

Application for a Maritime Usage Licence under the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021

Important Information

Before completing this form please read the declaration and consent at the end of the application form

It is important to note that a change in applicant name will require a new application.

This application and supporting documentation should be submitted by email to licence@mara.gov.ie

Please complete the form electronically. Type details in the boxes provided, space will expand as you type. Please complete form to a high level, i.e. give comprehensive answers to questions, answers which only reference supporting documentation are not sufficient.

Maritime Usage Licence:

Part 5 (sections 110 to 133) of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 (MAPA) provides for the granting of maritime usage licences.

Section 112 of the Act states that the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) is the competent authority for the purposes of Part 5 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) regulations 2011 ([S.I No. 477 of 2011](#)) and appropriate assessments to which that Part applies.

Section 114 of the Act states that the Minister may by regulations provide for class of Schedule 7 usage to be exempted usage for the purposes of this Part.

[Schedule 7](#) of the Act lists the Maritime Usages that may be undertaken in the maritime area pursuant to licence.

[Schedule 8](#) of the Act lists the types of conditions that MARA may attach to a licence.

Privacy Policy:

MARA may require you to provide certain personal data in order to carry out our legislative and administrative functions. MARA will treat all personal data that you provide as confidential and will process your details in accordance with its obligations under data protection legislation, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

A Privacy Statement explaining how MARA, as the Data Controller, will process the personal data you provide, how that information will be used and what rights you may exercise in relation to your personal data, is available in this link: [Privacy Statement](#).

Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

Applicants should be aware that under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2018, information provided by them to MARA may be liable to be disclosed.

Applicants are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by them in their application should not be disclosed and clearly identify the specific sections of their application containing such information, specifying the reasons for its confidentiality/sensitivity. MARA will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information/Access to Information on the Environment request received.

MARA
2nd Floor, Menapia House,
Drinagh Business Park,
Drinagh,
Wexford,
Y35RF29

www.maritimeregulator.ie

Part 1: Applicant Information	
1.1 Applicant Details	
Name of Applicant (the name that will appear on the licence)	University College Cork
Company/Organisation (if applicable)	[REDACTED]
Address/Company Address	Distillery Fields, North Mall, Cork
Eircode/Postcode	T23 N73K
Contact Name within Company/Organisation	[REDACTED]
Contact Phone No.	[REDACTED]
Contact Email Address	[REDACTED]
Is the company registered in Ireland for tax purposes?	Yes

1.2 Contact Details (if different from above)	
Full Name	
Address	
Eircode/Postcode	
Contact Name	
Contact Phone No.	
Contact Email Address	

1.3 Agent Representing Applicant (if applicable)	
Person/Agency acting on behalf of Applicant	
Address	
Eircode/Postcode	
Contact Name (if applicable)	
Contact Phone No.	
Contact Email address	

1.4 Applicant's Legal Advisor (if applicable)	
Name/Company Name	
Address	
Eircode/Postcode	
Contact Name (if applicable)	
Contact Phone No.	
Contact Email address	

