

New report calls for streamlined, science-based consenting processes for ocean energy

3 December 2020, Brussels. **Deploying ocean energy at scale requires simpler, faster consenting processes that are informed by the latest environmental research, according to [a new report](#) launched today. To date, there is no evidence that ocean energy has a negative impact on the marine environment – in fact, its role in mitigating climate change is clearly a positive one. Regulatory decision-making should be designed with this in mind, and provide an easier path into the water for these innovative technologies.**

Authored by a sectoral advisory body, the European Technology and Innovation Platform for Ocean Energy (ETIP Ocean), the report aims to make the decision-making process more efficient and better informed. It calls for more real-world, long-term data and greater knowledge-sharing across projects, to strengthen the science behind consenting decisions.

The report advocates an ‘Adaptive Management’ approach that responds to new information over time, reducing uncertainty when it comes to environmental impact.

Equipping developers with the right information is also key. Another of the report’s recommendations is a ‘single authority’ – a national contact point, who supports developers in navigating the requirements. Companies could also learn from each another’s consenting experiences via a peer-to-peer platform, suggests the report.

Financial support to help developers take part in environmental programmes above and beyond the legal minimum is another vital aspect of improving the quality and quantity of data available. Many are SMEs and their resources are heavily invested in technology development, leaving little or nothing for additional monitoring programmes.

Felix Leinemann, Head of Unit at the European Commission, who launched the report, said: *“As recognised in the European Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy, facilitating access to the sea is a key factor in the development of a competitive European ocean energy sector. This report highlights the need to continue environmental monitoring programmes such as those supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, to accelerate ocean energy deployments across Europe.”*

Lotta Pirttimaa from Ocean Energy Europe, the report’s author, commented: *“As the sector grows, and both projects and machines get bigger, it is more important than ever that the consenting process is both fit-for-purpose and based on real-life observations. It is time for regulators to strike the right balance between diligence and simplicity when it comes to the way these processes are designed and implemented.”*

[Download the full ETIP Ocean report 'Ocean energy and the environment: Research and strategic actions'](#)

Images available :

[Report cover](#)

[ETIP Ocean logo](#)

[Photo of Felix Leinemann](#)

[Photo of Lotta Pirttimaa](#)

Media contact:

Amy Parsons, Ocean Energy Europe

a.parsons@oceanenergy.eu

+32 2400 1043

Notes for editors

About ETIP Ocean

The European Technology and Innovation Platform for Ocean Energy (ETIP Ocean) is funded by the European Commission to define research and innovation priorities for the ocean energy sector and promote solutions to the industry, European and national policy makers.

ETIP Ocean uses the existing TPOcean network to carry out its mission. TPOcean is the recognised advisory body to the European Commission and part of the EU's main Research and Innovation policy the Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan).

[Ocean Energy Europe](#) manages ETIP Ocean, in partnership with the [University of Edinburgh](#), [Tecnalia](#) and [WavEC Offshore Renewables](#) which receives funding from the European Commission's lighthouse R&I programme: [Horizon 2020](#).

www.etipocean.eu

About Ocean Energy Europe

Ocean Energy Europe is the largest network of ocean energy professionals in the world. Over 120 organisations, including Europe's leading utilities, industrialists and research institutes, trust OEE to represent the interests of Europe's ocean energy sector.

Ocean Energy Europe's mission is to create a strong environment for the development of ocean energy, improve access to funding, and enhance business opportunities for its members. To achieve this, OEE engages with the European Institutions (Commission, Parliament, Council, EIB, etc), and national ministries on policy issues affecting the sector.

The results are undeniable: in past four years the sector's profile has increased significantly, and the EU has emerged as a major driver of the industry.

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