North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited,

Building 4200,
Cork Airport Business Park,
Co. Cork

15th November 2021

[redacted],
Foreshore Section,
Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage,
Newtown Road,
Wexford.

Dear [redacted],

RE: FS007358 – FORESHORE LICENCE APPLICATION BY NORTH IRISH SEA ARRAY WINDFARM LIMITED., SITE INVESTIGATION

North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited (NISA Ltd.) would like to thank the prescribed bodies for their review of the Foreshore Licence Application and welcome the observations made.

The following table summarises the list of the submissions received under the public consultation process under the Foreshore Act, 1933, as amended.

Ref	Submission
1	National Inshore Fisheries Association & National Inshore Fisheries Organisation
2	Public Submission (Fishing Industry)
3	Public Submission (Fishing Industry)
4	Public Submission (Fishing Industry)
5	Public Submission (Fishing Industry)
6	Irish Whale and Dolphin Group

Submission and Responses

Prescribed Body	Comments	Response
National Inshore Fishermen's Association & National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation	With reference to planning application reference number FS007358 by North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited, of Building 4200, Cork Airport Business Park, Co.Cork T12D23C, The National Inshore Fishermen's Association (NIFA) AND THE National Inshore Fishermen's Organisation (NIFO) wish to make the following joint submission. We acknowledge that the applicant has consulted with the fishing industry, which has included some of our members. We would always advocate that applicants consult directly with operators likely to be directly affected on such projects and commend the applicant on their efforts in this regard to date. That said however, we have members that have raised, what we feel are valid concerns regarding this application. This submission is based on the same, the main points being as follows: **Importance of area to Inshore Fishing Activity** The area in question is important in general to Inshore Commercial fishing, particularly static gear fishing using pots targeting whelk, brown and velvet crab and lobster and also using towed gear for razor clams, along the coast and prawns at the eastern side of the area. It is of particular importance to a number of our members, operating from the ports of Howth, Skerries, Rush, Balbriggan and Loughshinny, with one member having a traditional dependency solely and exclusively on this area. It is also important to note that some of these harbours are tidal and having clear access to them around high tide, irrespective of the time is vital. Members concerned, operate small vessels, typically between seven and twelve meters in length, given the size of these vessels and the nature of fishing activity in the broader and general area, operating elsewhere, to where the(y) traditionally have done, is not realistically a viable option for them, even on a short-term basis. Some members have a more seasonal dependency on it particularly when targeting brown crab from early Autumn to early Spring. Given its general importance in terms of supporting static gear and	NISA Ltd acknowledges the joined submission from the NIFA & NIFO. Through our engagement with fisheries NISA Ltd is aiming to develop a long-term working relationship with the fishing community. [redacted] and [redacted] of Fisheries Liaison Limited have been appointed as Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for the project and has been actively engaging with the fishing community and fisheries groups since late 2019. The fundamental ethos of this communication process is to establish positive and proactive engagement with the fishing industry. As part of this process, engagement will be held with the SFPA and relevant fishermen's groups in relation to the SI works. Indicative timelines will be provided well in advance of any works being carried out with confirmation of activities proposed being shared once the information is available. NISA Ltd. began engagement with groups such as regional inshore fisheries forums (RIFF's) and sought advice and discussed the fisheries stakeholder approach with Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) in the early stages of the application process for the application for the main array area which NISA hopes will conclude the consent process shortly. NISA Ltd has also commenced engagement with fisheries relevant to the export cable area in relation to proposed activities. The FLO has been working to build relationships and lines of communication between the NISA project and the fishing industry from the very earliest stages of development and will continue to do so through to SI works and on to construction and operation. During the Covid-19 crisis, the FLO has endeavoured to continue this engagement despite the restrictions through phone calls and virtual meetings. Since restrictions have eased, fortnightly port visits have been established, re-engaging with the fishing community in person. In addition to this, Irish Naval Service Fisheries Monitoring

	fisheries and high level of activity in the area a high volume and density of static gear is deployed in the area on a year-round basis. **Likely disruption of activity and economic impact caused by the same** While we appreciate this application is for site investigation works, our members are concerned that these works will disrupt their fishing operations and this disruption will have a negative economic impact on them. The extent of that disturbance is still unknown and will likely vary between members. Given the density of fishing activity, both in this specific and adjacent areas, and the nature of the survey work, disruption is highly likely, and may involve static gear operators having to move gear, to avoid damage or loss to it, in advance of the survey. Previous experience with similar applications proved this to be the case. We also have members that traditionally operate on the fringes or adjacent to the area in question. These members are concerned about the secondary effects of displacement into areas in which they traditionally operate. Any displacement of this nature will undoubtably have a negative impact on them, such is the nature of the fishing operations in question. Our position is that any disruption should be kept to an absolute minimum. Given that avoiding this disruption completely is highly unlikely we ask that consent to proceed be withheld until a disturbance mitigation plan is agreed with our relevant members. This plan needs to be designed to keep displacement of activity to an absolute minimum, but where displacement occurs and in turn has a negative impact on members working outside of the area, the mitigation plan and agreement needs to take these members into account also. Finally to conclude, we would like to thank DHLGH for the opportunity to make this submission and we trust our concerns will be the consideration they deserve.	Centre (FMC) has been contacted for guidance on expected fishing activity levels within the application area. Vessel monitoring data (VMS Data) has been obtained and analysed. A further application was made to the Marine Institute for inshore tracking data to build on this knowledge base. NISA Ltd intends to only survey a very small channel (c. 1km) nearer the coast on the approach to the landfall location. Towards the array site NISA Ltd may survey a wider area. Through the collaborative engagement proposed, the aim will be to avoid or minimise any interactions with ongoing fishing activities in the area.
Public Submission (Fishing Industry) Submitted: 30/08/2021	I'm very concerned about my livelihood as a fisherman from Skerries and I fish these grounds with crab and whelk pots.	NISA Ltd thanks you for your submission. Through our engagement with fisheries NISA Ltd is aiming to develop a long-term working relationship with the fishing community.

