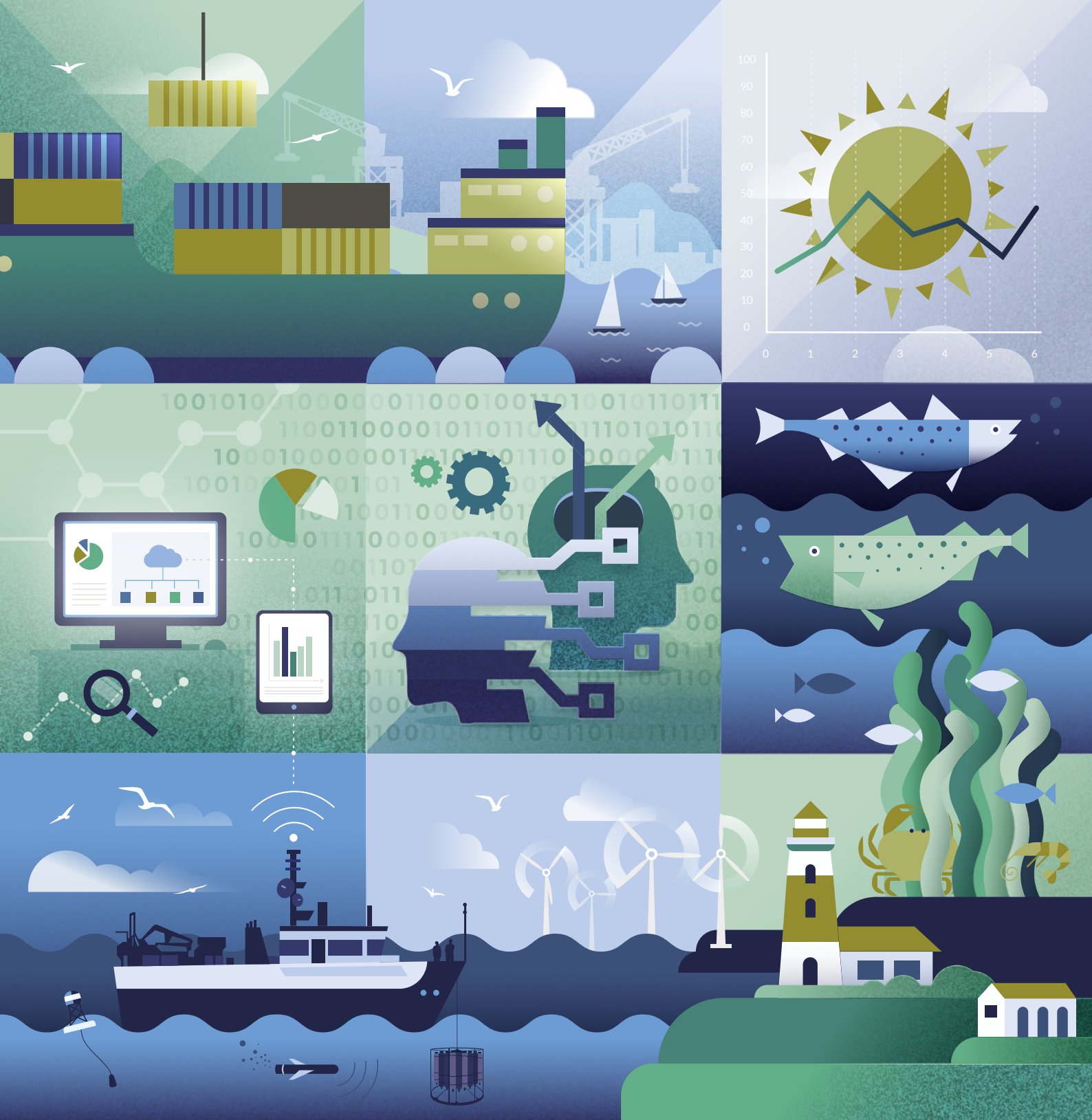




OCEAN KNOWLEDGE THAT INFORMS AND INSPIRES

CORPORATE STRATEGY
2023 - 2027



Foras na Mara
Marine Institute

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The Marine Institute Act (1991)

To undertake, to co-ordinate, to promote and to assist in marine research and development and to provide such services related to marine research and development, that in the opinion of the Institute will promote economic development and create employment and protect the marine environment.

Foreword

The period up to 2030 is a critical time for humanity to address global challenges including decarbonisation, advancing food and energy security, and reducing and adapting to climate change. In 2021, the United Nations launched the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, recognising the essential role of ocean science and knowledge in understanding and finding solutions to these complex global challenges.

Under its strategic plan for the period 2018-2022, the Marine Institute substantially increased its research activity, public engagement and service provision, and successfully delivered flagship projects including a new state-of-the-art national research vessel, the Tom Crean. The national policy and development priorities that guide the work of the Institute have changed fundamentally over that period. These developments are greatly increasing the demands that are being placed on the Institute to deliver more services to a greater number of clients. Serving new clients and expanding services, whilst continuing to advance the Institute's support to its parent department, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), presents both an important challenge and an immense opportunity for the development of the Institute over the next five years.

In that context, I am pleased to present the Marine Institute's Strategy 2023-2027, *Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires*. The new strategy sets out an ambitious agenda for the development of the Institute and its service delivery to DAFM and key clients in a way that informs government policy and inspires stakeholders and society to understand, value, protect and develop our maritime area and resources.

Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires sets a clear ambition and roadmap that will enable the Marine Institute and Ireland to deliver on national and EU policy goals in sustainable seafood production, ocean science and management, environment and biodiversity, maritime transport, offshore renewable energy and climate action.

The Institute will enhance its national and international partnerships; leverage science and development funding opportunities; increase its profile, leadership, and influence in the national and international arena; become more sustainable as an organisation, and build capacity and capability across the eight strategic priority areas set out within this strategy. This will be matched and enhanced by continual innovation in the deployment and use of infrastructures, digital tools, products and services.

