

Maritime Area Usage Licence MUL230034 – Codling Wind Park

Proposed activity:

MARA has received an application from Codling Wind Park for a Maritime Usage Licence under the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 for site surveys in Dublin/East Coast.

The site surveys are part of an ongoing survey schedule to undertake survey mobilisations at the proposed Licence Area to inform the location and detailed design of the proposed CWP OWF, export cable route, potential operations and maintenance base, potential land reclamation area at the potential onshore substation location, and additional buffer zones.

The proposed licence area also includes two smaller areas for a potential operation and maintenance base (Wicklow Harbour) and an area for a potential onshore substation (northern shore of Poolbeg Peninsula, Dublin).

BIM comments:

It is noted in the AIMU report attached to this application *“Seed mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) grounds are located inshore between the proposed array area and the coastline around Wexford Bay and Wicklow and are typically targeted by dredge for the purpose of aquaculture supply”*

However, There is some overlap with historical seed mussel beds. However, those beds date back from the early 2000s at their latest and recent surveys (less than 5 years) did not indicate any suitable seed mussel settlements in this particular area.

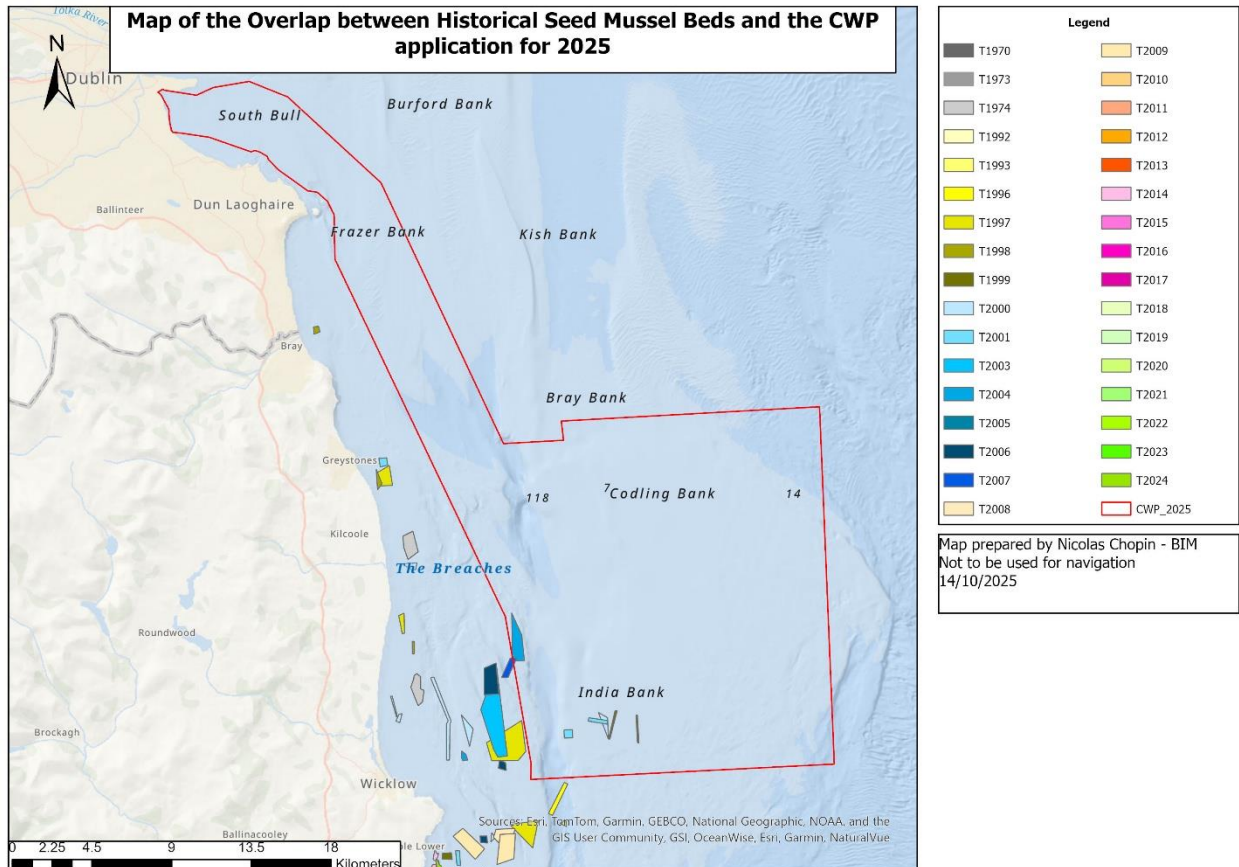


Figure 1. Overlap of Historical Seed mussel beds and CWP application

BIM also acknowledge the extensive reference to Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture Activities in Section 6.4 and 6.5 of the AIUMU report attached to this application.

Fisheries Comments:

The Licence Area overlaps with the spawning and/or nursery grounds of several commercially important species of fish, namely cod and haddock spawning areas, and mackerel, horse mackerel, cod, and haddock nursery areas.

All vessels undertaking survey works will adhere to MARPOL requirements, which provide an international standard for the safe management and operation of ships for pollution prevention. In the unlikely event of oil or fuel or chemical spills, the timely notification should be to notify fishers on the ground, but also through all the usual channels, such as Marine Notices, the Producer Organisations such as the IS&EFPO (but fishermen fishing this area will be members of other Pos also), NIFA, SE RIFF, all the relevant harbour port offices and local authority offices, and local media where possible covering the impacted area.