		[redacted] and [redacted] of Fisheries Liaison Limited have been appointed as Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for the project and has been actively engaging with the fishing community and fisheries groups since late 2019. The fundamental ethos of this communication process is to establish positive and proactive engagement with the fishing industry. As part of this process, engagement will be held with the SFPA, relevant fishermen's groups and the local fishing industry in relation to the SI works. Indicative timelines will be provided well in advance of any works being carried out with confirmation of activities proposed being shared once the information is available. NISA Ltd intends to only survey a very small channel (c. 1km) nearer the coast on the approach to the landfall location. Towards the array site NISA Ltd may survey a wider area. Through the collaborative engagement proposed, the aim will be to avoid or minimise any interactions with ongoing fishing activities in the area.
Public Submission (Fishing Industry) Submitted: 13/09/2021	I refer to the above planning application and wish to make the following submission in relation to the same. I am making this response as a person directly dependant on a Commercial Inshore Fishing Enterprise and am concerned the project outlined will impact negatively on this enterprise. I acknowledge that this application is for the site investigation works, but I am concerned that these works will negatively affect the financial viability of the fishing enterprise I depend on, and my livelihood. I am also concerned about displacement of fishing activity as a result in the wider area and the negative impact this will have on this enterprise. In the event that it's not possible to avoid this negative impact then I ask consent be withheld for the proposed activity until a disturbance mitigation plan is agreed between myself and the applicant.	NISA Ltd thanks you for your submission. Through our engagement with fisheries NISA Ltd is aiming to develop a long-term working relationship with the fishing community. [redacted] and [redacted] of Fisheries Liaison Limited have been appointed as Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for the project and has been actively engaging with the fishing community and fisheries groups since late 2019. The fundamental ethos of this communication process is to establish positive and proactive engagement with the fishing industry. As part of this process, engagement will be held with the SFPA, relevant fishermen's groups and the local fishing industry in relation to the SI works. Indicative timelines will be provided well in

	The fishing operation I depend on operates, in the following areas, at the following times, for the following species, fishing by means of the following methods, and I fear the proposeD works will prevent or disrupt it from doing the same. • Operating in the area roughly bound by the following latitude and longitude coordinates; North: 53937.45, South: 53030.13, East: 53032.31, West: 53030.38 The fishing operation I'm dependent on, traditionally fishes for crustacean shellfish and valve during the months of March until December by means of pots. • Operating in the area roughly bound by the following latitude and longitude coordinates; North: 53037.45, South: 53030.13, East: 53032.31, West: 53030.38 The fishing operation I'm dependent on, traditionally fishes for crustacean shellfish and other species during the months of March until December by means of pots/static nets. Outside of the specific areas in which this enterprise fishes, it is reliant on other areas covered by the application for safe navigational passage to and from the fishing grounds to the following safe harbours on a 24/7/365 basis. I would also like to raise the following points: I have almost 1,000 pots (crab, lobster and whelks) in this area for almost 10 months of the year. It is almost impossible for me to shift them as there is no other fishing ground to fish as we fish from Rush Harbour. (It) is only small and (there is) no room to hold pots.	advance of any works being carried out with confirmation of activities proposed being shared once the information is available. NISA Ltd intends to only survey a very small channel (c. 1km) nearer the coast on the approach to the landfall location. Towards the array site NISA Ltd may survey a wider area. Through the collaborative engagement proposed, the aim will be to avoid or minimise any interactions with ongoing fishing activities in the area.
Public Submission (Fishing Industry) Submitted: 15/09/2021	I refer to above application and wish to make a submission. I am a commercial fisherman and I am concerned this will have a direct impact on my work. I acknowledge the application is for site works but I'm very concerned it will negatively affect my financial ability and livelihood. In the event that's its not possible to avoid negative impact then I ask consent to be withheld for the proposed activity until a disturbance mitigation plan is agreed between myself and application. I fish crab and whelk in and around these areas for survey from ports of Howth and land in Rush, Loughshinny and Skerries at times. My boat is called (redacted).	NISA Ltd thanks you for your submission. Through our engagement with fisheries NISA Ltd is aiming to develop a long-term working relationship with the fishing community. [redacted] and [redacted] of Fisheries Liaison Limited have been appointed as Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for the project and has been actively engaging with the fishing community and fisheries groups since late 2019.

