

Towards a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland

A response to the Green Paper

By

THE MARINE INSTITUTE

1. The Marine Institute welcomes the publication of the Green Paper and supports the general thrust of its proposals. In particular, the Institute welcomes the recognition of the potential role that Ocean Energy can play in achieving the Government's energy objectives. In this context, the Institute offers the following comments:
2. The Marine Institute operates under the aegis of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (DCMNR). It was established in 1992. Its remit is defined by the Marine Institute Act, 1991, *to undertake, to co-ordinate, to promote and to assist in marine research and development and to provide such services related to the marine research and development, that in the opinion of the Institute will promote economic development and create employment and protect the marine environment*.
3. Since its establishment the Institute has played an active role in promoting research and development in the area of renewable Ocean Energy, primarily Wave Energy. Its role in this area is not directly related to policy or practice in respect to the Energy sector in Ireland, but to the fact that the emergence of a future global market for ocean energy systems provides a unique opportunity for Ireland to develop leading technical and private sector competences in this field of marine technology.
4. The Marine Institute has outlined its activities in the area of Ocean Energy in a previous communication to the Department in response to the Consultation document. An updated summary of these includes:
 - Funding of €1.5m., under NDP Marine Research Measures for RTD and capacity-building initiatives, and the provision of a Test Site for wave energy device developers.
 - Publication, in collaboration with Sustainable Energy Ireland, of
 - >a public consultation document, with the objective of eliciting discussion and feedback on the approach to the development and utilisation of wave energy in Ireland,
 - >a study to identify the potential economic contribution of ocean energy to Ireland, undertaken by Peter Bacon and Associates, in association with ESB International,
 - >a Wave Energy atlas for Ireland,

>the preparation of the national strategy document, 'Ocean Energy in Ireland', launched by the Department in April 2006. This identifies significant energy and employment opportunities for Ireland, by proactively becoming a leader in the development of OE technologies.

5. Specific Comments on the Green Paper

- The Institute specifically welcomes the commitment in the green Paper to fully deliver the national Ocean Energy strategy and commits (*is this MI commits or Green paper commits?*) to continuing to build the research and technical infrastructure required
- The Institute will fully participate in and co-operate with the work of the Irish Energy Research Council
- The Institute particularly supports the target that Ireland should become a centre of excellence for R&D in Ocean Energy and will continue to focus its funding to this effect.
- In respect to the implementation of the Ocean Energy strategy and the achievement of the technology and enterprise development opportunities identified, the institute would note that Ireland is in an internationally competitive situation, and that realisation of the employment and technology export opportunities is dependant upon timely and concerted actions by the relevant partner agencies. In this context, it is particularly important that the Advisory Committee mechanism proposed in the strategy be put in place immediately.
- In respect to the objective to develop new energy technologies to deliver security of supply, sustainability and competitiveness, and the unique opportunities that the Ocean Energy technology sector offers, the provision of tax-based incentives to private capital investors in early stage development of these technologies can provide an important stimulus to Ireland's objective to be a leading exporter of knowledge-led products and services.

Did we not intend to make a comment with regard to flagging issue of government support/stimulation measure(s) for SME based technology development / R&D investment promotion