The new strategy has been developed in close consultation with government, industry and civil society stakeholders and we thank them for their valuable inputs. I also express my thanks to the staff of the Institute, who are themselves a key stakeholder and who have directly engaged in the strategy development process. It is their expertise and dedication that will enable us to deliver on the ambition we have set for the Institute.

We look forward to working with all our partners and stakeholders to realise our vision to make the Marine Institute a national and international leader in ocean knowledge that benefits people, policy and planet.

John Killeen

Dr. John Killeen
Chairman



About the Marine Institute

The Marine Institute is Ireland's scientific agency responsible for supporting the sustainable development of the state's maritime area and resources. We do this through conducting applied research and providing scientific knowledge, advice and services to government, industry and other stakeholders and users. This policy advice capacity, our broad mandate, and the research programmes we fund and undertake, give us a unique insight into the science-policy interface and make us an exemplar in the provision of integrated ocean knowledge.

The Marine Institute provides a broad range of essential scientific support to its parent department, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM). There is an increasing demand from Government for the data and evidence that are essential to inform national policy and to underpin the state's governance of our maritime area. Through laboratory, field and seagoing work, the Institute carries out statutory environmental, fisheries and aquaculture surveys, seafood testing and other monitoring programmes assigned by government. The Institute plays an important role in supporting the state's response to the impacts of our changing seas and oceans, through working with the national and international scientific community to observe, study and understand our changing oceans.

This essential scientific advice supports industry, protects consumers and underpins legislative and other obligations aimed at the protection and management of the marine environment.

There are **6 broad service areas** within the Marine Institute;

- (1) Fisheries Ecosystems Advisory Services;**
- (2) Marine Environment and Food Safety Services;**
- (3) Policy, Innovation and Research Support**
- (4) Ocean, Climate and Information Services**
- (5) Corporate Services**
- (6) Irish Maritime Development Office**

The Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) is the part of the Marine Institute which supports Ireland's maritime transport sector. The IMDO provides maritime business development functions and advisory services to government, specifically in reference to requests from the Department of Transport.

Research and innovation are central to the role of the Marine Institute as both a research performer and a research funder. In addition, the Institute holds responsibility for coordinating national marine research, and supporting Irish-based researchers to achieve success in international programmes. The Institute also operates essential national infrastructures, including two research vessels, the Celtic Explorer and the Tom Crean, providing an essential platform for national and international research.

Through its communication and education, networking and outreach activities, the Institute informs its stakeholders and broader society about the work that it does and the importance and value of the ocean in providing essential goods and services for society and economy.

With headquarters located in Oranmore, Co. Galway, the Marine Institute also has a catchment and climate change research facility at Newport, Co. Mayo, offices and laboratories in the main fishing ports and an office in Dublin.

Supporting our Key Clients



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

SUPPORTING DAFM OUR PARENT DEPARTMENT

- **Sustainable Seafood** - Scientific Advice and Technical Services
- **EU Common Fisheries Policy** – Scientific Support (*Stock Assessment, Advice, Policy Support*).
- **Inshore Fisheries** (*Stock Assessment and Advice Policy Support*)
- **Aquaculture Advice and Technical Services** (*Sealice Monitoring, Benthic monitoring, Shellfish Microbiological classification, aquaculture license database support*).
- **Aquaculture Licensing Support** (*Appropriate assessments, Environmental Impact Assessment Reports, Application Reviews, Protocols and Guidelines*)
- **The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund** (*Biodiversity & Marine knowledge schemes*)
- **EMFAF** projects of strategic importance, **DCMAP** national co-ordination
- **EU Fisheries, Aquaculture and Ecosystem Research Projects**
- **NATURA 2000, Nature restoration law, Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, MPA's**, (*support for impacts from seafood production*)
- **Seafood Safety** (*Residues of veterinary drugs, Shellfish Biotoxins monitoring, seafood contaminants,*)
- **Fish Health** (*competent authority, fish movement authorisations, imports and exports, disease monitoring*)
- **Blue Growth** (*innovative aquaculture, fisheries management support*)

- **Marine Strategy Framework Directive** (*biodiversity, food webs, commercial fish, seafloor integrity, eutrophication and contaminants in the marine environment*)
- **Marine Spatial Planning** (*Fishing footprint*)
- **Marine Climate Adaptation** (*Climate models & marine ecosystem impacts*)
- **National Marine Research Co-ordination and Funding**
- **Ocean Economy** – Facts and Figures
- **Stakeholder Engagement** (*Irish Fisheries Science Research Partnership*)
- **International Science Co-operation**
- Support the Work of **ICES, SCF & STECF** in International Marine Science
- **Data Management and Quality**
- **Infrastructure Sharing**
- **Research Vessel Operations**
- **Ocean Modelling and Forecasting**
- **Marine Research and Innovation**



WHAT WE DO

- We **Generate** and **Communicate Ocean Knowledge**.
- We **Deliver Ocean Services** to **Support the Sustainable Development** of our **Marine Economy**.
- We **Safeguard Ireland's Marine Resources**.



An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport

SUPPORTING DOT THROUGH THE WORK OF IMDO

- **Maritime industry** - Development and Promotion
- **Maritime Policy, Advice and Support**
- **EU Policy, Funding Support, and Project Co-ordination**
- **Port Development, Advice and Support**
- **Offshore Renewable Energy Support**
- **Offshore Renewable Energy** – Policy, Advice and Analysis
- **Decarbonisation and Green Ports** – Policy Advice and Analysis
- **Strategic Development Initiatives** (*socio-economic research, digitalisation and decarbonisation*)

WORKING WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, INDUSTRY

THIRD LEVEL AND STAKEHOLDERS

MI PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

- Marine Spatial Planning
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Water Framework Directive
- Marine Protected Areas
- Biodiversity, Birds, and Habitats Directive (NATURA)
- Integrated Maritime Policy, Blue Growth
- Offshore Renewable Energy
- Seabed Mapping (INFOMAR)
- Climate Policy Support
- Inland Fisheries
- Environmental Research and Monitoring
- Shared Ocean – International Ocean Governance
- Research and Innovation
- Bioeconomy
- Shared Island
- Regional and Rural Development
- Climate Risk and Mitigation
- Food Safety
- Maritime Safety
- EMFAF
- Blue Growth
- Ocean Economy
- Outreach and Engagement
- National Marine Research Coordination
- MI Funded Research Projects
- Co Funded Projects
- Collaborative Projects
- Data Sharing
- Infrastructure Sharing
- Strategic Partnerships

Our Strategy

Our five-year strategy, *Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires*, sets a new vision, and mission for the Marine Institute and identifies eight strategic priorities for the period 2023-2027. Each priority includes a clearly defined ambition along with a targeted set of initiatives and outcomes. Ambition describes what we set out to achieve, initiatives are the actions we will undertake to achieve the ambition and outcomes are the specific goals or endpoints we will measure to track our achievement of the strategy.