		The fundamental ethos of this communication process is to establish positive and proactive engagement with the fishing industry. As part of this process, engagement will be held with the SFPA, relevant fishermen's groups and the local fishing industry in relation to the SI works. Indicative timelines will be provided well in advance of any works being carried out with confirmation of activities proposed being shared once the information is available. NISA Ltd intends to only survey a very small channel (c. 1km) nearer the coast on the approach to the landfall location. Towards the array site NISA Ltd may survey a wider area. Through the collaborative engagement proposed, the aim will be to avoid or minimise any interactions with ongoing fishing activities in the area. Unfortunately as the name of your vessel has been redacted NISA Ltd cannot provide details in relation to engagement with you or with any fishery organisation you may be a member of.
Public Submission (Fishing Industry) Submitted: 11/09/2021	I refer to the above planning application and wish to make the following submission in relation to the same. I am making this response as a person directly dependant on a Commercial Inshore Fishing Enterprise and am concerned the project outlined will impact negatively on this enterprise. I acknowledge that this application is for the site investigation works, but I am concerned that these works will negatively affect the financial viability of the fishing enterprise I depend on, and my livelihood. I am also concerned about displacement of fishing activity as a result in the wider area and the negative impact this will have on this enterprise. In the event that it's not possible to avoid this negative impact then I ask consent be withheld for the proposed activity until a disturbance mitigation plan is agreed between myself and the applicant.	NISA Ltd thanks you for your submission. Through our engagement with fisheries NISA Ltd is aiming to develop a long-term working relationship with the fishing community. [redacted] an [redacted] of Fisheries Liaison Limited have been appointed as Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) for the project and has been actively engaging with the fishing community and fisheries groups since late 2019. The FLO will undertake ongoing engagement with fisheries communities and the applicant commits to give as much notice as is practical in advance of undertaking survey works. The fundamental ethos of this communication process is to establish positive and proactive engagement with the fishing industry. As part of this process, engagement will be held with the SFPA, relevant fishermen's groups and the local fishing industry in relation to the SI works. Indicative timelines will be provided well in

	The fishing operation I depend on operates, in the following areas, at the following times, for the following species, fishing by means of the following methods, and I fear the proposed works will prevent or disrupt it from doing the same. • Operating in the area roughly bound by the following latitude and longitude coordinates; Between Rush North to Dundalk out East to Prawn Grounds. The fishing operation I'm dependent on, traditionally fishes for crustacean shellfish during the months of 12 months by means of pots/demersal trawl/m/bottom dredge/other. • Operating in the area roughly bound by the following latitude and longitude coordinates as above. The fishing operation I'm dependant on, traditionally fishes for crustacean shellfish, during the months as (stated) above by means of pots. Outside of the specific areas in which this enterprise fishes, it is reliant on other areas covered by the application for safe navigational passage to and from the fishing grounds to the following safe harbours on a 24/7/365 basis. I would also like to raise the following points: • I am dependant solely on fishing in this area. I am a skipper	advance of any works being carried out with confirmation of activities proposed being shared once the information is available. NISA Ltd intends to only survey a very small channel (c. 1km) nearer the coast on the approach to the landfall location. Towards the array site NISA Ltd may survey a wider area. Through the collaborative engagement proposed, the aim will be to avoid or minimise any interactions with ongoing fishing activities in the area.
Irish Whale and Dolphin Group	The IWDG is not resourced to properly evaluate all foreshore applications but a brief look at the following application we believe merits a few observations as follows: 1. Quoting the NPWS mitigation measures as protection from impacts that are quite distant from surveys is nonsense. NPWS mitigation measures applied during activities are for reducing impact in the vicinity of operations out to 1 km as standard or 500m, not 50 or 100km from the site in Wales or elsewhere. This requires temporal and spatial mitigation which is not discussed that we have seen. 2. Mitigation measures as standard do not offer protection for Annex IV species once operations begin as they do not employ a shutdown under any circumstances and may operate without cessation thereby inhibiting any ability to mitigate impacts.	NISA Ltd acknowledges the submission from IWDG. This submission was received by the Department outside the consultation period however NISA Ltd have chosen to respond to it at this time. 1. The appears to be some misunderstanding in relation to the intention of the mitigation measures with regards to SACs in Wales (and those in Ireland at similar distances) which have been screened in for Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. NISA Ltd is aware of the limitations in applying the NPWS 2014 guidance to noise generating activities that fall within the hearing range of underwater noise sensitive Annex II Species. NISA Ltd is not proposing that the survey activities, which have very localised and temporary effects would affect animals when they are within those SACS

