

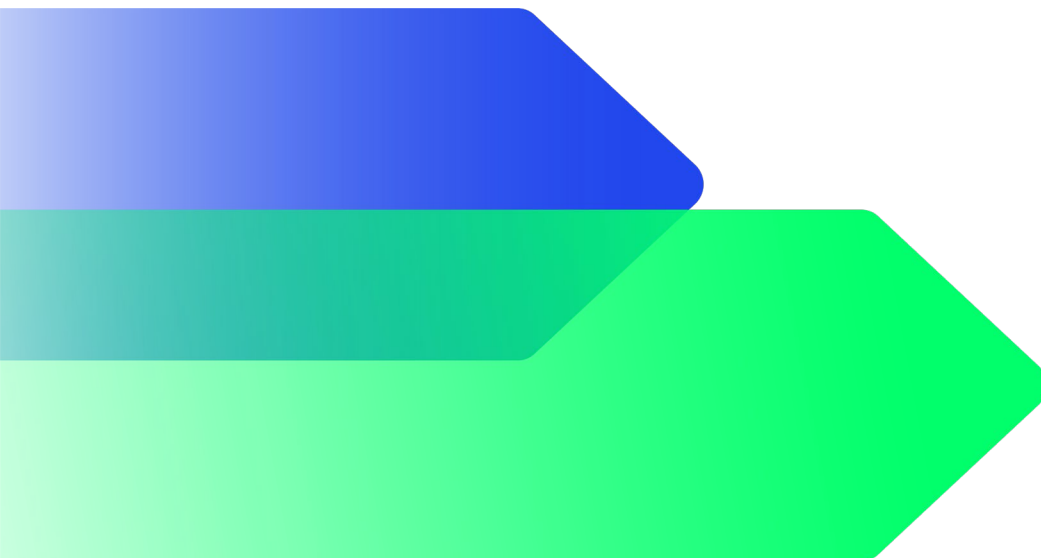


OFFSHORE RENEWABLES JOINT INDUSTRY PROGRAMME (ORJIP)



Benthic habitat changes post-construction of offshore wind: a strategic investigation (BenCh) – clarification question responses

21 June 2024



#	Question	Response
1	In WP1, it is specified that the project should utilise data from UK and international offshore wind markets. We wanted to confirm if "international" was intended for "worldwide" or more focused on the European offshore wind market?	"International" does not have to be limited to Europe if the bidder feels there are likely useful data sources outside of Europe. The bidder should suggest markets where there is most relevant data within the proposal.
2	Will there be an extension to the bid submission deadline?	There are no plans to extend the bid submission deadline.
3	Will there be an extension to the clarifications deadline?	There are no plans to extend the clarifications deadline.
4	Please can we ask that the requirement to have a pricing section in the main bid document is omitted and the BenCh_Bid-Price-Calculation-Sheet is used to assess our pricing submission, thus leaving the main bid document as 20 pages devoted to the technical submission?	Please do include a pricing section in the main bid document. This can be included as an appendix and therefore will not count as part of the 20 pages devoted to the technical submission.
5	The study is focused on benthos. Should we consider both phytobenthos and zoobenthos combined, or should we study them independently, or just one of them? Should one of them be given priority?	Both phytobenthos and zoobenthos should be considered in the study. Bidders should consider the aspects that are most relevant to offshore wind consenting.
6	If available data is not sufficient to perform proper analysis or to answer the research questions, should we perform in situ measurements by ourselves as optional scope?	This is not part of the core scope. Bidders are welcome to suggest additional work packages for consideration, but there is no guarantee that these will be funded.
7	Is it allowed to make use of datasets from outside the English Continental Shelf, to draw conclusions for OWF sites on the English Continental Shelf?	During delivery the contractor should outline assumptions taken and potential limitations to analysis, and where the contractor thinks conclusions can drawn. It is still of interest to ascertain