<u>Part 2: Proposal Details (Attach additional documents as required)</u>	
2.1	In relation to this application, have you previously applied for a declaration as to whether or not a licence was required for this usage? If so, please provide the reference number associated with that application.
	No
2.2	Specify the Maritime Usage(s) being applied for with reference to Schedule 7 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 as amended:
	2. Marine environmental surveys for the purposes of scientific discovery or research.
2.3	Description of proposed Maritime Usage.
	<p>The proposed maritime usage is to co-deploy passive acoustic monitoring devices ("acoustic receivers") in the western Irish Sea and southern Celtic Sea on existing Commission of Irish Lights (CIL) infrastructure to identify the broadscale movements of electronically tagged elasmobranchs (sharks, skates and rays). This work is being carried out as part of a large multidisciplinary research project called CETUS, funded by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) RD&D grant of €860k. The CETUS project: Cetacean, Elasmobranch, Turtle, and Seabird distribution modelling platform, will provide scientific data that can be used to support the sustainable development of offshore renewable energy in Irish coastal waters.</p> <p>The passive acoustic receivers are completely inert and listen for 69KHz coded pulses, every 120 – 180 seconds, from transmitters implanted in elasmobranchs. Initially, it is proposed to pilot five receivers on five focal navigational buoys in the Arklow Bank, off Co. Wicklow. Once satisfied that the deployments have negligible material impact on the buoys, data is of sufficient quality and deployments/retrievals are feasible, a minimum of 20 receivers will be deployed on other buoys along the east coast as well as at focal sites in Courtmacsherry (n co-deployed receivers = 2) to support CETUS tracking work. A study duration of 5 years is envisaged at this stage.</p> <p>This project has been through strict animal welfare licencing and review, with approval from the University College Cork Ethics Committee and governing body for animal research in Ireland, The Health Products Regulatory Authority. Licences for animal tagging were granted in 2023. The resultant findings on elasmobranch movement ecology will be analysed and disseminated through peer review, social media and in person meetings with all interested stakeholders.</p>
2.4	Describe the nature and scale of any structure to be erected in the maritime area.
	<p>No structure will be erected for this maritime area usage. Acoustic receivers will be used to detect fish as they travel within listening range (typically 200 – 2000 m). Note this type of equipment does not emit any sound but contains a passive acoustic receiver (or "microphone") that can detect acoustic transmitters (operating at 69 kHz) carried by tagged fish.</p> <p>Receivers will be fixed onto existing CIL infrastructure using a 14mm steel shackle connected to an insulated 12mm Polysteel rope terminating in a 40 kg clump weight (used to maintain the depth and orientation of the receiver). A cabled safety line will be used a safety in case of extreme weather events. The total length of the line will depend on the buoy type. The receiver will sit 3 m below the water's surface, which will equate to a line total length of 5 to 8m depending on the buoy configuration. Note this attachment</p>

<p>method has proven successful both in Irish waters and elsewhere in Europe (see 7. <i>Supporting evidence for Maritime Usage Licence application_MUL240028</i>).</p>
<p>2.5 Proposed licence duration</p>
<p>5 years</p>
<p>2.6 Indicative timing of the works/activity: (i) Start date (ii) Duration (iii) Any other information relevant to timing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. January 2025 II. 5 years III. Four-month pilot. Thereafter every 6 - 12 months the equipment will be serviced, the battery of the acoustic receivers replaced, and the tethered attachment redeployed.
<p>2.7 Do the proposed maritime usages provide for public use, commercial use or private use? Provide details.</p>
<p>The usage is for research and is underpinned by conservation management aims. The primary research aim is to collect movement data for elasmobranch species in the western Irish Sea and Celtic Sea. Many elasmobranchs present in Irish waters have declining populations, focal species including tope and flapper skate as vulnerable and Critically Endangered respectively by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature). Furthermore, these autonomous listening devices will be compatible with detecting a range of species tagged through other research programmes e.g. by the Marine Institute, NPWS, ATU etc. Data will be shared through the European Tracking Network (ETN), vastly enhancing the scope and utility of these devices.</p> <p>This data will help support Objective 2 of Ireland’s 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan (2023-2030), the EU (European Union) Marine Strategy Framework Directive, EU Habitats Directive, EU Biodiversity Strategy and UN Sustainable Development Goals 7, 13 and 14. This work will also inform maritime planning in line with Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future (2015-2030) and Climate Action Plan.</p>
<p>2.8 Could the proposed works restrict public use/enjoyment of the nearshore e.g. fishing, sailing, surfing, swimming, walking or other activities? Provide details.</p>
<p>The proposed works are being co-developed with CIL for deployment on CIL infrastructure. Deployments will be engineered and monitored to mitigate losses. The presence of acoustic receivers attached to CIL buoys will be trivial and will not impact other water users.</p>
<p>2.9 Please outline any engagements that have taken place with marine users or other stakeholders in the proposed area that may be affected by the proposal and attach supporting documentation where relevant.</p>
<p>A substantial effort has been made to engage with the offshore wind industry operating in the western Irish Sea including GE Energy (site operators of Arklow Bank wind farm), SSE (potential developers off the Arklow Bank area) and the Wind Energy Ireland Environment group (includes representatives from all potential Irish offshore wind farm operators). The proposed Irish Sea study area includes Phase II of the Arklow wind farm (SSE), which is currently awaiting permission for Phase III. Dr Haberlin has also engaged with local whelk fishers in Arklow and the Fisheries liaison officer with SSE. Project staff and students attended the Wind Energy Ireland conference in February 2023, attended by over 500 people, promoting the CETUS project with relevant industry, academic and eNGO groups present. In the Celtic Sea, namely in Courtmacsherry, there has been extensive in-person engagement. Additionally, we have consulted researchers across Ireland, the UK, Europe, and North America regarding their experiences with co-</p>