	3. Mitigation measures have no poor visibility or darkness capability and therefore it needs to be clear that surveys cannot under proposed mitigation measures operate in fog, rain, sea state 5 or greater and darkness without some additional measures. It is proposed that a detailed mitigation plan should be submitted to explain how it is proposed mitigation measures are to operate. 4. Operations of geophysical equipment need to be cognizant of frequency of systems used and their impacts and appropriate dB or sound level changes during any soft start or ramp up of activity. This should ensure the soft start is an audible one in line with industry standards for seismic (see report 579 IAGC/IOGP). Generally it is good practice to prepare a mitigation plan and this is now common place in many industry operations. This allows the practices employed in mitigation to be understood by the public and those actually responsible for the mitigation. Currently off Ireland there are a variety of mitigation practices in place for different surveys using similar equipment. Some appear to use passive acoustic monitoring and others do not and generally the NPWS guidelines do not support acoustic monitoring, but do not offer any alternative ability to detect animals underwater or at night for example. There is an urgent requirement therefore to either bring the current NPWS guidelines in line with international best practice and legal requirements. A mitigation plan submitted with applications is a well-established practice and meantime could be used to deal with deficiencies in the NPWS guidelines. However mitigation plans are still best practice and will be more easy to write with coherent, clear, operable guidelines.	therefore it is not intended that the mitigation measures would apply to animals when they are within those SACs so far away. As those animals can be highly mobile, application of the NPWS 2014 guidance is intended to protect animals from those SACs should they be in close proximity to the survey equipment when it is in use. The screening in of these sites for Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is on an extreme precautionary basis. 2. The mitigation measures proposed are the NPWS 2014 guidance measures which are standard practice in the industry. The use of the soft start/ramp up procedure will deter sensitive Annex II Species from remaining in the area. In addition the noise sources that are used for offshore wind data gathering activities are of relatively low power. For geophysical surveys in some cases the sound generated is outside the hearing range of Annex II Species (MBES, SSS), in others it falls below that which would cause injury relatively close to the source and the sound generated even when used in combination (SBP). It may cause disturbance or minor disturbance to Annex II Species further from the source of the sound which will in itself act as a temporary deterrent to Annex II Species. 3. Should other measures be necessary such as those required for 24-hour operation of geotechnical equipment, NISA Ltd will engage with the competent authority (NPWS) on a site-specific basis to agree such measures. 4. NISA Ltd intends producing a mitigation plan in advance of the proposed survey works which will reflect industry best practice methods and/or NPWS guidance.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

On behalf of Statkraft Ireland

APPENDIX I: Fishing Activity relevant to the North Irish Sea Array proposed windfarm and export cable route.

1 Introduction

Renewables developer North Irish Sea Array Windfarm Limited (NISA Ltd.), which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Statkraft Ireland Ltd, is currently investigating the feasibility of developing an offshore wind farm located in the Irish Sea, 7km to 17km off the coast of Dublin, Meath and Louth. This application (FS007358) is for a foreshore licence to conduct marine site investigation activities for the export cable route from the windfarm to shore and at the potential landfall areas. The marine surveys will include geophysical, geotechnical, ecological and archaeological surveys. This technical note aims to outline the baseline understanding of the fishing activities in the area and to describe how the proposed site investigations will interface with fishing activities.

2 Foreshore Application Documents

The NISA Ltd. Foreshore application (FS007358) documents are available to view here:

https://www.gov.ie/en/foreshore-notice/c7c0a-fs007358-statkraft-north-irish-sea-array-nisa-site-investigations-for-export-cable-route/

3 NISA Ltd. engagement with fisheries to date

NISA Ltd. engaged a Fishing Liaison Officer (FLO) – Fishery Liaisons Limited (FLL), at an early stage in the development of the project (late 2019) and importantly before the application of the foreshore licence application was submitted. The appointed FLO is responsible for identifying interested parties and engaging with these parties in an open, transparent and proactive manner with the view to sharing information and gathering feedback. The FLO is the primary point of contact on the project for those involved in the fishing industry and the feedback gathered from all stakeholders will be incorporated into the development process. The FLO has engaged with representative bodies and organisations such as the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) and the Naval Service (FMC) to develop an understanding of not only the nature of fishing in the area but also to develop our knowledge of the individuals actively involved in fishing in the area.

Initial contacts were made at an early stage with fishermen at the array site who were known to NISA Ltd. and whom NISA Ltd. was directed towards, with the intention of undertaking a comprehensive engagement process with all fishermen who are actively involved in this area. The development of this engagement is ongoing and will remain ongoing for the duration of the development. This engagement, although impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions in terms of proactively seeking out face-to-face meetings, has continued via phone and email correspondence. A copy of the 2021 engagement is set out below.

The flowchart below (Figure **3-1**) outlines the general approach to the fishery stakeholder consultation process that is currently being used. This approach is at an early stage, consultation has begun but much more detailed consultation is required and planned. This process will be ongoing over the

duration of the site investigation application and will continue well into the future. The consultation with the fishing industry is very important to NISA Ltd. and will be active through all stages of the proposed project with the appointed FLO being made available to the fishing industry at all stages throughout the entire process.

