



Our Ref: FH—ExAQ2_Deadline5-Morgan-OWFProj/25-001

Your Ref: EN010136—Morgan Offshore Wind Project: Generation Assets -
Examining Authority's Second Written Questions

Interested Party Reference Number: 20048922

Email: morganoffshorewindproject@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

16 January 2025

To whom it may concern,

Scottish Fishermen's
Federation
24 Rubislaw Terrace
Aberdeen, AB10 1XE
Scotland UK

T: +44 (0) [REDACTED]
E: sff@sff.co.uk

[REDACTED]

SFF & West Coast Sea Products Ltd (WCSP) Response to Examining Authority Written Questions 2 re Morgan Offshore Windfarm Generation Assets

This response to the 'Examining Authority's Written Questions2' is presented by the Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) on behalf of the 450 plus fishing vessels in membership of its constituent associations, the Anglo Scottish Fishermen's Association, Fife Fishermen's Association, Fishing Vessel Agents and Owners Association, Mallaig & North West Fishermen's Association, Orkney Fisheries Association, Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association, the Scottish White Fish Producer's Association and Shetland Fishermen's Association.

The SFF appreciate the Examining Authority's (ExA) questions re our written response to Morgan OWF Generation Assets License Application consultation submitted on 10 December 2024. Following is SFF's including the West Coast Sea Project Ltd (WCSP) response to the ExA's written questions.

ExAQ2_CF Commercial Fisheries

1. ExA Q2: CF 2.3: "Satisfaction with cable installation and protection commitments submitted at D4

The ExA notes the outline Construction Method Statement (CMS) submitted at Deadline 4 includes at Annex A: Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) including Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA), and at Annex B: Scour Protection and Cable Protection Management [REP4-032]. The Applicant has also revised the wording of TM17 in the outline FLCP [REP4-021]. The Fisheries IPs are requested to confirm if they now sufficiently satisfied with the commitments contained in the outline CSIP/CBRA [REP4-032] and within the Commitments Register [REP4-025], notably commitments Co19 to Co30 inclusive, to be able to agree with the principle of the Scallop Mitigation Zone as proposed."

Members:

Anglo Scottish Fishermen's Association · Fife Fishermen's Association · Fishing Vessel Agents & Owners Association (Scotland) Ltd ·
Mallaig & North-West Fishermen's Association Ltd · Orkney Fisheries Association · Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association Ltd ·
The Scottish White Fish Producers' Association Ltd · Shetland Fishermen's Association

VAT Reg No: 605 096 748

SFF and WCSP Response:

We are not satisfied with the Applicant commitments contained in the outline CSIP/CBRA [REP4-032] and within the Commitments Register [REP4-025], notably commitments Co19 to Co30 inclusive as they do not address our concerns, therefore we do not agree with the principle of the Scallop Mitigation Zone as proposed. Following outlines our reasons:

- The Applicant's proposed SMZ still does not address the fishing industry's concerns, as there are no commitments in the draft FLCP, and Commitment Register that prove the fishing industry's demand in regard to leaving the SMZ free of turbines and subsea cables has been accepted and will be acted upon.
- We note from Co20 (New commitment not within MMS), "The Applicant **will seek to minimise cable routing through the SMZ where possible**" (Final cable routing will be secured through the Design Plan condition. The design plan will be prepared post consent). We are of the view that this is a weak and loose commitment and confirms that there will be no guarantees that cables will not be routed through the SMZ and the fishing industry's demand re SMZ will be materialised. To reiterate, if cables cross the SMZ area (that would require cable protection) it will make this area a no go zone for scallop fisheries due to the snagging risks it creates to the fishing vessels and safety hazard it will pose to the fishers' life.
- The SFF also re-emphasizes the need for not using turbines at western corners of the proposed SMZ to avoid disruption to pelagic fisheries in the area, as the Applicant has not made any commitment to do so yet.
- The Construction Method Statement (CMS) submitted at Deadline 4 that includes at Annex A: Outline Cable Specification and Installation Plan (CSIP) including Cable Burial Risk Assessment (CBRA), and at Annex B: Scour Protection and Cable Protection, are just brief outline papers and do not include any technical specifications pending finalisation post consent. The proposed commitment for cable protection (Co27) that commits to minimising height above seabed, smooth and shallower profiles, grade used for rock placement, type of rock (e.g. smoother edges) does not avoid the snagging risks to scallop dredgers at all as use of cable protection by itself creates snagging hazard to scallop fisheries, due to dredging nature of the fleet.
- We note from (Co25) that, in the CSIP, "consideration will be given for the use of cable protection which is of such a nature that it may be more readily removable at decommissioning". The SFF and WCSP require further clarification on and want to know the nature of the proposed cable protection material. We would like to reiterate that the fishing industry opposes use of concrete mattresses and grout/sandbags for cable protection works as they create significant snagging hazard to demersal fisheries specifically the scallop dredgers. In addition, any material arising from drilling and/or sandwave clearance (as referred to in Co31) should be deposited outwith scallop fishery grounds.

