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European Technology & Innovation Platform for Ocean Energy

Webinar: Best consenting practices for ocean energy

15 December 2020

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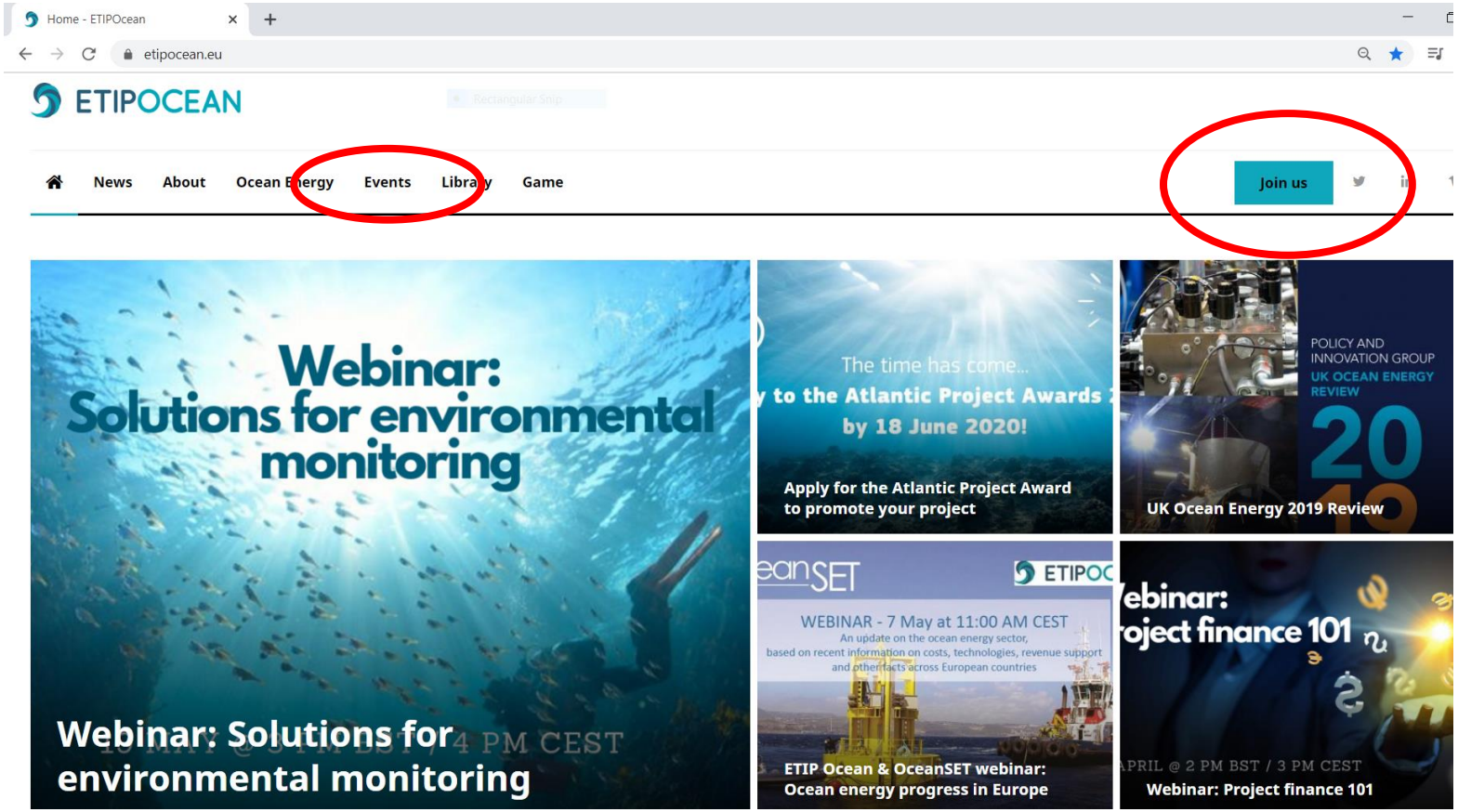
THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

WavEC Offshore Renewables

Ocean Energy Europe

The presentations and the webinar recording will be available at: etipocean.eu.