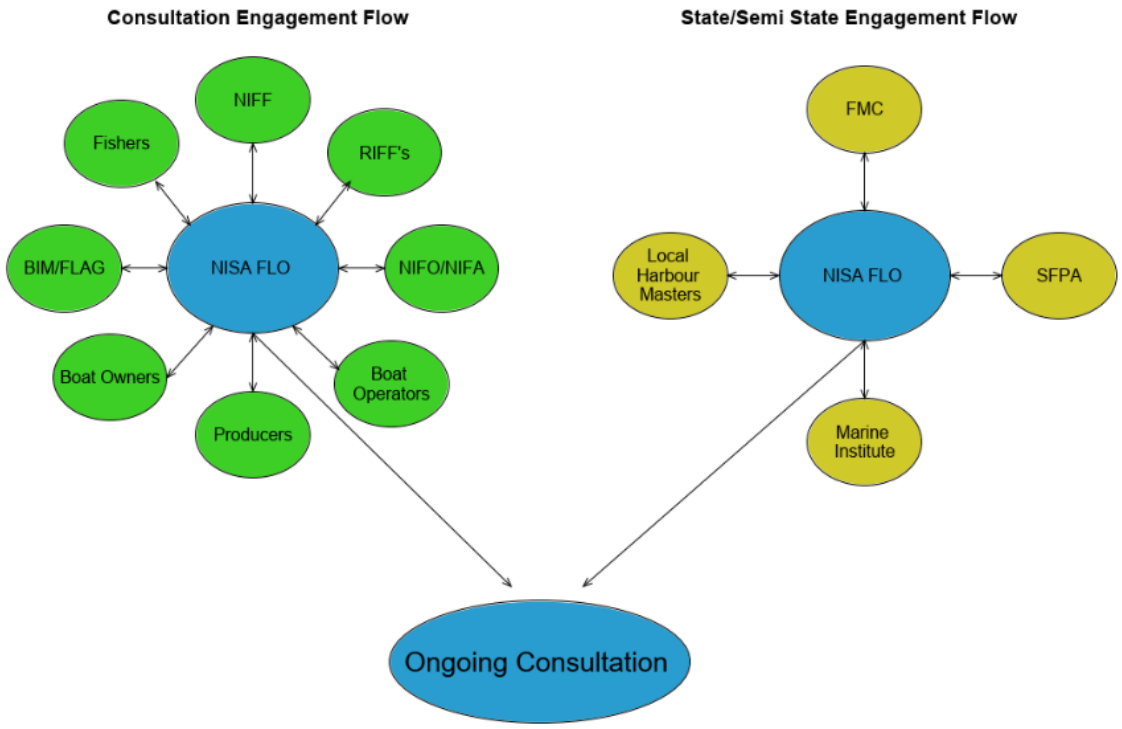

Figure 3-1: Consultation Flow Chart

To date, the FLO appointed to the NISA project has engaged with the Southeast Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum, North-East Inshore Fisheries Forum (through the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG)), Clogherhead Fishermans Co-Op, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), The Irish Naval Service and Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) to name a few.

The FLO has actively been engaging in person with fishers in the ports local to the site investigation area from June 2020 going forward and will remain doing so until such time as the site investigation works are complete. Stakeholder engagement will then move into the next phase where regular engagement will continue with all of the above mentioned and shall be expanded where needed (please see below for further details of ongoing engagement with fisheries and fisheries group).

Engagement with fisheries is a two-way process and NISA Ltd. is actively seeking information from local fisheries, which will feed into the overall process to develop an accurate picture of fishing activity in the area. NISA Ltd. is also committed to providing information to fisheries on an ongoing basis in advance of and throughout the various stages of the project. This process will help NISA Ltd. to assess how all aspects of the proposed project will impact on fisheries and work with the local fishing community to ensure that any potential negative impacts are minimised and positive benefits for the fishing and wider community are realized. NISA Ltd. is committed to working towards a model of co-existence with the fishing community and the timing and coordination of the proposed site

investigation works shall be undertaken with a view to minimising the potential disruption to existing fishing practices in the area.

In addition to direct engagement with the fishing community to gain feedback on their operations, additional information will be gathered in terms of operators, fisheries and species targeted including gathering available information, carrying out surveys and offering to work with the industry though facilitating observer days. NISA Ltd.'s FLO will continue to liaise with the local fishing community to minimise the impacts of the proposed site investigations on their activities. NISA Ltd. recognises both the long-standing history of fishing in the area as well as the economic importance of fishing to the local coastal communities and we are committed to working with local communities to ensure that it is maintained.

Date	Location	Purpose
May 20th 2021	Clogherhead Balbriggan Skerries Loughshinny Howth	Further Engagement with the fishing industry in relation to the NISA main site array.
June 10th & 11th	Skerries Clogherhead	Further Engagement with the fishing industry in relation to the NISA main site array. Positive meeting Clogherhead.
June 30th	Skerries Balbriggan	Series of meetings of meetings organised by Fishing Industry members that Fishery Liaisons attended – very positive engagement in both ports looking at future opportunities.
14th July	Howth	Discussion with various fishing industry members offshore and inshore discussing the main site array and various topics surrounding offshore wind.
15th July	Castletownbere	Took the opportunity while near the offices of one of the mainstream PO's to discuss NISA main site array while developing Irish supply chain opportunities.
27th July	Clogherhead	Meeting with various fishers in the Clogherhead area discussing the main site array and offshore renewable energy in general.
16th August	All affected ports	Communication campaign in support of the imminent publication of the Cable Corridor FLS and begin

		discussions with fishing industry in relation to same.
3rd September	Howth Rush Skerries	Discussion in each of the of the ports in relation to (a) main site array (b) Cable corridors, fishers spoken to in each port engaged well and requested to be kept informed.
September 15th	All affected ports	Communications campaign in relation to the potential Benthic surveys.
September 22nd	Howth Clogherhead	Discussion held in each of the Ports in relation to (a) main site array and (b) cable corridors areas, again the engagement was good with the fishers again requesting that they be kept informed.
21st October	Clogherhead	Follow meetings in relation to the cable corridors and main site arrays.

