

*Our Energy Future: How Ireland can better protect the environment and biodiversity while delivering necessary infrastructure to meet climate and renewables targets*

Wind Energy Ireland

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[windenergyireland.com](http://windenergyireland.com)



# Wind Energy Ireland represents over 180 members covering all aspects of Onshore and Offshore Wind



## Members across existing assets, development & supply chain for onshore & offshore:

- Wind farm developers
- Turbine manufacturers
- Construction companies
- Supply companies
- Accountants
- Insurance
- Consultancy
- Legal firms
- Banks
- Small local businesses



## WEI Strategy

- WEI adopted a new strategic plan for 2022-2025 which includes the following objectives:
  - *WEI will promote the continued use and evolution of sustainable and environmentally friendly development practices for wind energy and supporting technologies in Ireland.*
  - *WEI will work with our members to ensure wind energy projects are developed sustainably in a manner which supports land and marine biodiversity.*

## Ongoing work

- In Q1 2022 our Environmental Stakeholder Working Group expanded into a Biodiversity & Sustainability WG.
- The WEI Council voted to allocate more resources into our Offshore Consenting policy work including the creation of a dedicated Offshore Environment WG.
- In 2021 WEI initiated collaboration with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan team to develop sector specific guidelines for the wind industry, resulting in the [Pollinator-Friendly Management of Wind Farms](#).
- In Q1 2023 WEI will launch a pilot project in collaboration with wind farms and their local secondary schools to create local networks of sustainable and suitably designed nest boxes for solitary bees – combining Action 5 (Provide nesting spaces) & 6 (Raise awareness) from the AIPP guidelines.

## Nature+Energy Research Project

- The [Nature+Energy](#) project is a collaboration between WEI, industry members and academia to maximise biodiversity on onshore wind farms.
- Aims to:
  - develop new ways of accounting for the value of nature on wind farms
  - design a state-of-the-art environmental monitoring system
  - develop sector-specific Natural Capital Accounts, Land-Management Decision Support Tools and Biodiversity Action Plans to facilitate the enhancement of biodiversity and help to mitigate the effects of wind farms on key species
  - develop a programme for sector-specific industry-academia education and collaboration
- WEI & TCD are also currently planning an Offshore Nature+Energy Project and would welcome engagement as this progresses.

## OCEaN membership

- In 2021 WEI successfully applied for membership of the [Offshore Coalition of Energy and Nature](#) (OCEaN).
- NGOs, Transmission System Operators and energy developers/wind industry members are working together at a European level to align the development of offshore wind energy with nature protection and healthy marine ecosystems.

## Working together

- In 2019-20, through the Environmental Pillar, we held a number of workshops to address environmental concerns regarding the development of on and offshore wind energy.
- We suggested a formal engagement 3-4 times a year and separately offered to run expert workshops for environmental NGOs on environmental aspects of on and offshore wind energy development.
- We would like to reiterate that offer today as a way of ensuring we can work together to deliver the renewable energy essential to meeting Ireland's legally binding carbon emissions targets while doing so in a way that is sustainable and sensitive to the needs of marine and terrestrial biodiversity.



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