The delivery of our strategy will build on the Marine Institute's resource base by leveraging national and international investment and funding and our established track record of leadership and influence in key national and international networks and fora. Reflecting the dynamic operating environment of marine and maritime policy, the Institute will be agile and adaptive in advancing the ambitions of the strategy.

The strategic priorities centre on transforming our knowledge, advice and services, delivered through a sustainable organisation and a workplace culture that inspires our people to deliver excellence.

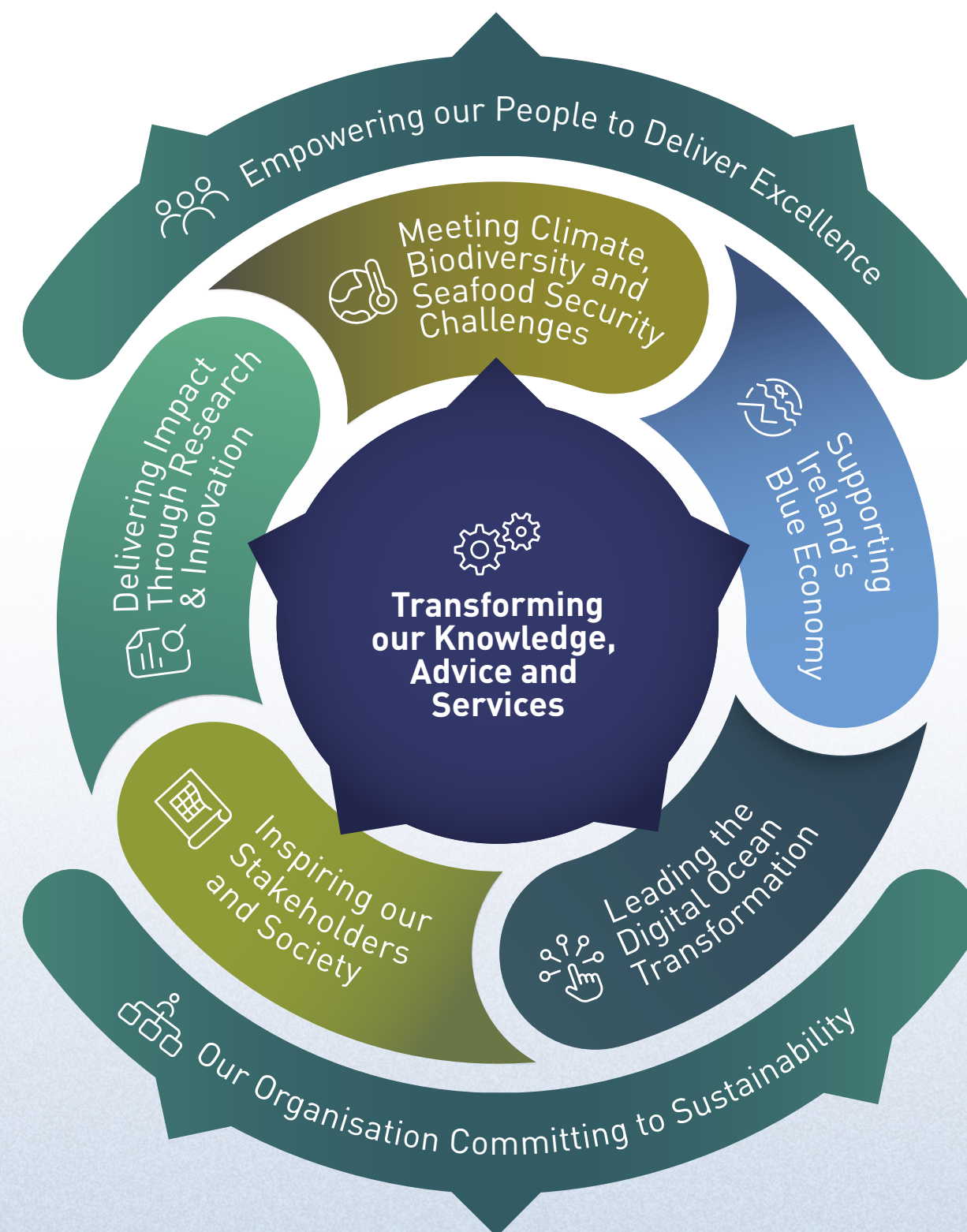
Our integrated ocean knowledge, advice and services will enable a growing number of government clients and stakeholders to meet commitments and targets in relation to environmental protection and restoration,

climate, energy and economic development. In particular, there will be an increased focus on informing and supporting government in the area of safe, sustainable and secure seafood production; sustainable development of offshore renewable energy; implementation of marine spatial planning and licensing support; the establishment of marine protected areas; strengthening the strategically important maritime sector; and supporting the transition to a sustainable, climate-neutral blue economy.

We will deliver impactful research and build partnerships that enhance our leadership in the research arena. We will support sustainable development in Ireland's marine and maritime industries. We will advance our advice and services by embracing the goals of the EU digital decade, particularly focusing on the digitalisation of our business practices and public service offering. We will build a greater capacity to communicate and engage with society and stakeholders on the role and importance of our ocean and the ecosystem services it provides, and the important role of the Marine Institute in understanding and safeguarding them.

Ocean Knowledge 2030 is the roadmap for the Marine Institute to be a key service provider, enabling Ireland to meet its national and international commitments and to achieve a sustainable and productive blue economy in balance with nature.

