-term, exclusive partnership will see Ocean Winds and Bord na Móna co-own, identify and develop offshore wind energy opportunities around the coast of Ireland.

The joint venture initially incorporates two potential projects, Réalt na Mara, off the coast of Dublin and Wicklow, and Celtic Horizon, off the coast of Wexford and Waterford. Engagement on both projects with local communities, stakeholders and the fishing industry is currently underway. The projects have the potential to generate up to 2.3 GW of clean and renewable electricity to power up to 2.1 million homes by 2030. By reducing Ireland's reliance on gas and oil it will also help safeguard Irish communities from global energy price fluctuations.

Bord na Móna 'Brown to Green' programme

The Bord na Móna 'Brown to Green' programme of transformation has seen the organisation pivot from the state's largest solid fossil fuel business into a 'Climate Solutions' company over the space of the last four years. The company unveiled a

10-year plan to invest €1.6bn to develop renewable energy projects. Bord na Móna's generation assets primarily produce green electricity, and more than 80% of the electricity generated in 2022 comes from renewable sources.

The Brown to Green Strategy saw the creation of three Business Units (Renewable Energy, Recycling and Land & Habitats) that make up the operational elements of the company.

Bord na Móna Renewables

Bord na Móna Renewables is developing a pipeline of circa 2,000 MW of new onshore renewable projects to contribute to the Climate Action Plan target of 80% RES-E by 2030. This pipeline is backboneed by onshore wind, with circa 1,500 MW of capacity and a further circa 500 MW of solar PV capacity. Bord na Móna Renewables is also developing low carbon thermal assets to ensure Ireland's security of supply, new integrated Energy Parks to leverage the economic potential to attract new large scale users, Just Transition and Green Enterprise dividend from Renewable Electricity and are investing in Green Hydrogen to help decarbonise the more difficult fossil dependent heating & transport sectors.

Bord na Móna are actively developing a site with planning permission for a circa 500 MW Combined Cycle Gas Turbine unit and additional peaking capacity. The delivery of this capacity will contribute to the solution for the current electricity 'security of supply' shortfall in generation adequacy highlighted in the latest generation capacity statement published by Eirgrid. This site will initially be fuelled on natural gas but will be developed as a green hydrogen ready plant to allow for the ultimate transition to a net carbon zero power system.

Bord na Móna Renewables also aims to target new and novel technologies in the Green Enterprise space to assist in the transition to a low carbon society. These projects include a mix of battery storage and other technologies that provide the inertia and other required grid balancing services necessary for a power system with a high level of renewables.

Bord na Móna's intention is to develop Energy Parks that, in addition to the construction of renewable and low carbon generation assets will also attract new large scale industrial 'demand' users. Traditionally, these large scale 'demand' users have been concentrated in the greater Dublin region, but Bord na Móna plan to develop its Energy Parks in the Midlands which will facilitate the growth in this sector of the Irish economy. This is a tangible example of a corporate strategy that is addressing Just Transition and Green Enterprise, creating economic activity in a region that has traditionally lagged behind the state's major urban centres.

Complimenting these Energy Parks investments Bord na Móna's Renewables Team are assessing the potential for the role of green hydrogen in the wider decarbonisation of the economy. A pilot scale project is under development at the site of Bord na Móna's existing wind farms, with a view to using energy that would otherwise be curtailed for grid balancing as part of the source energy for hydrogen production. The potential for Green Hydrogen as a dividend from Ireland's renewable electricity investments, is that it can catalyse and other downstream enterprises and job creation in areas such as in Sustainable Aviation Fuel, green Ammonia and related fertilisers.

Bord na Móna projects this pilot unit will initially supply hydrogen from 2024 for the industrial and transport markets. The potential for green hydrogen as a dividend from Ireland's renewable electricity investments, is that it can lead to other downstream enterprises and job creation in areas such as in Sustainable Aviation Fuel, green ammonia and related fertilisers.

Bord na Móna welcomes the legislative proposals that are currently before Dáil & Seanad Éireann, and would stress the urgency in the delivery and implementation of the following:

- Publish and enact the proposed draft Planning and Development Bill 2022 that mandates specific planning decision timelines and streamlines the planning decision-making process and ensure that the planning authorities are properly resourced to deliver on new statutory obligations.

