



**Limerick
Chamber**
Advancing business together



Limerick Chamber
**Consultation on the
Development of a National
Industrial Strategy for
Offshore Wind**

November 2023

Introduction

Limerick Chamber fully endorses the recommendations set out in the Shannon Estuary Economic Taskforce (SEETF) report, published July 2023 and welcomes this public consultation on the development of a national industrial strategy for Offshore Wind.

This first National Industrial Strategy for Offshore Wind is an opportunity for Ireland to ambitiously set out a vision for how the sector will be developed and supported.

The strategy is critical to identify key steps that must be prioritised, such as accelerated delivery of Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPS), which will allow Ireland to strategically plan for maximum capture of potential value add for the economy to signal to the sector internationally that Ireland will proceed with deliberate intent to create the best environment in the world for Offshore Wind Energy (OWE) production, for industry research and development and for supply of skilled workers.

1. Closing the Supply Chain Gaps

- Accelerate the delivery of policy and DMAPS necessary for the development of floating offshore wind on Ireland's Atlantic coast.
- Establish transparent planning application processes with minimum statutory timelines for responses to support investment decisions.
- Whilst acknowledging the unique natural assets in the Shannon Estuary region and the opportunity for energy generation from the Atlantic coast, we must also recognise the fast-moving competition globally to win these green energy investments to jurisdictions, particularly given the likely long lead-in time nature of these investments and the opportunity for supply chain value add.
- Establish the proposed Irish Floating Offshore Wind Development Agency as recommended in the SEETF report.
- Input costs for Floating Offshore Wind Energy (FLOW) can be reduced by locating the manufacturing of key supply-chain technology in Ireland. The IDA, ISIF, and institutional investors should have roles to play in supporting these investment decisions.

Locations should be identified for the establishment of Centres of Excellence to support the development of clusters and to build on existing, complementary industry networks and skillsets.

The natural assets of the Shannon Estuary area should be recognised: A deep water sheltered port with Shannon Foynes Port; grid connectivity through Moneypoint and Tarbert; proximity to the Irish EEZ; connection to the motorway network upon completion of the N69 Foynes to Limerick road, connection to the railway network with the reactivation of the Foynes to Limerick railway line; availability of land for industrial and residential development.

Investment in enabling infrastructure (road, rail and grid) for the Shannon Estuary region should be prioritised and accelerated.

Regional ecosystem development in the Mid-West at Foynes should build upon the existing ESB plans for the Green Atlantic at Moneypoint project and the master plan for the development of the Shannon Foynes Port Company (SFPC).

As the sector is still emerging, there is demand for research and development of advanced technologies across the entire supply chain, ideally facilitated through the co-location of industry and academia to establish a 'living lab', ensuring a pioneering, entrepreneurial spirit is built into the ecosystem of the sector in Ireland.

