



## **Irish Sea Maritime Forum**

### **Summer Newsletter 2020**

#### **New Survey for the Irish Sea - closing date 31st August**

The Irish Sea Maritime Forum, supported by the University of Liverpool, is conducting an Irish-sea wide survey to look to the future and the changing context of the Irish Sea in the 2020s. We want to develop a comprehensive picture of the future for the Irish Sea and its communities on a whole Irish Sea scale by asking about current and future issues and opportunities, key Irish Sea projects, and what Brexit and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic might mean for the Irish Sea and its communities. The survey draws on the 2013 Irish Sea Issues and Opportunities Report and the 2015 Blue Growth Prospectus, both of which were developed with wide stakeholder input, and results will be presented at the 2021 Irish Sea Maritime Forum conference on the Isle of Man (date tba). We welcome responses from all sectors and communities around the Irish Sea. Please feel free to share the survey with others. You can access the survey by following this [link](#).

#### **Wholescape Approach to Marine Management Project**

The Rivers Trust and the Coastal Partnerships Network are working together on a 16-month project, funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), to support a more an integrated and collaborative approach to the management of estuarine and coastal waters in England. The Wholescape Approach to Marine Management 'WAMM' project will help support a more collaborative approach between Coastal and Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) partnerships and, through training workshops and webinars, build knowledge and expertise across a range of issues.

A key aim of WAMM is that more holistic and collaborative project delivery, supported by a range of stakeholders and drawing upon a diverse range of funding sources, is realised. Morecambe Bay in North West England has been selected as the primary pilot study location within WAMM and the Morecambe Bay Coastal Partnership and the three CaBA Partnerships (led by Lune, South Cumbria and Wyre Rivers Trusts respectively) encompassing the Bay catchment have begun a programme of collaborative working with a focus upon plastics and their presence within the coastal and estuarine environment. WAMM will also develop a roadmap to collaborative working which will identify the means to overcome perceived barriers and identify the opportunities and benefits of a partnership approach.

The North West Coastal Forum is pleased to be assisting with regional co-ordination for WAMM. For more information follow this link: <https://www.theriverstrust.org/projects/wamm-wholescape-approach-to-marine-management/>

#### **SIMAtlantic Project releases first project newsletter**

The first newsletter of the EMFF co-funded SIMAtlantic project was issued in March 2020. The SIMAtlantic project aims to support the establishment and implementation of maritime spatial planning (MSP) in five European Atlantic countries: France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom covering a project area that includes the Irish Seas. The project will produce methodologies, practical guidance documents, communication tools and a catalogue of relevant information to assist the work of MSP authorities. These will be tested in specific pilot study areas. The work will culminate in an 'Atlantic Vision' – a roadmap for MSP in the European Atlantic marine



region. The project newsletter provides an update on the state of maritime spatial planning in each of the countries involved in the project and is available to view on the SIMAtlantic [website](#).

### **Ireland's Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA) has launched consultation on the country's grid development policy for offshore wind.**

The DCCA has opened a consultation to Inform a Grid Development Policy for Offshore Wind in Ireland on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The feedback from the survey aims to assist the Irish government in meeting the ambitious targets set out in the [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP) which was published in June 2019 and includes a target to develop at least 3.5 GW of offshore wind energy. To meet these targets Government has to put in place a policy framework for the delivery model for offshore grid in alignment with [National Marine Planning Framework](#) (NMPF).

The consultation paper is not intended to provide a decision on the best available option, but rather to present evidence that informs the decision for a grid delivery model suitable for offshore wind development in Ireland. The ultimate choice of grid delivery model will come from any point along the full spectrum of options available, informed by careful consideration of the key drivers in the Irish context. Once the model has been decided by the government the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) will similarly consult and decide on a regulatory framework for offshore wind, DCCA states. For more information on responding to the consultation, please visit the government [website](#).

### **Solway Firth Partnership release Spring/Summer edition of Tidelines**

The current lockdown doesn't mean you have to miss out on this seasons edition of Tidelines which is now available to download in PDF and enjoyed from the comfort of your own home! Just one of the items included in this edition of Tidelines is an update on the Dumfries & Galloway Shoreline Management Plan which is currently being revised and a new plan is expected to be published in summer 2021. The edition also includes a review of Sarah Kerr's book 'The British Lighthouse Trail. A Regional Guide' which provides a new perspective on these wonderful structures which have played such an important role over the years in keeping vessels safe as they approach our shores. The current edition of Tidelines can be accessed via the following [link](#).

### **UK Government runs Freeports consultation in bid to boost economic activity**

In a bid to provide a boost to the post Brexit economy the UK government plans to open 10 new freeports in 2021. The government wants to establish freeports, which have different customs rules than the rest of the country, that are innovative hubs, boost global trade, attract inward investment and increase productivity. In doing so, the government wants freeports to generate employment opportunities to the benefit of some of our most deprived communities around the UK. A formal consultation which opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February has now been extended to run until the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020. To participate in the consultation please visit the UK Government [website](#).

### **Consultation on the Draft National Marine Planning Framework for Ireland closes**

The Draft NMPF is Ireland's first marine planning framework and it applies to a broad range of marine activities including aquaculture, offshore renewable energy, sea fisheries and tourism. A public consultation for the plan ran from the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The consultation was open for feedback via post, online and also included a series of regional public



events were held to promote awareness and facilitate public and stakeholder participation on the Draft NMPF focusing on different relevant sectors. The results of the consultation will be published later this year. Further information can be found on the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government [website](#).

### **Consultation for the North West and South West Marine Plans for England closes**

Consultation has also been taking place on marine plans on the English side of the Irish Sea, with the consultation on the North West and South West plans running from the 20th January 2020 until the 20th April 2020. This is the final stage of statutory public consultation before submission of the plans to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for adoption. As in Ireland the comments received as part of the consultation are currently under review by the Marine Management Organisation. A consultation summary will be produced following the consultation and a summary of responses and changes made will be published once the Marine Plans are adopted. Further information can be found on the Marine Management Organisation [website](#).

### **Inshore Ireland rebrands to Ocean Focus and moves online**

After 15 years publishing as Inshore Ireland they have now rebranded to Ocean Focus in order to better reflect global lens on the oceans of the world, in addition to reporting on the coastal and inland waters of Ireland. The new Ocean Focus will report on the 'blue economy' and the impacts of climate change and global warming, as well as on fisheries, seafood, aquaculture and freshwater. Ocean Focus has now also moved online to 'device friendly' platform. The first digital edition of [Ocean Focus](#) is available to view now.