- Commence all sections of the Planning and Development, Maritime, and Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022 (PDMVA) recently enacted and those sections relating to substitute consent.
- Finalise and enact the General Scheme of Planning and Development and Foreshore (Amendment Bill) 2022.

Bord na Móna Recycling

The Bord na Móna Recycling business, continues to pursue its aim to be a leading waste collector, processor, and end treatment solution provider to support Ireland's drive towards sustainable waste management. This business comprises of 9 Waste Licenced sites and 4 Waste Permitted sites.

Bord na Móna Recycling continues to grow and expand its offering into the circular economy. Recycling is now the 2nd largest domestic operator serving over 7,000 businesses, 140,000 households (circa 385,000 people) collecting and processing 15% of the nation's waste, of which 90% is diverted from landfill disposal. This Business increased its commercial and residential customer base year on year both organically and via acquisitions.

Bord na Móna Land and Habitats

Bord na Móna Land and Habitats, which incorporates the former consumer products and fuels businesses, combines both the Just Transition and opportunities in Green Enterprise. Bord na Móna Land and Habitats has redeployed over 200 former peat production/transport employees as well as creating over 35 new sustainable jobs in Ecology, Hydrology, Carbon expertise and Green Finance, to work on peatlands rehabilitation projects.

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The Land & Habitats business unit within Bord na Móna has an overarching remit to sustainably manage the company's estate.

Peatlands Climate Action Scheme (PCAS)

The current core activity of this Business Unit is the Peatlands Climate Action Scheme encompassing the Enhanced Decommissioning Rehabilitation & Restoration Scheme which cuts across both the Just Transition and novel opportunities in Green Enterprise. Bord na Móna Land and Habitats has redeployed over 200 former peat production/transport employees as well as creating over 35 new sustainable jobs in Ecology, Hydrology, Carbon expertise and Green Finance, to work on peatlands rehabilitation projects.

To date over 11,000 Ha of Bord na Móna peatlands have been rehabilitated, creating an estimated store of between 20 to 25 million tonnes of carbon. Flowing from this rehabilitation is the associated improvement in biodiversity.

Bord na Móna promote this a green activity that can continue to grow and expand, at present in over 7m tonnes of carbon emission can be attributed to Ireland's 'Land Use'. The Irish landscape has almost 20% organic (peatland) soils capable of storing large volumes of carbon, it is estimated that there are circa 1.5m Ha of organic soils in Ireland. This represents an opportunity to address carbon emissions and deliver sustainable jobs & economic activity in rural Ireland.

Tracks and trails

Bord na Móna Land & Habitats are working with partners including Fáilte Ireland to explore the tourism potential of the peatlands located in Ireland's Hidden Heartland via the development of tracks and trails (500km) and leveraging the success of the Lough Boora Parklands initiative. This 'eco-tourism' offering is seen as part of an emerging global macro-trend which can sustainably support novel accommodation and amenities in the Midlands.

Bord na Móna's Accelerate Green programme.

Accelerate Green is an accelerator programme developed by Bord na Móna in conjunction with Resolve Partners. It is the first of its kind in Ireland aimed at supporting early-stage companies looking to scale-up innovative products and services based on green innovation, or who are pivoting their current offering, in response to climate action and sustainability challenges.

Accelerate Green has been developed as part of a strategy to provide a pipeline of potential new innovations or enterprises operating in the sustainability space or looking to transition to become a climate solutions company like Bord na Móna's Brown to Green journey that commenced in 2018. Sharing expertise across a variety of climate solutions, including renewables, energy, carbon storage and sequestration and waste management Bord na Móna can help and support these companies to build viable propositions to deliver sustainable jobs while enabling a low-carbon economy.

In terms of network development and in the context of the recently introduced sectorial carbon budgets and the target of a net zero carbon economy by 2050 there is now an urgent need for a longer-term grid development strategy. Bord na Móna advocate that a dynamic, flexible electricity network, backboned by a high-capacity transmission network to all the regions, can harness the wider RES development potential of the island, both onshore and offshore, and serve as one of the core building blocks to the decarbonisation of the heating and transport sectors as well as being the catalyst for further Green Enterprises.

