

Offshore renewable energy: Oceans Secretariat approach

Kayla Kingdon-Bebb, Director - Policy, Department of Conservation
Hayden Johnston, Director - Water and Land Use Policy, Ministry for the Environment

Hon David Parker, Minister for Oceans and Fisheries
Hon Poto Williams, Minister of Conservation

MBIE is preparing a discussion document on establishing a regulatory framework for offshore renewable energy. Developing a regulatory framework was a commitment in the Emissions Reduction Plan. Several developers are now seeking direction on what would be required of them to establish offshore wind farms, particularly in Taranaki.

The discussion document is due to be considered by Cabinet Economic Development (DEV) Committee on 7 December, ahead of a four-month public consultation period starting on 13 December. You are likely to be consulted by the Minister of Energy and Resources in late November.

All three Oceans Secretariat agencies have worked in alignment to provide comment to MBIE on drafts of the discussion document and have submitted a joint document summarising our collective views. Comments we have provided to date (which have been partly addressed) include that:

- s 9(2)(g)(i)
[Redacted]
- The bespoke approach to offshore renewable energy does not align well with the general direction that the oceans work programme and resource management reform are moving, which is to consider managing the marine environment in an integrated and holistic way.
- s 9(2)(g)(i)
[Redacted]
- The current iteration of the discussion document is an improvement on previous versions in relation to explaining risks to biodiversity. An outstanding issue is that it is very unlikely that sufficient environmental information (such as impacts on protected species) will be available in the medium term to make informed judgments about appropriate locations (if any) for offshore wind energy generation.

We'll continue to work with MBIE on the development of their discussion document to ensure these risks are managed. We are available to support your engagement with Ministerial colleagues on this work programme if needed.