<p>deployments to refine the approach opted for in this proposal. For further information, see '8. Supporting evidence for Maritime Usage Licence application_MUL240028'.</p>
<p>2.10 Describe briefly any consultations undertaken with other relevant authorities (e.g. Local Authority, Port/Harbour authority etc.) or State Agencies. e.g. National Parks & Wildlife Service, National Monuments Service of Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>
<p>Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) are a partner on the CETUS project, enabling project staff to engage with charter vessels and the recreational angling community. As most elasmobranch angling in Ireland is catch and release and IFI has a long running mark – recapture programme, this research is highly complementary to existing conservation efforts. Project staff are part of the Expert Marine Protected Area Advisory Group to the Department Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). Regular updates are provided to the DHLGH marine section as the CETUS project focuses on OSPAR species. Lastly, this maritime usage is being co-developed with CIL, with their full support.</p>
<p>2.11 Please provide the reference number and title of any existing Foreshore licence you may hold within the footprint, or otherwise in the vicinity of the proposed Maritime Usage area.</p>
<p>We do not hold any existing foreshore leases in the proposed maritime usage area.</p>
<p>2.12 Please provide the reference number of any current application for a Foreshore Licence to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. Does this application for a foreshore licence relate to or impact any part of the maritime area the subject of this licence application? If so, please provide details of the foreshore licence application.</p>
<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>2.13 What environmental reports, if any, have you submitted with this application? (Supporting information for screening for Appropriate Assessment/ Natura Impact Statement/ Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species/ Assessment of Impact on the Maritime Usage Report)</p>
<p>AIMU Report, SISAA</p>

Part 3: Location and Spatial Extent of Proposed Maritime Area
(Attach additional documents as required)

3.1 Location of proposed Maritime Usage

The proposed Maritime Area includes two areas. Firstly, a polygon encompassing all the CIL managed buoys in the western Irish Sea equate to an area of 3656 km² with a summed swing radii of 1.65km². This polygon includes 47 potential co-deployment CIL buoys. Secondly, two CIL buoys in Courtmacsherry, Co. Cork with a summed swing radii of 0.07 km². It is important to note that all buoys are at fixed positions and the 'study area' is included to demonstrate the size of the area it is possible to monitor through this collaborative approach with CIL.

3.2 Total size of the proposed Maritime Area (in m², ha or km², as appropriate).

3,656 km²

3.3 Please provide the distance of the main body of the proposed maritime area from the shore at its closest point in km.

The buoy closest to land in Courtmacsherry, Co Cork is 0.185 km from shore (Woodpoint). The buoy closest to land in the western Irish Sea is 0.35 km southeast of Howth Island.

3.4 Is any of the maritime area in the proposed site in private ownership? If yes please provide documentary evidence of same (e.g. folio).

No.