In their written submission Bord na Móna outlined the following concerns and recommendations for them to operate effectively under all policy obligations, legislative requirements, budgets, and Ireland's mandatory climate obligations.

Planning

- Publish and enact Proposed draft Planning and Development Bill 2022 and ensure that the planning authorities are properly resourced to deliver on these new statutory obligations.
- Commence all sections of the Planning and Development, Maritime, and Valuation (Amendment) Act 2022 (PDMVA) including the provisions around substituted consent.
- Finalise and enact the General Scheme of Planning and Development and Foreshore (Amendment Bill) 2022.

Grid Development

- Upgrading of the key 220kV overhead lines in the Midlands in conjunction with facilitating the expansion of access to the existing northern 400kV overhead line with the addition of a new 400kV node must be progressed without delay – in this regard the various state bodies, including the network operators, must be sufficiently resourced to deliver these opportunities.
- The agile investment framework introduced in PR5 (Price Review 5) should be deployed in the above instance; and at the very least one annual Enduring Connection Policy (ECP) application window should be put in place for the remainder of this PR5 period.
- New methods of outage management should be explored with industry players who are trying to connect ECP projects.

Offshore

- The processes, sequencing, and timing of Maritime Area Consent (MAC) applications, development consents, and Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme 2 (ORESS2) must be finalised in 2023.
- A sufficient pipeline of Phase 2 MACs will be required to ensure the competitiveness of future ORESS auctions and to cater for project attrition through the development process.
- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is to be established in Q1 2023, and will need a Board, management, and appropriately skilled resources to carry out its functions under legislation.
- Foreshore Licenses - A quicker, more efficient procedure for foreshore license processing is required to enable developers to carry out the necessary surveys and site investigations in a timely manner to develop project designs for planning consent applications and inform Offshore Renewable Energy Support Scheme (ORESS) auction bid development.
- Offshore Phase 2 developers require immediate engagement with the Transmission System Operator EirGrid with regards to grid capacity and connection of Offshore Phase 2 projects. It is critical that the various state bodies involved in this sector are sufficiently resourced.

Energy Parks

- The classification of these areas (Energy Parks) as ‘Strategic Zones’ under RePower EU.
- Development of an evidence based and proportional set of Guidelines for the renewables sector in line with best practice used in other jurisdictions, to manage the interaction of the wider renewables industry with the aviation and maritime sectors (both civil and military).

Hydrogen

- Publication of the Government’s Hydrogen Strategy under the stewardship of the Department of the Environment, Climate & Communications.

Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS)

Local coastal and marine communities will play a central role in facilitating and supporting the development of Ireland's offshore renewable electricity ambitions. This is a vital component in meeting Ireland's commitments under the Climate Action Plan 2022. Phase 1 and Phase 2 of offshore wind are expected to deliver 7GW of installed capacity.

Coastal communities hosting offshore wind projects are now to financially benefit as generators will have to pay them an amount each year, under a new government framework published on 9 January 2023.

The payments will go into "community benefit funds", and the amount paid will depend on the amount of energy generated. The Renewable Electricity Support Scheme (RESS) is a Government of Ireland initiative that provides support to renewable electricity projects in Ireland.

RESS is an important component of the Programme for Government and the Climate Action Plan 2021 and is a major step in achieving Ireland's target of at least 80% renewable electricity by 2030. With a primary focus on cost effectiveness, the RESS delivers a broader range of policy objectives, including:

- providing an Enabling Framework for Community Participation through the provision of pathways and supports for communities to participate in renewable energy projects;
- increasing technology diversity by broadening the renewable electricity technology mix;
- delivering an ambitious renewable electricity policy to 2030; and
- increasing energy security, energy sustainability and ensuring the cost effectiveness of energy policy.

EirGrid has been tasked with operating the RESS auctions (including qualification).

Maritime Area Regulatory Authority

The Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (MAP Act) was signed into law in December 2021. It is intended to be the centrepiece of a new streamlined consent regime, which will enable the swift deployment of offshore wind energy infrastructure, ultimately delivering 5GW by 2030.

The Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 is one component of the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) which was published in summer 2021. Parallel to the National Planning Framework, the NMPF illustrates the vision for Ireland's maritime area, totalling approximately 495,000km², until 2040.

The Maritime Area Planning Bill 2021 passed all stages of the Oireachtas on 17 December and was enacted on 23 December 2021.

The Act provides the legal and administrative underpinning for a new planning regime in the maritime area, facilitating the development of offshore energy. It is intended to strike a balance between unlocking Ireland's offshore wind potential, while also protecting the marine environment.

Replacing the existing development consent regimes with a single consent principle, or Maritime Area Consent (a seabed lease), it will enable development consent, or planning permission, with one environmental assessment. The new processes provided for within the Act will apply to foreshore licences and leases, as well as planning permissions for marine projects, from seaweed harvesting to offshore renewable energy infrastructure.

Significantly, the legislation seeks to ensure that the consent mechanism for offshore renewable energy projects:

- complies with EU environmental assessment obligations;
- complies with Aarhus Convention on public participation; and
- enables Ireland to deliver projects conducive to national climate targets for 2030.

The legislation also creates a new regulatory authority, the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA).

Alongside its enforcement functions, MARA will assume responsibility for issuing foreshore licences from the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Likewise, the MARA will also be empowered to issue Maritime Area Consents (equivalent to foreshore leases).

Beginning its work in January 2022, the MARA implementation committee has been allocated a €2 million budget. Until MARA is established (Q1 2023) and resourced, the Minister will retain responsibility for granting applications for licences and leases to legacy projects or “special MAC cases”.

Development Consent

In January 2022, Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications Eamon Ryan TD, launched a consultation in relation to the new Marine Area consent regime for offshore renewable energy.

Providing for Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs), or portions of the maritime area which are selected for specific usage, the MAP Act also requires applications for Marine Area Consents (MACs) within DMAPs to be subject to a specific process.

Seven offshore wind projects were granted “relevant project” status in May 2020 – i.e., offshore renewable energy projects which hold a foreshore authorisation, are in the process of applying for foreshore authorisation, or are subject to an EirGrid connection agreement – can be invited by the Minister of the Environment, Climate and Communications to apply for the first MACs. It is intended that these “special MAC cases” will contribute to the delivery of 5GW of offshore wind energy by 2030.

Maritime Area Planning

In December 2022, Minister Ryan issued MACs for the first phase of seven offshore renewable energy projects.

The Maritime Area Planning Act gave Minister Ryan the powers to assess the first batch of MAC applications while the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority is being established, this includes seven phase one projects:

The Oriel Wind Park, the Arklow Bank II, the Bray Bank, the Kish Bank, the North Irish Sea Array, the Codling Wind park, and the Skerid Rocks project.

Shannon Estuary Region Taskforce

The Programme for Government 2020 committed to supporting the Shannon Estuary Region through the establishment of a Taskforce to evaluate the economic development potential of the area and determining how this potential can be realised in both an economically and environmentally sustainable way. The Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce was established on 21 April 2022 with the twofold objective to create a long-term vision for the region and to outline a concrete action plan to achieve it.

The Shannon Estuary area encompasses the twin headlands of Loop Head Peninsula in County Clare, across to the northern coastal area of County Kerry, and stretching inland on either side of the Estuary, to Limerick city and North Tipperary. The Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce (SEET) centres its plan on the economic impact of all industrial, professional and services ecosystems and the associated societal activity and benefits, rooted in realistic yet abundant renewable energy scenarios. The baseline scenarios foresee an autonomous growth of the regional population by over 50,000 by 2040.

The Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce Interim report states that there is an urgent need for Europe to transition to secure, cost-effective, renewable energy and that Europe/Ireland is now at a critical juncture. This precarious situation, which has developed due to the international climate emergency, has also escalated due to the war in Ukraine, with EU electricity demand reduction targets and spiralling costs creating an overwhelming need for all Member States to do more to activate all alternative energy sources.

