Invitation to tender for research into Ireland's current and future energy demand in the context of renewable energy development

The Irish Environmental Network (IEN) is the umbrella network for national Environmental Non-Government Organisations (ENGOs) in the Republic of Ireland. It is made up of over 38 national ENGOs that work both individually and jointly to protect and enhance the environment, and to place environmental issues centre stage in Ireland and internationally. The IEN represents and supports national ENGOs, through capacity building and funding support and advocacy work.

The work of IEN members covers a broad range of areas including habitat conservation, wildlife protection, environmental education, sustainability, waste and energy issues, as well as environmental campaigning, awareness raising and advocacy.

The MARÉIRE project, funded by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), aims to be a unifying voice for Irish ENGOs in the offshore renewable energy sector. By engaging early in the process, the project will ensure the marine environment is considered in all phases of development. With a focus on advocacy and finding a balance between mitigating the climate crisis and protecting biodiversity, MARÉIRE will provide expert, scientific and evidence-based information while recognising its diverse audience.

Deadline for Applications: 5pm, 30th May 2025

Overview

Ireland is undergoing a transformative shift in its energy landscape, driven by climate commitments, EU obligations, and the imperative for a just transition. This research will inform future policy, planning, and stakeholder engagement by analysing current and future energy demand in relation to renewable energy production potential, grid infrastructure, and international obligations.

The IEN is seeking proposals for a research study that provides critical context for the development and production of renewable energy in Ireland, with a specific focus on energy demand, energy policy, and infrastructure capacity. This research will inform national energy strategies and ensure alignment with Ireland's climate and sustainability goals.

Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to evaluate Ireland's current and future energy demand in the context of renewable energy development, and to assess whether current policies and infrastructure are aligned and sufficient to meet these demands and obligations.

Research Objectives

The successful tenderer will deliver a research report that covers the following core areas:

1. Analysis of Ireland's Energy Demand Reduction Obligations

- Analyse Ireland's legally binding obligations related to energy demand reduction at both national and EU levels.
- Identify and evaluate compliance timelines (benchmarks and deadlines), legal implications, sector-specific responsibilities, and enforcement mechanisms.

2. Review of Irish and EU Energy Demand Policies

- Evaluation of whether existing Irish and EU energy demand policy frameworks are sufficient to meet reduction obligations.
- Identification of policy gaps and areas of misalignment or inefficiency.

3. Assessment of Energy Demand Reduction Targets

- Critical analysis of Ireland's energy demand reduction targets:
    - Are they ambitious enough?
    - Are they achievable?
    - How do they compare to other EU nations?

4. Scenario-Based Analysis of Renewable Energy Demand and Supply

The report should analyse and/or summarise a set of future scenarios, including:

- Domestic energy demand only.
- Combined domestic and export demand.
- All scenarios above should include and exclude data centres as a major variable.

The analyses should include:

- Environmental impact (e.g., emissions, land use, biodiversity).
- Socio-economic impact (e.g., employment, energy prices, regional development).

5. Projected Renewable Energy Production vs Energy Demand

- Compare current renewable energy production projections to:
    - Projected energy demand if reduction obligations are met.
    - Projected energy demand if current trends continue (business-as-usual).
- Identify potential shortfalls or overcapacity in different scenarios.

6. Grid Infrastructure and Resilience

- Assess current grid and energy infrastructure capacity.

- Identify bottlenecks or vulnerabilities in supporting increased renewable generation and varying demand scenarios.
- Provide recommendations for infrastructure investments and upgrades necessary to support identified scenarios and targets.

Delivery

The final deliverable will be a comprehensive report, including:

- Scenario-based analysis, where relevant.
- Visual representations of energy demand and supply scenarios (charts, graphs, etc.).
- A non-technical executive summary suitable for public and stakeholder communication.
- Actionable policy and infrastructure recommendations based on the findings.

The findings will also be expected to be presented at a stakeholder workshop

The consultant will be expected to:

- Present the findings to IEN member groups
- Engage with the IEN team at key milestones to review progress and preliminary findings.
- Produce a clear, well-structured detailed report
- Provide a short summary document (2–3 pages) of key insights for policymakers and NGOs.

The successful consultant/s will report to an IEN project steering group.

Criteria for Appointment

Applicants must demonstrate:

- A minimum of 2 years' experience conducting research projects of similar complexity and scope.
- Strong research, analytical, and critical thinking skills.
- Proven ability to write clear, structured, and accessible research reports.
- In-depth knowledge of Ireland's energy system, infrastructure, and policy landscape.

Desirable Attributes

- Experience working with environmental NGOs or within the non-profit or public sectors.
- Knowledge of Ireland and EU's renewable energy regulations and targets, climate commitments, and related national plans.
- Experience with stakeholder engagement processes, especially in energy or infrastructure contexts.

Submissions will be evaluated in accordance with following criteria:

Criteria	Commentary	Weighting
Value for Money	Your submission should include a detailed breakdown of costs; this must include the proposed number of days work, and the daily fee rates.	30%
Previous experience & understanding of brief	Evidence of skills/experience including brief portfolio of relevant work is required (At least 3 examples); information/CVs on who will be delivering the project	30%
Delivery methodology	Tenderers must describe the methodology they will use to carry out the project with specific reference to both the tasks and the processes and approach to be followed.	40%
Timeframe	Ability to complete work within the agreed timeframe	Pass/Fail

Failure to include all of the above may lead to disqualification.

Timeframe and Reporting

The programme will run from June 2025, with the following milestones anticipated:

- Tender selection and signature of contract – Early June 2025
- Project Initiation and agreed priority actions – mid-June 2025
- Interim report – early October
- Final report – early December 2025

The project will be managed by a Steering Group comprised of staff/member organisation from the IEN.

The successful tenderer will be required to report regularly to the Steering Group.

Budget

A maximum sum of €10,000 + VAT is available for this contract, which must include all other expenses including any travel, personal expenses, events or other engagements.

Tenderers should price accordingly to gain a competitive advantage.

Tenders received over this amount will not be considered.

Proposal Submissions

All submissions must be submitted via email to Dr Jenny Bortoluzzi at jenny@ien.ie by **5pm, 30th May**

We are not bound to accept either the lowest or any of the quotes received.

The MARÉIRE project is hosted by the Irish Environmental Network and funded by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).