3.5 Any other site details considered relevant:

In the western Irish Sea: four buoys are within the Rockabill to Dalkey SAC (003000), with a further four buoys within < 4 km. Four buoys are within the the North-Western Irish Sea SPA (004236). Additionally, four buoys are within the Blackwater Bank SAC (002953), with a further six lying close to the northwest boundary area. One buoy is within the Long Bank SAC (002161), with a further four lying within < 1 km. Sixteen buoys are within the Sea off Wexford SPA (004237).

In the Celtic Sea: one buoy is within the Courtmacsherry Estuary SAC (001230) and SPA (004219), and the other buoy is 4.6 km and 3 km southeast the SAC and SPA respectively.

<p style="text-align: center;">Part 4: Maps and Drawings. Please refer to Technical Guidance on map and drawing requirements.</p>	
4.1	Please draft a map, titled “Licence Map”, outlining the proposed Maritime Area in accordance with the Technical Guidance for Maritime Area Licence Applications and submit same with this application.
4.2	Please submit GIS Shapefiles, in accordance with the Applicant Technical Guidance Note and submit same with this application.
4.3	Please list any Admiralty Charts, Maps, GIS Shapefiles and/or other Drawings submitted with this application.
<p>5. CETUS CIL co-deployment western Irish Sea (MUL240028)</p> <p>6. CETUS CIL co-deployment Celtic Sea (MUL240028)</p> <p>7. VR2Tx attachment for CIL Type 3 Buoy</p> <p>GIS_File_MUL240028.zip - zip folder containing all GIS Shapefiles for mapping</p>	

Part 5: Fishing/Aquaculture Considerations:

5.1 Is the proposal located in proximity to any of the following:

- aquaculture operation
- designated Shellfish Growing Waters
- fish spawning ground
- other sensitive fisheries location

Please Illustrate on appropriate chart including distance in Km.

No.

5.2 Are there other potential impacts of the proposal on fishing/aquaculture in the area? If yes, please describe.

Not applicable.

5.3 Are there any measures proposed to mitigate potential impacts on fisheries or aquaculture? If yes, please describe.

Not applicable.

Declaration and Consent:

The details provided here are correct to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that no works will be commenced, by the applicant or the applicant's agents on the proposed site, without a valid licence from MARA. The granting of any Maritime Usage Licence will not give rise on the part of the applicant to any expectation whatsoever for, right or entitlement to a grant of any future licence in respect of all or any part of any area of the Maritime Area.

By submitting this application form, the applicant agrees that the details provided (with personal contact details redacted) are to be published on MARA's website and also that the full information provided including contact details are to be processed and retained by MARA and shared with all relevant public authorities in furtherance of consideration for a Maritime Usage Licence under the MAPA.

I give consent to MARA and its agents to copy this application and to make (a redacted) copy available for inspection and copying by the public. This consent relates to this application, to supporting documentation submitted with the application, to any further information, or submission provided by the applicant or on the applicant's behalf, including any supplementary material submitted in response to a notice to determine notice in respect of this licence application, and to the publication of the licence document.

Signed for and on behalf of the applicant:

Name of Signatory (block letters):

Position Held:

Senior Postdoctoral Researcher

Date:

27th August 2024

Applicant Checklist	
Document	Included
Application Form (Parts 2 to 5 inclusive)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Supporting Information for Screening for Appropriate Assessment (SISAA) Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Risk Assessment for Annex IV Species Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Natura Impact Statement (NIS), if initially included	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment of Impact of the Maritime Usage (AIMU) Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schedule of Works	<input type="checkbox"/>
Licence Mapping (including GIS Shapefiles)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please list below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other

5. CETUS CIL co-deployment western Irish Sea (MUL240028)
6. CETUS CIL co-deployment Celtic Sea (MUL240028)
7. VR2Tx attachment for CIL Type 3 Buoy
8. Supporting information for Maritime Usage Lice Application MUL2400028