With its proximity to a vast offshore wind resource, a deep-water port, the availability of development lands, existing gas and electricity grid connectivity, road/rail/air, and water connectivity, as well as human capital, the Shannon Estuary Region is uniquely positioned to deliver a European solution – through the harnessing of Atlantic offshore wind, with upwards of 70 GW of capacity within a viable distance.

The Taskforce vision for the Shannon Estuary is for it to be the lead location for Atlantic offshore wind through the delivery of 2GW by 2030 and 30GW by 2050, satisfying both the domestic demand of our future economy and also export demand to Europe. The 2050 scenario of 30 GW of Floating Offshore Wind could attract direct and indirect investment of €60-90Bn if integrated with current and new downstream industrial and domestic usage. A [recent study](#) estimates upwards of 5,000 jobs would be directly supported through the design, construction, and operation and maintenance of this pipeline up to 2050.

In the onshore and offshore energy sectors, consultations include national stakeholders such as Eirgrid, ESB, SEAI, and representative bodies for the wind energy, bioenergy, and solar energy industries. The Taskforce has also engaged with international stakeholders including the European Commission, Hydrogen Europe, wind energy developers, European energy ports, and others.

The taskforce ambition aligns with both the July 2022 Government announcement on 2030 sectoral emissions ceilings and the September Joint Statement on the North Seas Energy Cooperation committing Ireland to 37GW target for offshore wind by 2050.

[The Vision 2041 Strategic Review](#) focuses on the sea change of opportunities and obligations around climate action as well as the extensive changes in national supply chain logistics. Climate action is grounded in our net zero obligations by 2050 and plans to attain them must be devised and implemented in the immediate term.

The Shannon Estuary's proximity to an abundance of renewable energy from offshore wind provides the potential for significant production of net zero compatible fuels and feedstocks, such as green hydrogen and its various derivatives. In addition to transforming local industry and helping the country accelerate its transition to a net zero future, this will enhance Ireland's energy security as it reduces reliance on imported fossil fuels. This review recommends the establishment of four core facilities on the Shannon Estuary to support the delivery of floating offshore wind at scale.

Appendix 1: Membership of the Joint Committee

Deputies

Maurice Quinlivan (SF)	Cathairleach
Richard Bruton (FG)	
Francis Noel Duffy (GP)	
Joe Flaherty (FF)	
Paul Murphy (S-PBP)	
James O'Connor (FF)	
Louise O'Reilly (SF)	
Matt Shanahan (Ind)	
David Stanton (FG)	

Senators

Garret Ahearn (FG)
Ollie Crowe (FF)
Róisín Garvey (GP)
Paul Gavan (SF)
Marie Sherlock (Lab)

Notes:

1. Deputies appointed to the Committee by order of the Dáil on 8 September 2020.
2. Deputy Maurice Quinlivan was appointed as Chair on 8 September 2020.
3. Senators appointed to the Committee by order of the Seanad on 25 September 2020.
4. Deputy James O'Connor replaced Deputy Niamh Smyth on 26 November 2020.

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference of The Joint Committee

a) Scope and Context of Activities of Committees (*derived from Standing Orders – DSO 84, SSO 70*)

- 1) The Joint Committee may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders;
- 2) Such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil/and or Seanad;
- 3) The Joint Committee shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Committee of Public Accounts pursuant to Standing Order 186 and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993;
- 4) The Joint Committee shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Joint Committee on Public Petitions in the exercise of its functions under Standing Order 111A; and

The Joint Committee shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—

- (i) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or
- (ii) the principal officeholder of a body under the aegis of a Department or which is partly or wholly funded by the State or established or appointed by a member of the Government or by the Oireachtas:

Provided that the Chairman may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle, whose decision shall be final.

- 5) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice given by the Chairman of the Select Committee, waives this instruction on motion made by the Taoiseach pursuant to Standing Order 28. The Chairmen of Select Committees shall have responsibility for compliance with this instruction.

b) Functions of Departmental Committees (*derived from Standing Orders – DSO 84A and SSO 70A*)

- (1) The Select Committee shall consider and report to the Dáil on-
 - (a) such aspects of the expenditure, administration and policy of a Government Department or Departments and associated public bodies as the Committee may select, and
 - (b) European Union matters within the remit of the relevant Department or Departments.
- (2) The Select Committee may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann for the purposes of the functions set out in this Standing Order, other than at paragraph (3), and to report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments, such—

- (a) Bills,
- (b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 187
- (c) Estimates for Public Services, and
- (d) other matters as shall be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil, and
- (e) Annual Output Statements including performance, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of public moneys, and
- (f) such Value for Money and Policy Reviews as the Select Committee may select.