Agenda

- Presentation of 'Ocean energy and the environment: Research and strategic actions' – *Lotta Pirttimaa, Ocean Energy Europe*
- Licensing and consenting process in Scotland– *Jessica Wilson, Marine Scotland*
- Consenting guidance for Spain and Portugal: Results from the WESE project – *Iratxe Mentxaka, Azti*
- Q&A

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Ocean energy and the environment: Research and strategic actions

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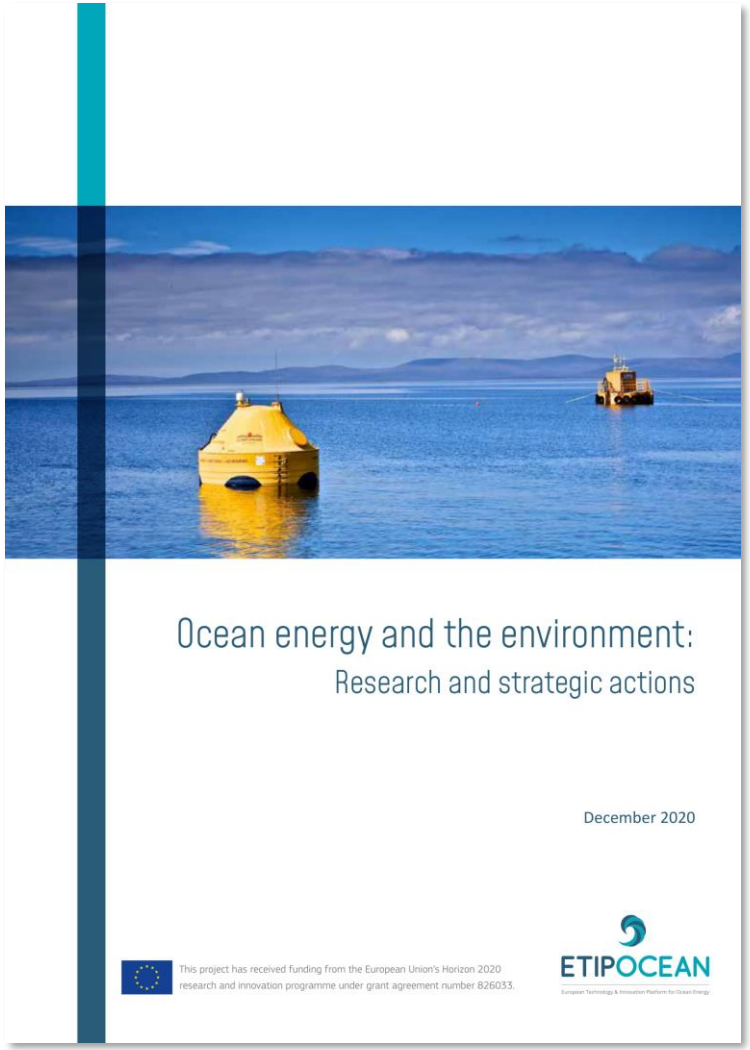
Science-based guidance for regulators and developers

- Latest research on environmental impacts
- Analysis of consenting processes
- Strategic Action Plan to accelerate deployments



Protecting oceans by fighting climate change

- Climate change damages marine ecosystems and biodiversity
- Ocean energy reduces CO2 emissions and fuel transportation
- Legislation should take into account these wider benefits

No evidence of significant risk to marine ecosystems

- No observed collisions
- Noise is lower than ambient sea noise
  - No pile-driving!
- EMFs might attract animals but have no significant biological impact
- No significant changes in benthic habitats or populations

Ocean energy works in harmony with marine life

- Marine reserve effect
  - Fish can live and reproduce unhindered in ocean energy sites
- Artificial reef effect
  - Devices create new habitats for marine organisms

Real-world long-term monitoring is essential

- Moving towards multi-device installations requires more information on impacts
- Continuous monitoring provide necessary data for better informed decisions

Consenting processes for ocean energy

- EU Directives regulate marine areas
  - Marine Strategy Framework, Maritime Spatial Planning, Birds & Habitats, EIA
- Analysis of processes
  - Belgium, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal Spain, UK

CONSENTING PROCESS

Required licenses and consents	Environmental permit, including EIA
	Domain concession
	Application for the laying of cables
Involved authorities	Scientific Service Management Unit of the North Sea Mathematical Models (MUMM) – *advises Federal Minister/Secretary of State responsible for the Marine Environment*
	General Energy Directorate of the Federal Public Service Economy, SMEs, Self-Employed and Energy – *advises Federal Minister responsible for Energy*
Single point of contact	No – *if no domain concession is needed (e.g. in some test fields), MUMM is a single point of contact*
Estimated time for the whole process	6 to 9 months