4 Fishing activities in the area

4.1 Commercial Fishing Study

Based on a study conducted by the Marine Institute in 2019 [1], data from a number of different sources have been integrated to provide new perspectives on fishing activities in Ireland.

1. VMS Data: VMS transmits the geographical position and speed of fishing vessels at intervals of two hours or less [2]. VMS data for the period (2014-2018) was used in this study and was supplied to the Marine Institute by the Irish Naval Service. The data is available for all EU vessels of 12m and larger, operating inside the Irish EEZ. VMS data does not record whether a vessel is fishing, steaming or inactive.
2. Logbooks: Logbook data was collected by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) and supplied to the Marine Institute by the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine. Landings data are generally only available for Irish vessels.
3. EU Fleet Register: For non-Irish vessels, gear information was obtained from the EU fleet register (https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/fishing_rules/fishing_fleet_en).

The majority of fishing effort (>12m) inside the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is by demersal otter trawlers (57%).

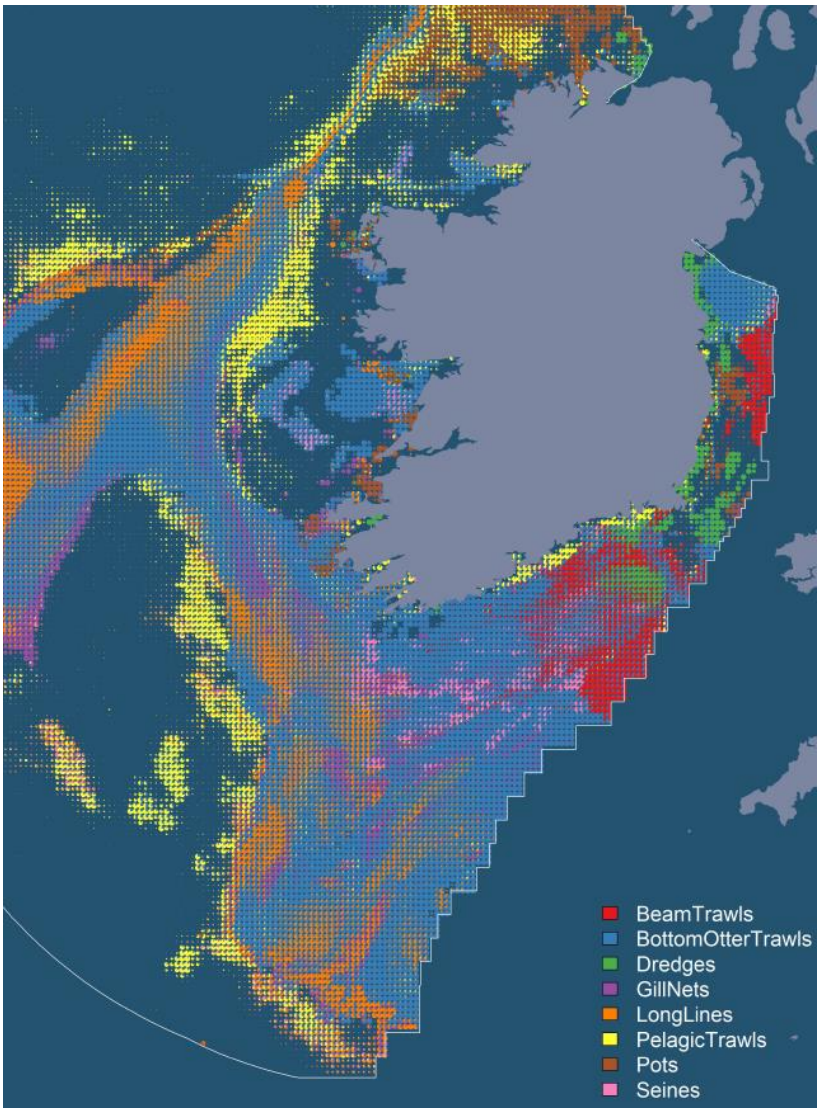

Figure 4-1: Distribution of international fishing effort in Ireland EEZ by gear 2014-2018 [1]

This study [1] concurs with another dataset NISA Ltd. have reviewed as part of this fishing study. The Irish Coast Guard monitor the movement of vessels in Irish waters via an Automatic Identification System (AIS) for maritime transport safety and security. The monitoring of vessels ensures ship tracking observes the designated shipping separation zones and sea highways. NISA Ltd has examined data related to fishing from the Irish Coast Guard of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS) representing the number of vessels per 40m x 40m grid cell over a 12-month period (June 2018 – June 2019) in the area. This shows that Clogherhead and Howth represent the greatest number of vessels with smaller numbers out of harbours along the north Dublin and Louth Coasts. It is important to note that not all fishing vessels are tracked in this AIS data, as the global positioning system (GPS) tracker that monitors vessel movement is not a requirement for vessels shorter than 12m in length. As such NISA Ltd acknowledges that there are fishermen fishing this area, particularly in relation to fishing for whelk and other pot fishing that are not captured in this data. To establish the level of fishing in the area not captured by AIS, VMS or logbook records NISA Ltd.'s FLO has been engaging with the local fishing industry with the aim of understanding the nature and level of fishing in the area.