(4) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Joint Committee may consider the following matters in respect of the relevant Department or Departments and associated public bodies:

- (a) matters of policy and governance for which the Minister is officially responsible,
- (b) public affairs administered by The Department,
- (c) policy issues arising from Value for Money and Policy Reviews conducted or commissioned by the Department,
- (d) Government policy and governance in respect of bodies under the aegis of the Department,
- (e) policy and governance issues concerning bodies which are partly or wholly funded by the State or which are established or appointed by a member of the Government or the Oireachtas,
- (f) the general scheme or draft heads of any Bill
- (g) any post-enactment report laid before either House or both Houses by a member of the Government or
Minister of State on any Bill enacted by the Houses of the Oireachtas,
- (h) statutory instruments, including those laid or laid in draft before either House or both Houses and those made under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009,
- (i) strategy statements laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas pursuant to the Public Service Management Act 1997,
- (j) annual reports or annual reports and accounts, required by law, and laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, of the Department or bodies referred to in subparagraphs (d) and (e) and the overall performance and operational results, statements of strategy and corporate plans of such bodies, and
- (k) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.

(5) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Joint Committee shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments—

- (a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 114, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,

- (b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,
 - (c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, and
 - (d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant EU Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings.
- (6) Where the Select Committee has been joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann, the Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be the Chairman of the Joint Committee.
- (7) The following may attend meetings of the Select or Joint Committee, for the purposes of the functions set out in paragraph (5) and may take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:
- (a) members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland,
 - (b) members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
 - (c) at the invitation of the Committee, other members of the European Parliament.
- (8) The Joint Committee may, in respect of any Ombudsman charged with oversight of public services within the policy remit of the relevant Department or Departments, consider—
- (a) such motions relating to the appointment of an Ombudsman as may be referred to the Committee, and
 - (b) such Ombudsman reports laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas as the Committee may select: Provided that the provisions of Standing Order 111F apply where the Select Committee has not considered the Ombudsman report, or a portion or portions thereof, within two months (excluding Christmas, Easter or summer recess periods) of the report being laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas.

Appendix 3: References Links

Joint Committee Meeting on 15 June in public session

[Video](#)

[Transcript](#)

[Opening Statement](#)

Skills for Zero Carbon

[Report](#)

Eirgrid Capacity Report

[Report](#)

Carbon Trust for the Irish Wind Energy: "Harnessing our Potential"

[Report](#)

Shannon Estuary Region Taskforce

[Report](#)

Vision 2041 Strategic Review

[Report](#)

Appendix 4: Belfast trip itinerary of the Committee

Agenda of the Educational visit

9.10 Attend at Dublin Connolly Train Station for 9.30am Train Departure

11.45 Train arrives in Belfast

11.55 Taxi from Belfast Train Station to Department of Foreign Affairs Residence

12.30 – 14.20 Informal lunch/discussion with MLAs in respect of offshore wind energy generation/ enterprise, trade, and employment at Department of Foreign Affairs Residence

14.30 Taxi from Department of Foreign Affairs Residence to Belfast Harbour Commission Building

15.00 Presentation and discussion at Belfast Harbour Commission Building/ Wind Energy Site

16.30 Taxi from Belfast Harbour Commission Building/ Wind Energy Site back to Belfast Train station

17.15 Arrive at Belfast Train Station for 18.05 Train Departure

18.05 Train departs Belfast Train Station

20.15 Train arrives in Dublin Connolly

MLA Attendees

- Mike Nesbitt, UUP
- Lauren Kerr, UUP
- Kellie Armstrong, Alliance
- Sorcha Eastwood, Alliance
- Caoimhe Archibald, Sinn Féin
- Matthew O'Toole, SDLP
- Clare Bailey, former Green Party MLA



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