

From: captbobkieran [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 December 2014
To: Marine Spatial Planning <msp@housing.gov.ie>
Subject: FW: 1st Marine Spatial Plan Baseline Report

Dear Sirs,

I have the following brief comments on the baseline report.

Energy - Renewables

9.13

Consideration should be given to providing more port infrastructure in the North West and West, and to the development and improvement of existing ports and infrastructure. So as to have ports which are sheltered and easily accessible and of sufficient capacity for future developments in this chapters sectors and related sectors.

Fisheries

13.6

The harbours and piers for small fishing vessels in many areas of the West need significant investment in protection, development and safety improvements. Many are only able to be used in summertime.

Marine Environment

15.21

MPA,s; other marine activities can often coexist; for example shipping channels and various types of fishing. Even when there may be a period for say wild life to re- establish after development, and this should be recognised and included in the plans.

17.0 Ports and Shipping

A more holistic approach to the usage and provision of ports may be beneficial. At present large ports compete for business, and this is reflected in their plans. Several small ports business declined very significantly during the recent depression. Small ports can benefit local economies, reduce truck miles, can be developed relatively cheaply, and help reduce congestion in larger ports. In particular smaller ports in the East, West and North West if improved could be used for smaller vessels reducing congestion at larger ports and reducing truck miles, and freeing up berths in larger ports for larger deep draught vessels.

Cruise ship traffic to areas which do not have ports

Facilities could be improved for landing passengers and for mooring cruise ships perhaps with permanent moorings in relatively difficult anchorages for summer use.

ETV

Consideration in my view should be given to the provision of an emergency towing vessel on the West or North West coast. Because there is a significant number of large tankers and bulkers with heavy oil bunkers transiting the territorial sea and they as was experienced in France, Spain, the UK and other countries pose an enormous risk to the environment, tourism, bird life and fisheries in the event of a casualty. The international compensation regime for pollution does little to deal with the reputational damage done by a large oil spill. The vessel could be multipurpose so it can be utilised for other routine marine operations or research tasks, but should be capable of connection up to and holding a very large vessel until professional salvors can be engaged and mobilised. Furthermore it is possible that large vessels for several reasons may be operating with reduced power main propulsion in the future possibly exacerbating this risk to coastal states during storms which may well increase in frequency.

TSS

With regards to my comments on ETV above; consideration could be given to establishing offshore traffic separation schemes which could be monitored so as to reduce the risk of collision, grounding nearshore, and in the event of a break down; early detection, response and intervention could be provided or ordered.

20 Tourism

Many harbours, piers and slipways in very important existing areas of tourism are not sufficiently protected, and are in inadequate condition or do not have sufficient facilities for safe use by small craft in the summer. It can often be better to provide separate facilities in the same harbour for commercial fishing vessels and recreational users. Recreational craft are often much less robust than fishing vessels.

Best regards

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