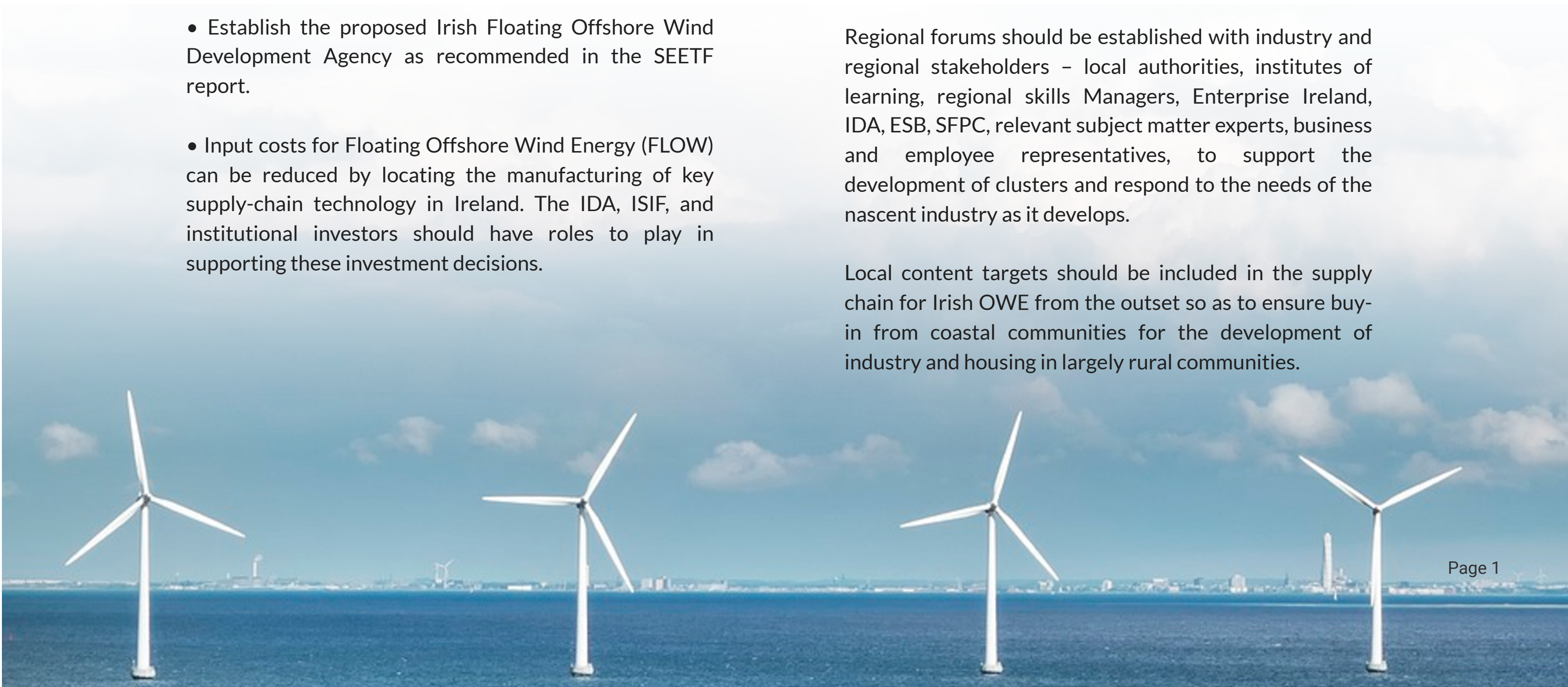
2. Building Co-operation

Supply chain synergies and capacities should be developed at inter regional and inter jurisdiction level. An all-Island approach should be taken to build North-South co-operation and support the development of the supply-chain ecosystem on the island.

A Centre of Excellence should be established on the Estuary at Foynes to support knowledge sharing and development of the ecosystem.

Regional forums should be established with industry and regional stakeholders – local authorities, institutes of learning, regional skills Managers, Enterprise Ireland, IDA, ESB, SFPC, relevant subject matter experts, business and employee representatives, to support the development of clusters and respond to the needs of the nascent industry as it develops.

Local content targets should be included in the supply chain for Irish OWE from the outset so as to ensure buy-in from coastal communities for the development of industry and housing in largely rural communities.



3. Research, Development & Innovation (RD&I)

As outlined in the SEETF Report, it is envisaged that there will be a large requirement for RD&I in the Estuary region to support the development of the sector and respond to its drive for increased efficiencies and excellence across all areas relating to FLOW.

The detailed recommendations in this regard in the SEETF report should be implemented.

4. Educating for the Future

Developing offshore renewable energy requires a diverse range of skills and education across various disciplines, and if Ireland is to take full advantage of the opportunity that we have, then we must now start training and educating people for this sector.

This is a completely new industry in Ireland, and unless we want to rely on the international pipeline of graduates, the industrial strategy must begin to plan for how we produce our own indigenous graduates.

