



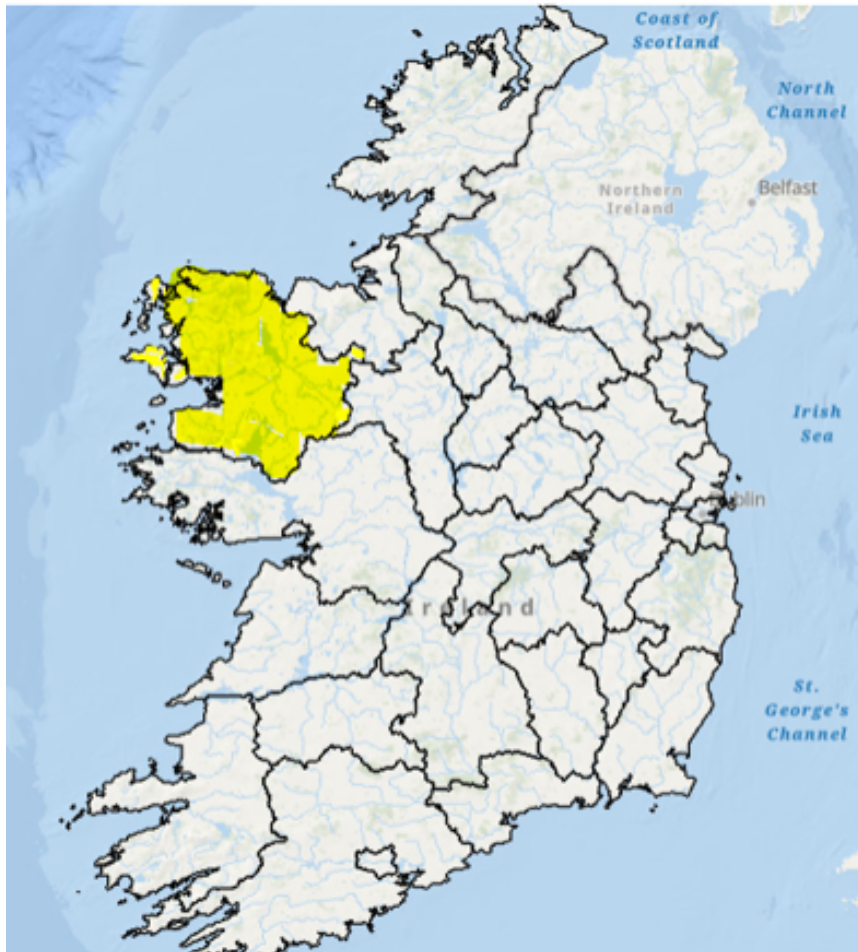
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An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications



County Mayo, Ireland Case Study



Map of Ireland showing Co. Mayo in the North West of Ireland

Characteristics of the Case Study

Mayo is located in the North West region of Ireland facing out to the Atlantic Ocean. Its rugged landscape has the longest coastline in Ireland at 1168km, approximately 21% of the Irish coastline. Many Islands exist off its west coast, both inhabited and uninhabited. Fishing, aquaculture and tourism are important activities for the inhabitants. Due to the wildlife and biodiversity of Mayo, there are 19 SPAs, 53 SACs and 15 NHAs.

The Corrib offshore gas pipeline supplies 25% of the gas used in Ireland. The Atlantic Marine Test Energy Site (AMETS) will facilitate testing of full scale wave energy converters and floating offshore wind technology devices in an open ocean environment in due course.

Activities conducted

Two workshops were conducted, one on the mainland and one on a small inhabited island. Information on MSP and presentations by the local council were given after which marine stakeholders were asked to identify the local strengths and weaknesses of their area and the marine activities which take place. This was followed by a discussion on how MSP could play a role in helping to improve the area and its marine activities.

Main recommendations of the case study

- **Objective Analysis for the Region**
 - Develop specific objectives at regional level, including for maritime sectoral policies and spatial approach (water depths, environmental designations, port infrastructure, etc.). The use of DMAPs will give statutory standing to these objectives.
- **Data knowledge - National data is vital for all decision making**
 - All data regarding the marine needs to be available so that Ireland can make informed effective decisions. We need to further develop our data knowledge on offshore renewable energy, cables, protected areas (including data on bird migration) and the marine environment outside currently designated areas. Advance knowledge of planned designations is also important
 - We also need social and economic data as this allows us to assess the impact of economic activities on marine resources at the regional and local level.
- **Legal aspects**
 - The Maritime Spatial Planning Directive has been transposed into Irish law through the Maritime Area Planning Act, 2021 and supported by the Marine Planning Policy Statement, National Marine Planning Framework and Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs). These documents provide the legislative and policy framework for regulating and managing activities in the maritime area.
- **Governance**
 - A National statutory body, the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) will have oversight and governance for all applications in the maritime space and must issue a Maritime Area Consent (MAC) or licence before applications can be made to the relevant Authorities. Monitoring will also be a key role of MARA.
 - To strengthen the SUB-NATIONAL and REGIONAL levels of governance- Coastal Planning Authorities in Ireland need additional support and expertise when dealing with maritime planning applications in the nearshore area. The Maritime Area Planning Act has increased their responsibility out to 3nm beyond the High Water Mark and additional resources will be needed to manage this. Training and education are vital to upskill land planners to become marine planners.
 - An Bord Pleanála will have responsibility for decisions on strategic development and offshore renewable energy and all applications in the outer maritime space.
- **Spatial resolution**
 - Regions should capitalise on high-level sectoral policies and identify tailored local policy responses that include a spatial element (e.g. future aquaculture sites to be identified or future tourism opportunities). The use of DMAPs should be explored as a mechanism to deliver local policy objectives and strengthen regulatory certainty.
 - Ensure a coherent policy approach is taken for marine activities with land-based dependencies, particularly at the coast and in estuaries (offshore renewable energies, seafood processing etc) in the development of sub-national or regional marine spatial plans.
 - Exclusion zones should only be used where safety and biodiversity features require exclusions. All other areas should encourage spatial co-existence where possible and feasible, even if there is a limit on the duration of the co-existence to particular time periods for specific reasons such as migration or spawning.



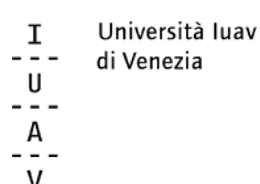
Local Ferry to the Islands in Co Mayo



Kilalla Bay Workshop in Co. Mayo



Inishturk Island Workshop off the coast of Co. Mayo



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