The Marine Institute strategic priorities 2023-2027



Our Vision

The Marine Institute is a national and international leader in ocean knowledge that benefits people, policy and planet.

Our Mission

The Marine Institute provides scientific, research and development services to government, agencies, industry and society that support the sustainable use of our maritime area, the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems, and promote a shared understanding of the ocean.

Our Values

These values are the foundation of our culture. Living by these values, putting them into practice, and weaving them into all aspects of our work inspires our people to deliver excellence.



Commitment

We are passionate about the ocean, our mission and Ireland achieving its marine potential in a sustainable way.



Integrity

We uphold the highest levels of integrity, accountability and transparency in everything that we do.



Excellence

We deliver to the highest standards, achieving excellence in the quality of our services through the performance of our people and the continuous investment in our marine research infrastructure.



Innovation

We promote and support a culture of innovation; nurturing creativity, fostering new ideas and striving to continuously improve what we do and how we do it.



Collaboration

We embrace teamwork, collaboration and the integration of our scientific and technical capacities.



Respect

We value the relationships we forge, respecting all colleagues, partners and stakeholders with a commitment to our individual and corporate social responsibilities, and diversity and inclusion policy.



Our Strategic Priorities

Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires is organised around eight strategic priorities.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	OUR AMBITION
Transforming our Knowledge, Advice and Services	We will advance our trusted and expert knowledge, advice and services to government, public agencies, and the marine and maritime industry. We will transform our digital services to better inform policy making, regulation and the sustainable management and growth of Ireland's marine resources.
Meeting Climate, Biodiversity and Seafood Security Challenges	We will substantially increase our capacity to meet national and international climate and biodiversity and seafood security commitments and targets. This will be achieved by expanding our data collection, modelling, monitoring and research programmes in full collaboration with local, national, and EU/Atlantic partners.
Delivering Impact Through Research & Innovation	We will build our research capabilities and increase our national coordination, promotion and funding activities for marine research and innovation. We will enhance our leadership and partnerships in the national and international research arena to promote research excellence, leverage substantial funding opportunities and advance national policy and development priorities.
Leading the Digital Ocean transformation	We will be a leader in Ireland and Europe's digital transformation through the development of an interactive digital model of the ocean (Digital Twin of the Ocean for Ireland) in order to advance our knowledge, advice and services. We will embrace technologies such as high-end computing and cloud services, digital collaboration and workflows, data analytics and artificial intelligence, underpinned by digital skills, data connectivity and cybersecurity.
Supporting Ireland's Blue Economy	We will support to the development of Ireland's marine and maritime industry, enabling growth and the necessary transition to a climate neutral, knowledge-based blue economy. We will provide maritime development services focusing on ports, shipping and related services and enhance our capacity and capabilities in marine socio-economics, enabling a robust analytical framework to guide integrated marine and maritime development policies and planning.
Empowering our People to Deliver Excellence	We will be a workplace where a dynamic, diverse, motivated, and valued team deliver service with excellence. This will be driven by a culture of collaboration, wellbeing, innovation and continuous development, aligned with our vision and mission, and enabled through living our values.
Our Organisation Committing to Sustainability	We will be a steward of the natural environment and make a positive contribution to society in all aspects of our work. Sustainability will be at the heart of how we work and a guiding principle for our organisation, our research, our scientific advice and our economic development services. Through access to state-of-the-art research infrastructures, data and digital services, we will enable the science community to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Agenda and the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.
Inspiring our stakeholders and society	We will engage and communicate with our stakeholders and with broader society in an innovative, targeted and strategic way. Our engagement will tell the story of our work and raise awareness about the role and value of the ocean to inspire interest and support in addressing ocean challenges and opportunities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY Transforming our knowledge, advice and services

The demands for integrated knowledge and advice on the health and sustainable management of our oceans, our seafood resource and the development of our maritime area, are increasing and broadening. The Marine Institute has an important role in communicating complex science and specialist knowledge to decision-makers, stakeholders, and society in an accessible and understandable way.

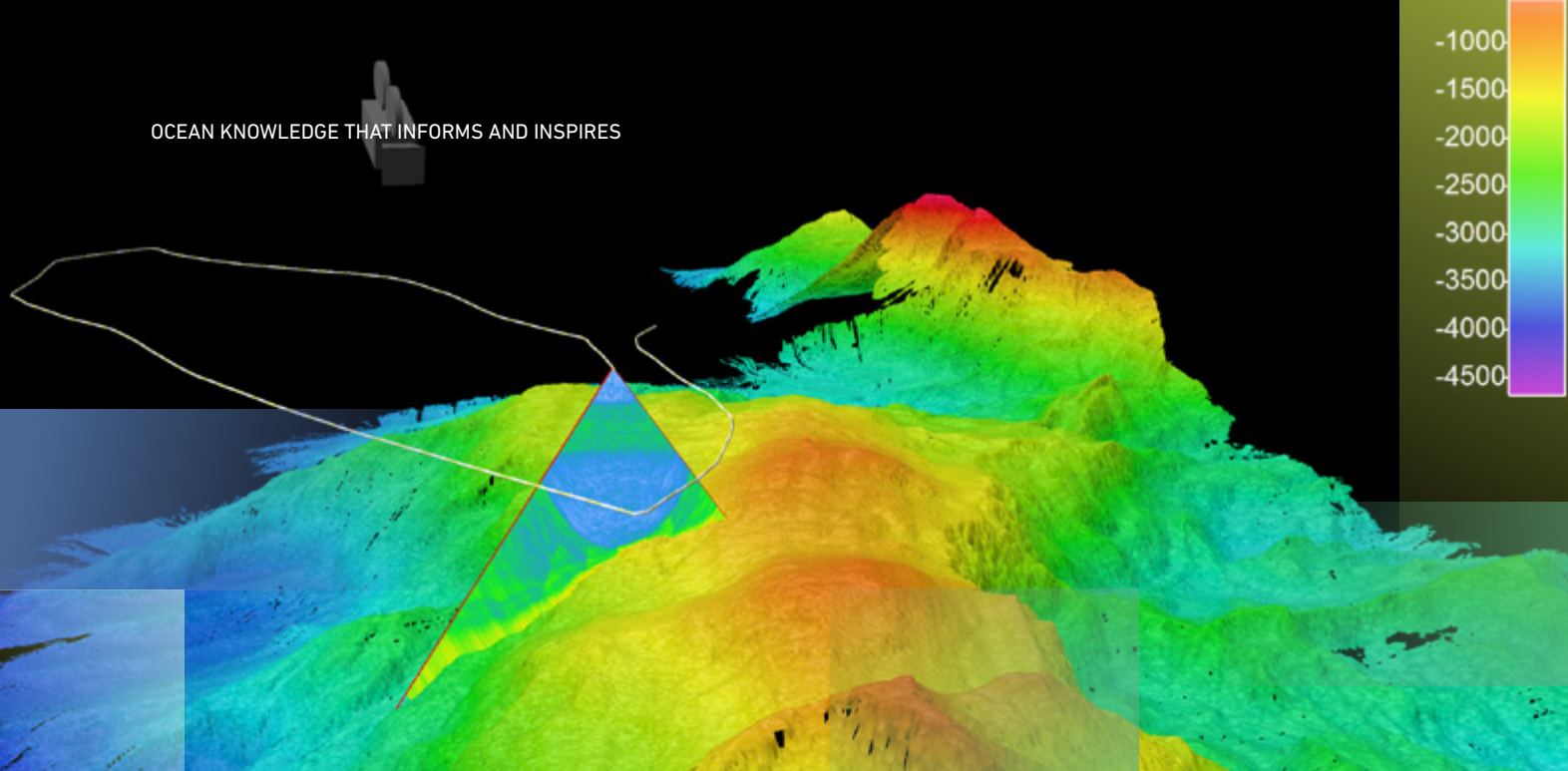
The Institute will continue to excel in the delivery of trusted research, advice and services to government, supporting the implementation of EU and national directives and policy areas. These currently include the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the Water Framework Directive (WFD),