5. Concerns raised by fishermen in the area

This section discusses some of the typical concerns raised by members of the fishing community in the area with respect to the proposed site investigation activities.

5.1 Effects on fishing activity

NISA Ltd is undertaking a programme of stakeholder engagement with fishing groups and individual fishers in the area with the aim of avoiding where possible any interaction with fishing activities. NISA Ltd plans to further refine the survey area prior to undertaking any survey activity to ensure that the smallest area that is required undergoes survey activity. This is likely to be a survey corridor of c. 1km nearer the coast and may be wider near the array site. Further refinement of the landfall locations will also be undertaken in advance of any survey activity to reduce the possible landfall locations and therefore also the potential cable corridors that require surveying. NISA Ltd aims to keep surveying time to a minimum and will only be in one area for a short period of time.

5.2 Port/harbour availability during survey activities

NISA Ltd. acknowledges that it may require the use of a fishing port/harbour and the potential issue of limitation on berthing space available in some of the local harbours as well as access to some tidal harbours. NISA Ltd also acknowledges that there may be worries about access to tidal harbours during the survey activities. Based on data obtained from the Marine Institute the main harbours identified are Clogherhead, Balbriggan, Skerries, Drogheda and Howth with lower levels of usage of other small harbours. If it is the case that the survey vessels require short-term access to harbour facilities, NISA Ltd. and the survey contractor will commit to consulting with the relevant associations in advance to seek to ensure that any inconvenience is minimised. In relation to survey activities NISA Ltd is avoiding the entrance to the harbour at Loughshinny as NISA Ltd purposely refined any possible landfall locations to north of Loughshinny Harbour. NISA Ltd are also avoiding Rush, Skerries and Balbriggan and will not cause any issues with access to these harbours for fishers at any stage.

In summary, NISA Ltd. is committed to work together with its FLO and the local fisheries in the area to developing a co-existence model for the project going forward, in so much as it is within the control of NISA Ltd to do so. NISA Ltd. Recognises the importance of fishing to the local coastal communities. The timing and coordination of the proposed site investigation works shall be undertaken with a view to minimising the potential disruption to existing fishing practices in the area.

NISA Ltd. has a plan to continue engaging and working with the fishing community going forward to mitigate adverse impacts from the proposed activities and has produced an Outline Fisheries Liaison Plan for the project as a whole and which has been submitted as Appendix 2 to this document. NISA Ltd. recognises both the long-standing history of fishing in the area as well as the economic importance of fishing to the local coastal communities and is committed to working with local communities to ensure that it is maintained.

References

1. Marine Institute – 'Atlas of Commercial Fisheries around Ireland Third Edition', Oct 2019
2. EC. Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2244/2003 of 18 December 2003 laying down detailed provisions regarding satellite-based vessel monitoring systems. Official Journal of the European Union, L 333:17–27, 2003.
3. DAHG – 'Guidance to manage the risk to marine mammals from man-made sound sources in Irish waters', January 2014. Prepared by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DAHG

APPENDIX II: Outline Fisheries Liaison plan for the Proposed Site Investigation works on the North Irish Sea Array (NISA)

1 Introduction

North Irish Sea Array Limited (NISA Ltd.) is committed to accommodating effective liaison with the fishing industry in order to fully understand potential impacts and guide appropriate mitigation responses. NISA Ltd. would like to develop co-existence opportunities with the relevant fisheries stakeholders in the area and seeks for open dialogue to discuss how co-existence can be managed with as little disruption as possible.

This document has been developed to present NISA Ltd.'s proposed approach to liaison and consultation with the fishing industry, before and during the proposed site investigations for the proposed NISA offshore wind project. This document has been drafted in conjunction with the Fisheries Liaison Officer (FLO) who has been appointed to support the consultation process.

This Outline Fisheries Liaison Plan (OFLP) has been produced for stakeholders from the fishing industry and is intended to provide clarity on delivery objectives as well as the NISA Ltd. approach to liaison. This outline plan was established based on feedback received during initial engagement with stakeholders within the fishing industry. It is envisaged that the plan will evolve as the project progresses based on ongoing consultation with all stakeholders within the fishing industry.

2 Fisheries Liaison Strategy

NISA Ltd. recognises that effective and meaningful consultation is an integral part of its development activities and is committed to ensuring that a transparent approach to consultation and engagement is maintained.

NISA's stakeholder engagement objectives are as follows:

- To identify and pro-actively engage with the local fishing community to identify those who may be impacted by the proposed site investigation works and to discuss potential measures that can be taken in the design and development of the NISA proposal where inclusion of feedback from the fishing community and stakeholders (in to the design and development process) can achieve the objective of an agreeable co-existence between NISA Ltd. and the local fishing communities
- To identify and engage with those statutory bodies, non-governmental organisations, other national and cross boarder organisations, and relevant stakeholders that have the potential to be affected by NISA Ltd.'s activities;
- To develop an open and transparent consultation and engagement strategy
- To prioritise consultation with stakeholders who are directly affected or who have a greater cause for concern as a result of NISA Ltd.'s development proposals;
- To be open in all communications with NISA Ltd.'s stakeholders and to promote a constructive two-way dialogue;

- To recognise the interests and points of view of NISA Ltd.'s stakeholders and wherever appropriate to use these to inform our development activities.