		what the effects are in areas where data has been collected and is available.
8	Our experience with acquiring datasets is that it is hard to access them because many private companies are not eager to share their datasets with others. Could we make use of datasets which are owned by the ORJIP Offshore Wind Partners?	This is a possibility to support the research, but cannot be guaranteed at this stage. Bidders should outline an approach with datasets that they are already aware of, and this will form a key part of the evaluation process.
9	Can the peer review be done by individuals within the same company that are not associated with / have not worked on the project, or must this be a third party? If the latter, does the third party need to be identified by the bidder, and should this be done in the proposal or later on the project?	The peer review should be completed by a third party, this should be outlined at the proposal stage.
10	Is it the intention of the Carbon Trust that the outcomes of this project are published in a peer reviewed scientific journal? If so, would the CT team be able to work alongside the contractor to share and divide the roles over the publication process?	Yes, this is the current intention. Bidders should outline the division of roles that they expect within proposals.
11	If yes to the above, is it the Carbon Trust's intention to work with a dedicated scientific journal (e.g. open access?) or would the bidding team need to cost and include in the bid the costs associated with publication fees? If so, are costs associated with this to be included in the proposal and do they fall within the £130-150k budget?	Yes, this is the current intention. Bidders should outline the division of roles that they expect within proposals. These costs do fall within the advertised budget.
12	Will there be any flex in the 10-month timeline given, does the Carbon Trust have a hard deadline date in mind? We are conscious from past experience that it can be challenging and take a while to obtain data agreements from third parties, such as developers or industry.	At present there is minimal flexibility and the project must be completed by a latest date of 30 th June 2025. Where this is an insurmountable challenge, bidders can outline what is achievable by this date and what would require extension/delay.
13	Which individuals sit on, or which organisations form, the Project Expert Panel? Is it correct to assume that these individuals are researchers / scientists, rather than people having direct involvement with developers?	The present formation of the Project Expert Panel includes representatives from: Natural England, NatureScot, Defra, JNCC, as well as individuals from the ORJIP Offshore Wind partners.

14	Will there be opportunity to, or would The Carbon Trust be interested in, the project being presented at a relevant conference(s) once results are obtained, either prior to or after publication?	This is a possibility and a decision will be made by the Steering Group on a case-by-case basis during project delivery.
15	Is The Carbon Trust expecting a statistical meta-analysis to be undertaken as part of this project?	This is in addition to the core scope of work outlined in the description of tender. However, bidders are welcome to suggest additional, optional work packages with justification, for consideration.
16	The ITT notes that "evaluation is expected to include a comparative analysis of predicted and actual impacts". Will this assessment be limited to developments where consent licence requirements have been completely discharged?	This assessment is not limited, and may depend on where the best data availability sits.
17	Regarding work package 6, we assume that the delivery of this work package will involve hiring an external reviewer to conduct a peer review and that we should therefore include this cost within our proposal? We also assume that the actual publication of the project deliverables is not expected within the scope of this project, given this is an often lengthy process, the timing of which would largely be outside of our control. Could you please confirm?	The assumptions are correct. 1) The cost of an external reviewer to conduct a peer review should be included within the proposal cost. 2) The publication of project deliverables can sit outside of the project delivery timeline.
18	In RQ3, ORJIP highlights changes in "regional ecological effects", what regional datasets would be expected to be used and/or what ecological regions does ORJIP need to have assessed for developers?	Bidders should suggest where datasets may be available to conduct this analysis as part of proposals.

19 Regarding RQ4, how does the project define "ecological function"? Does the project consider ecological functions as being based on their current context and importance to ecosystem processes? In addition, does this research question seek to understand additional impacts post-construction on the biosphere preform such as benthic nutrient cycling changes?

The contractor should consider definitions that are of most relevance to offshore wind consenting. Reaching a shared definition at kick-off will be an important aspect to the study.

The primary focus of this study is with regard to ecological effects rather than physical processes. This could extend to physical changes in the context of sediment type and associated implications for biota, rather than processes such as hydrodynamics. Ecological effects could review sediment structure and wave and tidal processes for their effects on the characteristic communities and key and influential species (those that have a core role in the structure and function of the habitat). The distribution, extent, diversity, abundance of these communities and other factors that affect the function of communities, such as changes to supply of recruits, predation, invasive species etc. would be valuable information to include if available.

20 Monitoring Data Accessibility: Could you confirm whether ORJIP has already secured access and collated any pre- or post-construction monitoring data from windfarm developers that would be available to use for further data analysis? Would the applicant also be expected to contact developers to request additional survey information from the developers that have not provided ORJIP with any data? Additionally, are there any further GIS files on the windfarms with monitoring data which also encompasses detailed infrastructure locations, including but not limited to cabling (both export and array), foundations, platforms, mooring lines, and anchors, especially for floating offshore wind projects?

This is a possibility to support the research, but cannot be guaranteed at this stage. Bidders should outline an approach with datasets that they are already aware of, and this will form a key part of the evaluation process.

21 Raw Data Examples: Is it possible for ORJIP to provide access to or examples of raw data emanated from Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) documents, alongside pre- and/or post-

This is a possibility to support the research, but cannot be guaranteed at this stage. Bidders should outline an approach with

construction baseline survey outcomes from developers? Access to such raw data would significantly bolster our ability to integrate this vital information into predictive models of ecological change, both current and future.

datasets that they are already aware of, and this will form a key part of the evaluation process.

22 Data Credibility Assessment Requirement: Would the tender application also require the inclusion of a data credibility assessment for any of the presented methodologies, similar to those required by Natural England for modelling scenarios?

This is considered additional to the core scope. Bidders are welcome to suggest additional work packages for consideration, but there is no guarantee that these will be funded.

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Published in the UK: 2023