the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR), the Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan II (ORED II), the Climate Action Plan 2023, the National Ports Policy, and the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF). Our science advice and service provision informs government policy and decision-making in aquaculture licencing, seafood safety and security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and sustainable development of the maritime industry.

We will further diversify and advance our capacity to provide integrated ocean knowledge and expertise to a wider range of stakeholders to meet the future needs of the state. New technologies such as remote telemetry, artificial intelligence, digital services, and molecular DNA techniques will advance our ocean knowledge and improve the Institute's advisory services. This will be critical to support sustainable food production from the ocean, underpin the anticipated expansion in offshore renewable energy, and meet national and EU targets for Marine Spatial Planning and the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity.

OUR AMBITION Transforming our Knowledge, Advice and Services.

We will advance our trusted expert knowledge, advice and services to government, public agencies, and the marine and maritime industry. We will transform our digital services to better inform policy making, regulation and the sustainable management and growth of Ireland's marine resources



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Deliver integrated, high-quality, and efficient services to meet the needs of our parent department, the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), with a focus on sustainable food production from the ocean, and implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy and Food Vision 2030.
- 2 Through the work of the Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO), deliver excellence in the provision of maritime services to the Department of Transport (DoT) in the areas of policy and advice, business development, training and education, EU funding for industry, offshore renewable energy, alternative fuels, and the expansion of port infrastructure.
- 3 Work closely with our partner agency, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), to optimise delivery of our common goals in the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) Data Collection Programme, seafood safety, aquaculture licensing support, biodiversity priorities and the blue bioeconomy.
- 4 Deliver on agreed commitments to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) related to OSPAR, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Water Framework Directive and the National Marine Planning Framework.
- 5 Develop and implement an expanded suite of services to Department of the Environment, Communications and Climate (DECC), across a range of sectoral areas to support the expansion of offshore renewable energy capacity and the completion and implementation of OREDP II.
- 6 Provide research, knowledge, data and evidence for consenting and licensing in Ireland's maritime area, e.g., to the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA), Local Authorities and other designated public bodies.
- 7 Deliver on the services required under the INFOMAR (Integrated Mapping for the sustainable development of Ireland's marine resource) programme (2022-2026), working with the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications, and Geological Survey Ireland. This includes a programme of data acquisition, management and interpretation, data exchange and integration, and value-added exploitation.
- 8 Make a valuable contribution to integrated marine governance by supporting the needs of relevant cross-government working groups, task forces and structures set up to deliver support across multiple programme areas and sectors.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027



Our advice and services support DAFM to inform and set seafood policy and contribute to the implementation of Ireland's agri-food strategy, Food Vision 2030, and the growth and sustainable management of the seafood sector and blue bioeconomy in Ireland.



Annual programme of research, policy and advice set by the Department of Transport is delivered.



Long-term Service Level Agreements are in place with key government departments that provide resources to deliver integrated marine government services.



