

General comments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We note that limited mention is made within the consultation of English Marine Plans (“Marine Plans”), this is concerning given their status as statutory marine plans for the English marine area. We would like to understand how Marine Plans have been considered in the development of the consultation and points included therein. The MMO would be happy to discuss the role of Marine Plans further. 2. With regard to MPIs a key challenge is likely to be the consenting regime, particularly how changes would be dealt with and considered under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (“MCAA 2009”). More detail is provided in our detailed comments below. The MMO would be happy to have more detailed conversations about how s. 81 MCAA 2009 may affect the consenting of MPIs.
3.4	Has it been considered to what extent this work may be considered a plan or programme under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, as well as to what extent this work may need to consider the marine plans, under s. 58(1) and s. 58(3) MCAA 2009?
3.5	In order to assist in minimising any potential delays or uncertainty, early engagement with the MMO regarding any change to the current consenting regime would be welcomed.
3.10	Is it possible for the generation map to be shared with the MMO? Given the MMO’s role as the marine planning authority for England it would be helpful to understand how the map interacts with existing statutory policy for the Marine Plans.
3.10	CCS is generally referred to as CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage) now.
3.10	What environmental data has been used in the production of the generation map? It would be helpful to see a full list of inputs.
3.10	It is slightly concerning that key factors such as fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, seascape, heritage assets etc. appear to have been excluded from this mapping exercise.

3.10	<p>It should be made clear that this map does not make any pre-determination on factors considered during the consenting process, under the Planning Act 2008 and MCAA 2009, respectively.</p> <p>It may appear as though decisions about siting have already been made and all relevant factors have already been considered, which isn't the case.</p> <p>A caveat should be added to the map specifying that applicants still need to undertake all assessments and that it no way guarantees that any relevant factors have already been considered by consenting authorities. This caveat should also be clear when discussing the map.</p>
3.12	<p>It is concerning that the MMO were not invited to engage in the development of the generation map as the marine planning authority for England, and therefore relevant in delivery of the regime under section 3.68 of the consultation. It should be noted that the Marine Plans are the statutory plans for the English marine area, and consideration should be given to s. 58(1) and s. 58(3) MCAA 2009 to determine how the marine plans need to be considered in both the production and the implementation of the generation map.</p>
3.12	<p>It is unclear what the intention is for the map and its standing in decision making. Has it been confirmed how the generation map interacts with other statutory plans, such as marine plans, river basin management plans, and local plans etc.?</p>
3.14	<p>It is disappointing that the Marine Plans, as the statutory marine plans for the English marine area, have not been considered here – as it is noted that the Marine Scotland Sectoral Marine Plans have been. Is it possible to ensure that the statutory marine plans are included within the generation map?</p>
3.15	<p>Can the map also be provided to marine planning and consenting authorities, such as the MMO?</p>
3.19	<p>Does this need to include something about co-existence with other industries, or is this setting a policy direction that offshore transmission and energy generation should be prioritised above others?</p>
3.20	<p>The CDG ToR do not appear to have been updated following OTNR working group comments. Will the ToR be updated to reflect the working group</p>

	comments, or will feedback be provided to the working group on why comments were not incorporated?
3.23	Is there an indication of what 'consultation' will constitute and who 'relevant stakeholders' are?
3.24, 3.25	Has it been considered to what extent the HND/DND work may fall under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (or their offshore equivalent), and under either s. 58(1) or s. 58(3) MCAA 2009?
3.28	Will the DND address or assess a wider range of impacts, such as coexistence, heritage, seascape, community impacts etc.?
3.46	To what extent has the loss of expertise between the different phases/partners been considered? It may be a consenting risk, particularly noting 'deliverability' requirements under Section 3.68, if different partners take a project through the early planning stages and the consenting stages, as they may not have all the information the previous partners had. This may also be a risk for post-consent discharge of planning requirements/conditions and post-consent monitoring.
3.68	The MMO would welcome early involvement in the development of any changes to the regulatory regime, ideally prior to any consultation process, once a decision has been made on the delivery model.
4.25, BEIS Question 1	<p>One of the key challenges facing MPIs is likely the consenting regime.</p> <p>You will need to consider how converting existing interconnector assets to MPIs may affect their status as an exempt cable under s. 81 MCAA 2009.</p> <p>Likewise it will need to be considered if these projects are subject to EIA.</p> <p>The MMO would be happy to have more detailed conversations regarding the potential effect of s. 81 MCAA 2009 on the consenting of MPIs.</p>