2. ExAQ2. CF 2.4: "Unresolved matters in the SoCG with the NFFO and others

The updated SoCG with the NFFO and others contains many unresolved matters, including lack of agreement with the EIA methodology and its conclusions for the project alone and cumulatively...."

SFF's Comment:

The SFF reiterate that the Applicant has still not reached agreement with us regarding numerous important items in the draft Statement of Comment Ground (SoCG) including agreement on

mitigation measures (SMZ), the EIA methodology and routine monitoring (every 5 years). These are still 'ongoing points for discussion' and should be agreed pre-consent.

3. ExAQ2. CF 2.5: "**Identification of Irish Sea queen scallop fishing grounds**

Do you have any observations or critique to make about the analysis produced by ERM and submitted by the Applicant as [REP4-011] identifying "Irish Sea queen scallop fishing grounds generated by digitising information provided in Vause et al, 2007, Defra, 2024 and plotter positions provided by WCSP"?"

SFF & WCSP Response:

Following are our observations and critique to make about the analysis produced by ERM and submitted by the Applicant as [REP4-011] identifying "Irish Sea queen scallop fishing grounds generated by digitising information provided in Vause et al, 2007, Defra, 2024 and plotter positions provided by WCSP":

The diagram provided at (**Figure 1.1 of Annex 6.2 to the Applicant's response to Written Representations from MMO at Deadline 3: Queen Scallop**) is out of context as it tries to show the Queen Scallop grounds in the Irish Sea are vast to prove the Queen Scallop grounds are vast and the development will have a negligible impact on Queen Scallop fisheries. This is not the case for the following reasons:

1. The mentioned diagram (Figure 1.1) shows further Queen Scallop grounds in the Irish Sea, but it should be noted that our members (especially WCSP as the receptor affected) do not have access to the Queen Scallop grounds in Manx waters, which despite having historical rights, is now purely an otter trawl fishery for Queen Scallops.
2. Secondly, the majority of the shown Queen Scallop grounds in Figure 1.1 are not prominent or commercially viable during a typical season, i.e. in some years there may be dense numbers of commercially viable Queen Scallops but some beds can go years without any productivity. We would also like the opportunity to also highlight that the Morgan OWF and its SMZ is situated within the area of the Fishery management Plan currently being developed for English waters in which the attached document ([21478 QUEENSCALLOPFMPEVIDENCESTATEMENT-FINALCOPY \(2\).PDF](#)¹ also attached with this response's email) evidences this as one of the most productive ICES rectangles for Queen Scallop commercial fishing.

As the analysis mentions, WCSP had provided detailed information on commercially viable queen scallop fishing grounds via plotter positions within the Morgan Array Area in responses to questionnaires issued to commercial fisheries stakeholders on 24 March 2022 (that has been cited in Section 1.3.3 of Volume 4, Annex 6.1: Commercial fisheries technical report (APP-059)). WCSP had categorised the queen scallop grounds into zones to show where Queen scallop fishery take place, with a zone in the west corner of the Morgan Array Area being labelled as the 'commercially important queen scallop fishing ground', with the remaining area within the Morgan Array Area being labelled as grounds that are rarely fished (as shown in Figure 1.54 of Volume 4, Annex 6.1: Commercial fisheries technical report (APP-059)). This remains intact to date. As we have reiterated in our Responses to this development consultations so far, the western corner of the proposed development has significant importance to our Queen scallop fishery and the mentioned area is our prolific fishing ground. Therefore, we wish for the development to include an SMZ which Queen

¹ Paper 1. Proposed Fisheries Management Plan for queen scallop in English waters, Supporting document: Evidence Statement, Date: October 2024.



Scallop fishers can be confident delivers true uninterrupted coexistence (without cable crossing and turbine on perimeters).

Note: Our concern in relation to the development constructions noise impacts on herring spawning ground and scallop larvae still remain intact and we propose that the ICES 2024 advice on herring in Irish Sea to be considered and acted up on.

Conclusion:

On behalf of the SFF and WSCP we appreciate the opportunity to submit this written response and reiterate the **SFF robustly objects to the application as it negatively impacts our members.**

Best regards

Fahim Hashimi
Offshore Energy Policy Manager
Scottish Fishermen's Federation