It is noted that the main commercial fishing activity on the Codling Bank targets whelk (*Buccinum undatum*) with pots and occurs across the whole of the Codling Bank. According to Ireland's Marine Atlas, creel fishing for crab (*Cancer pagurus*) and lobster (*Homarus gammarus*) occurs to a lesser extent within the vicinity of the Codling Bank.

The main concern from a fisheries context would be disturbance to fishing, and accidental entanglement with static fishing gear by the survey vessels, and/or by fishing vessels with the

deployed survey equipment. Disturbance to fishing activities is likely to be minimal as BIM can't see a requirement for fishers to stay out of the study areas. However, the risk of damage to static fishing gear and deployed survey equipment is a more realistic one. Instances of this has happen historically, where strings of pots were reported as being towed by survey vessels. The main comment to make therefore is that early and continuous communication is made with stakeholders in the survey areas to avoid any conflicts arising from such incidents as stated above.

Aquaculture comments:

BIM note that there is no likely significant effect on shellfish and aquaculture as a result of the Proposed Activities. There is no overlap between the DAFM aquaculture sites and the Licence Area. There are no aquaculture sites within or adjacent to the Licence Area. The closest aquaculture facility is located approximately 26 km from the Licence Area (based on the nearest point of the Licence Area to the aquaculture site) in Clogga Bay, Co. Arklow and is licensed for *M. edulis*.

Shellfish species which are present in the Licence Area, and which are of commercial importance, are *B. undatum*, *M. edulis*, razor clam (*Ensis* sp.), *C. pagurus*, and *H. gammarus*. Dublin bay prawn (*Nephrops norvegicus*) are also known to be present in the wider area. Seed mussel grounds are located inshore the proposed array area and the coastline around Wexford Bay and Wicklow and are typically used to supply aquaculture. Nearby Wexford Harbour contains extensive areas where mussel aquaculture is undertaken.

The same applies as stated above that in the unlikely event of oil or fuel or chemical spills, the timely notification should be to notify fishers on the ground, but also through all the usual channels, such as Marine Notices, the Producer Organisations such as the IS&EFPO (but fishermen fishing this area will be members of other Pos also), NIFA, SE RIFF, all the relevant harbour port offices and local authority offices, and local media where possible covering the impacted area.