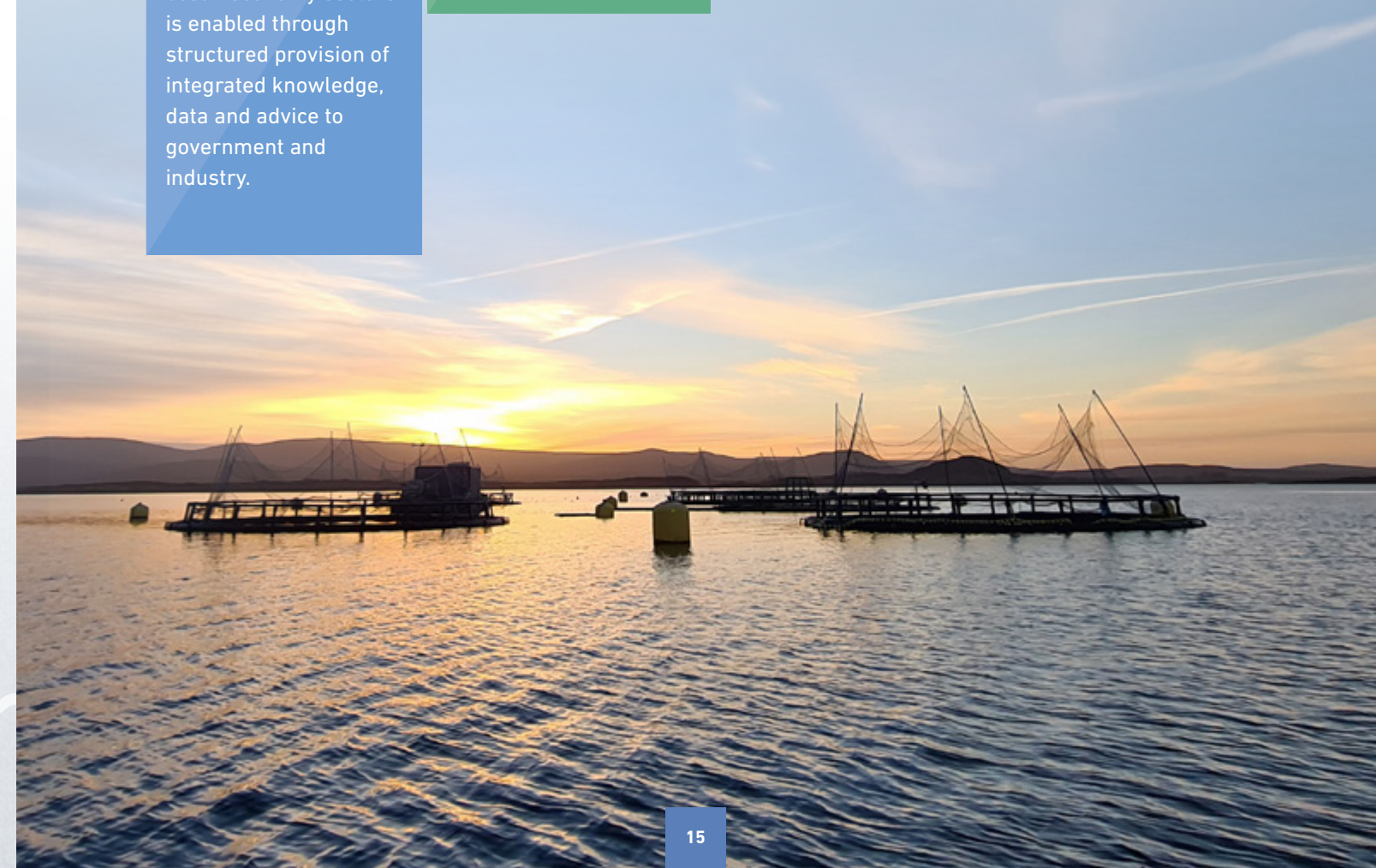
Greater range of datasets and associated services are provided to clients and advisory products are facilitated through the Institute's digital twin ocean programme and related digital services.



The INFOMAR baseline map of Ireland's seabed territory is completed and a successor value-added initiative is in place, linked to national strategic priorities.



Sustainable development of key ocean economy sectors is enabled through structured provision of integrated knowledge, data and advice to government and industry.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Meeting Climate, Biodiversity and Seafood Security Challenges

Leveraging our geographic location at Europe’s frontier with the Atlantic, the Marine Institute will be a key player in the national effort needed to meet the ambitious commitments and targets set out in Ireland’s Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 and Climate Action Plan 2023 (including the Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan). The EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy and national policy sets the ambition to designate 30% of our maritime area as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2030.

This is the policy framework within which Ireland can become a leader in addressing climate change, biodiversity and seafood security challenges, which also supports the ambition of the Institute to expand its ocean climate evidence-base and services.

Meeting these challenges will require new research partnerships and service delivery arrangements with government and its agencies, as well as investment in global and national observation and data collection infrastructure. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) programme will be a key enabler in addressing sectoral challenges linked to climate change and biodiversity.

OUR AMBITION

Meeting the climate, biodiversity and seafood security challenges



We will substantially increase our capacity to meet national and international climate, biodiversity and seafood security commitments and targets. This will be achieved by expanding our data collection, modelling, monitoring and research programmes in full collaboration with local, national, and EU/Atlantic partners.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1** Deliver the Marine Institute’s climate evidence and services in a targeted way to stakeholders across three strategic areas:

 - o Sustained Essential Climate Variables (ECV) observations;
 - o Improved understanding of ocean climate change; and
 - o Enhanced national capacity to project future climate impacts.
- 2** Deliver a range of tailored climate, biodiversity and seafood security services that inform policy makers, industry, and society, e.g. through the Climate Status Report and input to the National Framework for Climate Services.
- 3** Provide analyses of climate and seafood security threats of relevance to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, based on the Seafood Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan and support the implementation of marine-relevant Climate Action Plan (CAP) Actions. Support other climate adaptation programmes focused on maritime, coastal infrastructure and impact on coastal communities.
- 4** Implement biodiversity programmes and projects that address national, EU and international biodiversity priorities e.g., monitoring and protecting endangered fish and elasmobranch species and sensitive habitats, shifts in species distributions as a result of climate change and pollution pressures.
- 5** Provide integrated scientific advice and services to inform government on the designation of the optimum location and spatial extent of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Ireland’s maritime area for ocean protection and restoration, e.g., through biological, chemical, physical, economic and socio-economic assessments.
- 6** Leverage our knowledge base, and extensive monitoring and time-series data to develop baselines that will provide essential indicators of ecosystem service provision, biodiversity and environmental change.
- 7** The Newport Research Facility will be utilised to develop flagship projects that focus on telemetry, restoring endangered species and habitats, and the impact of climate on marine and freshwater ecosystems.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027



An expanded, resourced, and structured national marine climate programme, consistently monitoring essential ocean variables and enabling government to meet ambitious climate targets.



A strong international profile, participation and impact in science and service provision responding to climate, biodiversity and seafood security challenges.



An integrated marine environmental monitoring programme to map sensitive habitats, manage biodiversity, and increase support for the development of MPAs by 2030.



The Marine Institute's Newport Research Facility is recognised as an international centre of excellence for catchment ecology, climate impacts, telemetry, and the restoration of endangered species.