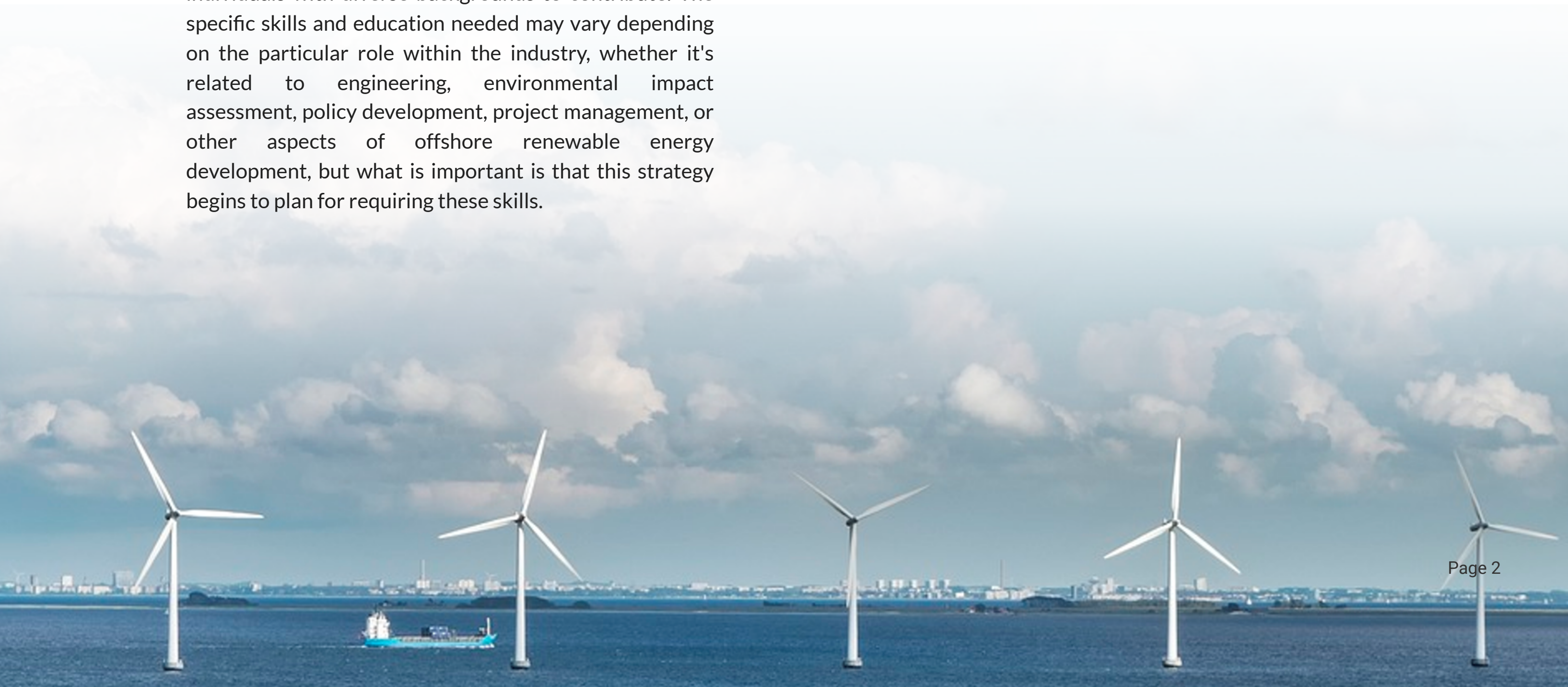
This sector will require significant people resourcing and skills across various disciplines: engineering, oceanographic practitioners, environmental scientists, environmental impact assessment professionals, marine resource management, sustainable practice managers, energy project managers, policy, law and regulation professionals, marine navigators and seamanship skills to name a few.

What's more, specialised education programs and modules focused on renewable energy technology, providing knowledge of various renewable energy sources and their application in offshore settings, must now become commonplace across many degree programmes.

It's important to note that the offshore renewable energy industry is multidisciplinary and offers opportunities for individuals with diverse backgrounds to contribute. The specific skills and education needed may vary depending on the particular role within the industry, whether it's related to engineering, environmental impact assessment, policy development, project management, or other aspects of offshore renewable energy development, but what is important is that this strategy begins to plan for requiring these skills.

Concluding Remarks

Limerick Chamber would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the National Industrial Strategy for Offshore Wind. We look forward to contributing to future consultations and will continue to promote awareness among member businesses and stakeholders of the significant economic opportunity for OWE from Shannon Estuary, as well as the important contribution that the region can make not only to decarbonising our national energy system but also supporting the decarbonisation of Europe and ensuring the security of supply for Irish energy needs now and into the future.





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