MSP AND OVERALL POLICY FRAMEWORK

MSP in place	Yes
Pre-allocated zones for ocean energy	Yes – *together with offshore wind*
Related policies	Law on the Protection of the Marine Environment of 20 January 1999
	Royal decrees: KB VEMA of 7 September 2003 (amended on 26 December 2013) and KB MEB of 9 September 2003 (amended on 26 December 2013)

In Belgium, there is no dedicated consenting process for ocean energy projects, and they must follow the same procedure as offshore wind [27]. There is also a lack of a single point of contact, which can make the process more complex for the developers.

The MSP in Belgium was adopted in 2014 and it foresees an area for offshore wind, wave and tidal energy [28]. The renewed 2020-2026 MSP has entered into force on 20 March 2020. The main changes to the current MSP are three additional zones for renewable energy of 285 km² in total, industrial and commercial activities and coastal defence [29]. This gives ocean energy more opportunities to develop and deploy.

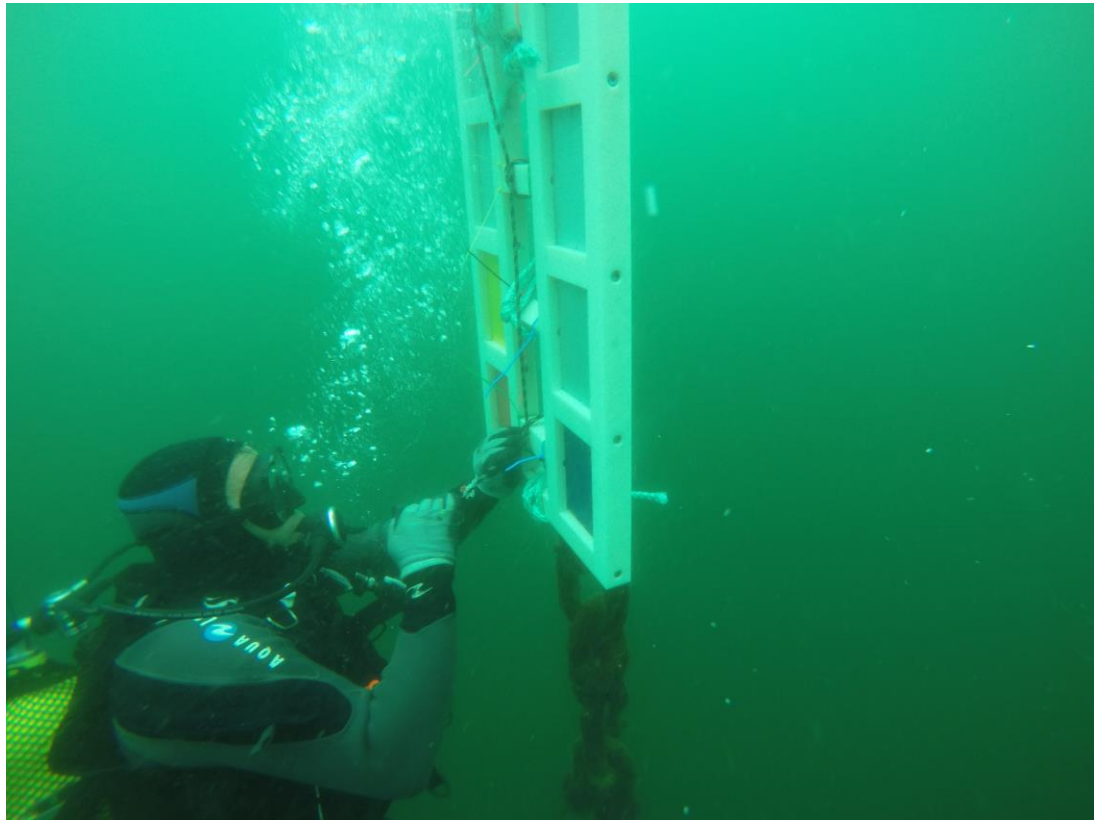
Room for improvement in consenting

- Consenting processes are often long, burdensome and costly
  - Lack of information about environmental impacts & challenge of coordination between authorities
- Regulators require extensive monitoring data
  - Substantial cost and risk upon small enterprises
- Absence of tailor-made consenting processes for ocean energy
  - Difficult for consenting authorities to make appropriate decisions

Action 1: Provide financial support for research & monitoring

- Launch yearly well-funded calls for environmental monitoring and data gathering in the context of ocean energy.