Our advice and services have supported the maritime industry and government policy initiatives on ORE, alternative fuels and port infrastructure.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY
Delivering impact through research and innovation

Over the next five years, research and innovation will be critical in providing knowledge to inform government policy, decision-making and sectoral development across a broad range of marine and maritime areas.

The Marine Institute is setting out an ambitious agenda to further increase research activity, capacity, coordination, and impact, both for the Institute and across our national research system. The Institute's multi-layered role as funder, performer and national co-ordinator with respect to research will be vital to support the specific action set out in Impact 2030: Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy, 'to position Ireland as a leader for marine research and technology.'

The Institute will continue to leverage its leadership roles in European science networks. International partnerships will also be a strategic priority to optimise the opportunities presented by Horizon Europe and its Mission to Restore Our Ocean and Waters by 2030.

The Institute will continue to foster and support impactful research, providing critical knowledge and innovation for public policy and sectoral development.

OUR AMBITION:
Delivering impact through research and innovation



We will build our research capabilities and increase our national coordination, promotion and funding activities for marine research and innovation. We will enhance our leadership and partnerships in the national and international research arena to promote research excellence, leverage substantial funding opportunities and advance national policy and development priorities.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1
- Deliver and implement the new national marine research and innovation strategy, Ocean Knowledge 2030, working in close coordination with funders and stakeholders.
- 2
- Optimise the Marine Institute’s role as a research funder through the development of new instruments and programmes, and an increased focus on impact.
- 3
- Build all-island research cooperation in areas such as climate change, biodiversity, ocean governance, marine planning, ocean observing, seabed mapping, offshore renewable energy, blue bioeconomy, maritime transport, and socio-economics through funding opportunities under EU programmes and the Shared Island initiative.
- 4
- Establish and foster strategic partnerships with national and international partner institutes, through leadership in the Atlantic region, implementation and development of the Department of Foreign Affairs-funded Our Shared Ocean Programme, and proactive participation in key EU Horizon Europe initiatives. These include the Mission, Restore Our Ocean and Waters by 2030; the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance; and the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership.
- 5
- Strengthen the Marine Institute’s capability and capacity in strategically important research areas by enhancing our equipment and infrastructures, building our expertise, fostering strategic partnerships, and attracting and retaining talented researchers.
- 6
- Continue to support and build relationships with industry and research partners through dedicated funding calls, research and service provision, technology development, and test and demonstration opportunities.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027

✓

Enhanced national marine research coordination, delivered through successful implementation of Ocean Knowledge 2030, with improved co-funding arrangements and strategic funding partnerships.

✓

An increase in competitive research funding awarded by the Marine Institute, complemented by new funding instruments and increased programme impact in key areas of strategic importance linked to national policy and sectoral needs.

✓

Enhanced cross-border research cooperation and collaborations, aligned with the government’s Shared Island initiative and Impact 2030.

✓

Strong research partnerships and flagship projects focused on the Atlantic established.

✓

The Institute has increased its direct and indirect supports to industry through its competitive funding programme, innovation support programmes, and service provision.

✓

Guided by the Marine Institute Research Framework, a demonstrable and measurable increase in Marine Institute research capacity has been achieved; including research funding, partnerships and projects; research staff and expertise; equipment and infrastructures.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY
Leading the Digital Ocean transformation

Ireland’s national digital strategy, Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework, was launched in 2022 to drive and enable the digital transition across the Irish economy and society.

The Institute aims to be a leader in Ireland and Europe’s digital transformation through the development of an interactive digital model of the ocean for Ireland (Digital Twin of the Ocean). With targeted development of our digital capabilities across our work programmes and services the Marine Institute is well placed to lead this transition in the area of ocean knowledge and services.

The Institute has an important leadership role in the collection of data to provide a range of advanced and easily accessible eGovernment services. This builds

on a connected and collaborative national marine digital services platform, underpinned by national marine data resources, coupled with strong data governance and security. The Institute will put in place new digital capabilities to adapt more quickly, collaborate more effectively and engage more meaningfully in the new digital world.

Superior digital services and data analysis will also be central to achieving our ambitions to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of Ireland’s maritime industry, which is so central to our success as a trading economy.

Our digital transition will transform how we operate, engage with our stakeholders and deliver programme requirements in areas such as fisheries and marine food, ocean environment and climate, offshore renewable energy, maritime transport, blue bioeconomy, marine spatial planning, and marine resource management.

OUR AMBITION
Leading the Digital Ocean transformation

We will be a leader in Ireland and Europe’s digital transformation through the development of an interactive digital model of the ocean (Digital Twin of the Ocean for Ireland) in order to advance our knowledge, advice and services. We will embrace technologies such as high-end computing and cloud services, digital collaboration and workflows, data analytics and artificial intelligence, underpinned by digital skills, data connectivity and cybersecurity.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Partnering with Higher Education Institutes (HEIs), public sector bodies and industry partners, we will enhance national datasets and substantially increase our user engagement, our online presence and access to our services.
- 2 A Digital Twin of the Ocean for Ireland will be a flagship programme and an integral part of the digital twin for Europe. This will create a virtual representation of the ocean environment that will continuously update with the addition of new observations and datasets, and allow for future scenario modelling. The establishment of Digital Twins will make marine knowledge readily available to policy makers, stakeholders, businesses, scientists, and citizens.
- 3 An advanced digital-skills development programme will be established within the organisation. This will support the digitalisation of our workflows, and the adoption and use of advanced data processes and analytical tools. This will also enable the continual improvement of our data management quality management framework.
- 4 Partnering with HEIs, public sector and industry partners; we will develop a new research and innovation programme focused on Digital Twin of the Ocean capabilities, with new data analytics, including artificial intelligence, advanced visualisations, and computational services with access to cloud, high-end computing, and scalable storage platforms.
- 5 With the support of industry and government, we will enable the digitalisation of the marine and maritime industry to improve its efficiency, reduce costs, lower emissions, and drive competitiveness.
- 6 We will embed cyber-security and resilience in the organisational way of working and enable advanced connectivity and cloud services to support the connection of new devices, including for new data acquisition technologies.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027



The Marine Institute provides a range of advanced and easily accessible eGovernment services, through a connected and collaborative national marine digital services platform, underpinned by national marine data resources, with strong data governance and security.