Future fisheries liaison will be continued on the principles outlined above, to which NISA Ltd. has adhered to-date. NISA Ltd. recognises that the OFLP should be an evolving plan to allow it to accommodate spatial and temporal changes in development activity. The preference of the fishing industry in terms of its preferred means of engagement and communications with NISA Ltd. may change over time and this plan will ensure a flexible and accommodating approach to engagement so as to endeavour to ensure that the most effective form of engagement is being provided at all times. Potential impacts on the fishing industry may change with the various phases of development (site investigations, construction, operation and decommissioning) and therefore the plan will recognise the changing nature of fishing activity.

Liaison activities to date have been based primarily on the following guidance and experience:

- The series of liaison meetings undertaken to date and in the future with national and regional fishermen's organisations, associations, and forums, along with producer organisations and state bodies;
- Direct liaison undertaken to date with individual fishermen and vessel owners;
- Consultation with the North Eastern and South Eastern Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum and Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) officers.

3 Consultation to Date

NISA Ltd. and the FLO have engaged with fishing industry representatives from statutory and non-statutory bodies since October 2019. The engagement to date has been in the form of face-to-face meetings, electronic communication and telephone conversations. While the COVID-19 pandemic has provided difficulties in carrying out face-to-face meetings with fisheries stakeholders, NISA Ltd. and the FLO have continued to carry out meaningful engagement through electronic communication and telephone conversations.

Consultation Timeline:

October 2019	Statkraft met with Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM) Negotiations commenced with Fishery Liaison Officer
November 2019	Statkraft met with the North East Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum (NERIFF) Fisheries Liaison Ltd. formally engaged, and Mark O'Reilly appointed as FLO for the NISA project and in attendance at all future engagements

December 2019	Statkraft met with Naval Service
	Engagement began with the Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) / Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
	Meeting with the South East Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum (SERIFF)
January 2020	Foreshore License Application Submitted
February 2020	Continued Engagement with Organisations and meeting with BIM (Fisheries Local Action Group - FLAG)
	Consultation with Fishers from Dun Laoghaire
March 2020	Continued dialogue with FLAG/BIM, SERIFF, NERIFF and Clogherhead Fisheries Organisation

COVID-19 restrictions in place

April 2020	Continued engagement with SERIFF and Clogherhead Fisheries Organisation via telephone
May 2020	Continued engagement with SERIFF, BIM/FLAG and Clogherhead Fisheries Organisation via telephone
May 2021	Continued engagement with the fishing industry and meetings held in a number of local ports and harbours
June 2021	Continued engagement with the fishing industry and meetings held in a number of local ports and harbours
July 2021	Continued engagement with the fishing industry and meetings held in Howth and Clogherhead
August 2021	Meetings with all potentially affected ports specifically in relation to the cable route Foreshore Licence Application
September 2021	Continued engagement with the fishing industry and meetings held in a number of local ports and harbours on the main array site, the cable corridor and the potential benthic surveys within the array site
October 2021	Follow up meetings in relation to the cable corridors and main site array at Clogherhead

NISA Ltd. and the FLO have also met with government agencies in relation to fisheries interaction and how NISA Ltd. plans to continue with the consultation process.

Issues related to the proposed project dominated the interaction with the Irish inshore fisheries sector and covered such topics as site surveys and survey methodology, the construction phase of the proposed project and availability to the area once this has begun and during operation of the windfarm. These discussions are ongoing.

4 Current and Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement to Support the Site Investigation Licence Application

NISA Ltd. and the FLO are currently engaging with the local fishing industry regarding the foreshore licence application for site investigation works for the proposed NISA cable route from the wind farm to shore and the potential landfall locations.

The following includes a breakdown of the consultation activities undertaken for 2021 and those planned for 2022:

- Continue engagement with organisations and groups such as RIFFs, BIM, NIFF, etc. as set out in the section above;
- Once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, our FLO will visit the piers to meet with local fishermen;
- Discuss mitigation measures with fishermen to see where we can minimise disruption;
- Seek to develop a database of interested parties who would like to be on a mailing list to receive notification of updates in advance of and during the site investigation works;
- This database will be used to provide a minimum of two months advance notice of the intention to carry out site investigation works. This notice may not have confirmed dates of the works but will provide up to date information in terms of envisaged timelines for the works;
- Once site investigation dates are confirmed, and at the earliest possible opportunity, the confirmed dates will be shared with people on this database;
- Confirmed dates will be advertised in the relevant print media such as the Marine Times and The Skipper.
- In addition to start date information, the individuals and organisations included on the aforementioned database will be provided with information on where site investigation works will be taking place and for how long.

As part of the NISA project, NISA Ltd. has set up a project website that provides information about the project, the public consultation strategy and any updates on the permitting and development process.

Engagement with stakeholders within the fishing industry to date has been constructive. NISA Ltd. has set the precedent of early engagement and is committed to not only minimising impacts and avoiding any unnecessary disruption but also committed to exploring all avenues that can allow the development of this proposal in a way that works for all stakeholders. NISA Ltd. will remain committed to providing up to date information to all stakeholders at the earliest possible opportunity.