- Favour proposals considering long-term environmental monitoring actions.



Action 2: Simplify and shorten consenting processes

- Aim at completing the whole consenting process in one year and introduce a 3-month limit for every consenting decision from the date of submission.
- Adopt an Adaptive Management approach for consenting decisions.
- Include ocean energy zones into the marine spatial plans in a non-discriminatory manner.

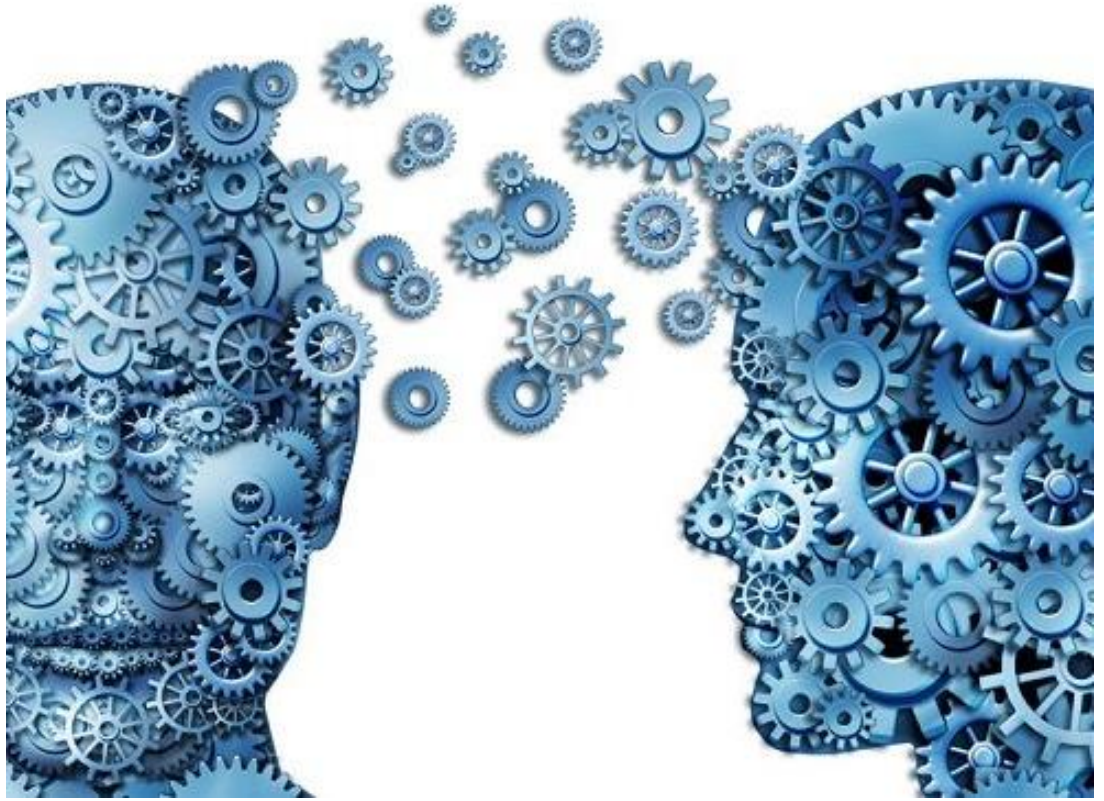
Action 3: Create single points of contact at national level

- Establish one institution per country managing the entire consenting process from start to finish.
- Provide guidance documents managed by that institution and covering all technical aspects of the consenting procedure.
- Strengthen the use of existing databases such as MARENDATA or Tethys to share research, monitoring and EIA data for regulators and developers.

Action 4: Set up a platform for developers to share experience on consenting

- Launch a call that includes establishing a platform for knowledge-sharing on consenting.

- Organise workshops to reinforce the knowledge-sharing and to inform developers of such platform.



Thank you!

For more information, contact:
l.pirttimaa@oceanenergy.eu

Rue d'Arlon 63
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium

www.etipocean.eu

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