The Digital Twin of the Ocean for Ireland programme is in place, making marine knowledge readily available in a fully accessible format, providing easy-to-use, efficient services and tools with high security and privacy standards useful to policymakers, businesses, scientists, and citizens.



Workplace skills, competencies and expertise are in place to deliver and maintain digital transformation across the organisation.



An integrated and resourced national research programme is in place, delivering new knowledge and capabilities to enhance digital service provision and the Digital Twin of the Ocean.



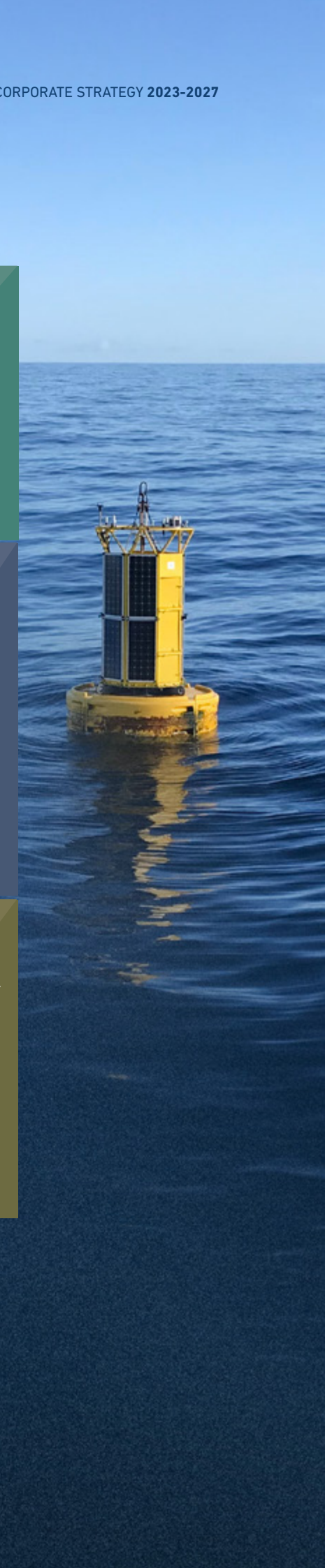
Enhanced data and digital capabilities underpin the advisory and research services that the Institute provides to national and international maritime stakeholders.



The Marine Institute benchmarks as a highly cybersecure organisation against similar organisations in terms of its cybersecurity levels of protection, resilience and capacities to deal with threats.



A co-ordinated and integrated national plan is in place, supported by Government Departments, Agencies, HEIs and industry, that drives and enables the digital transformation of Ireland's marine and maritime industry.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Supporting Ireland’s Blue Economy

The blue economy encompasses the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, while preserving the health of the ocean ecosystem. Through the provision of scientific, technical, and digital services, the Marine Institute supports the development of a sustainable blue economy across multiple marine and maritime sectors including seafood, offshore renewable energy (ORE) and maritime transport.

The EU Green Deal sets a clear ambition to decarbonise industrial activity across the EU, reducing and eliminating harmful emissions and protecting natural capital. The transition to a climate-neutral blue economy will require a transformation away from traditional business models and practices to less energy-intensive, more sustainable, and where possible, ‘regenerative’ activities. The future blue economy will be increasingly knowledge-based, leveraging the

potential of marine technology, data, information and associated digital products and services.

Maritime transport is a key enabler of the national economy and the Marine Institute’s Irish Maritime Development Office (IMDO) plays a fundamental role in supporting this vital sector. The IMDO also assists the Department of Transport in achieving its own strategic priorities in relation to safeguarding our international maritime connectivity, National Ports Policy, the rapid development of ORE port infrastructure; as well as assessing the maritime skill-sets Ireland will need in the future.

Ireland’s ambitions to create a sustainable and climate-neutral economy by 2050 will be met by stimulating investment from indigenous companies and through foreign direct investment. Over the next five years, the Institute will expand and enhance the supports it provides; both directly to industry and working in partnership with other development agencies such as Enterprise Ireland, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Údarás na Gaeltachta, the Western Development Commission (WDC), and the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).



OUR AMBITION

Supporting Ireland’s Blue Economy

We will support the development of Ireland’s marine and maritime industry, enabling growth and the necessary transition to a climate-neutral, knowledge-based blue economy. We will provide maritime development services focusing on ports, shipping and related services and enhance our capacity and capabilities in marine socio-economics, enabling a robust analytical framework to guide integrated marine and maritime development policies and planning.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Deliver excellence in our maritime development services focusing on ports, shipping and related services to government and the maritime industry. Support enhanced efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness in the marine and maritime industry through the development of digitalised services and support for emerging technologies and a knowledge-based blue economy.
- 2 Provide robust and enhanced economic and socio-economic data, evidence and advice to inform integrated marine policy and priorities established under various government and EU initiatives, including, the Climate Action Plan, Fit for 55, the National Marine Planning Framework and Project Marine 2040. This includes collecting, processing, analysing, and presenting reliable and harmonised data in collaboration with national and international partners and stakeholders.
- 3 Enable the transition to a sustainable and climate-neutral blue economy through integration of natural capital accounting and non-market values into the economic advice that informs marine policy and decision-making.
- 4 Build a partnership approach with government departments and agencies to support the development of the emerging offshore renewable energy sector in line with the Ocean Renewable Energy Development Plan II.
- 5 Support marine and coastal enterprise through the development of programmes in cooperation with agencies such as BIM, Údarás na Gaeltachta, SEAI and Enterprise Ireland, e.g. in the blue bioeconomy, Marine Ireland Industry Network (MIIN), and leveraging advantage from the IMDO’s development role in the maritime sector.
- 6 Optimise opportunities for international co-funding and cooperation and the associated impact delivered through, for example, Ireland’s participation in the Horizon Europe Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF).

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027

✓

A research programme that accelerates the green and digital transformation of the marine and maritime industry, approved by the government and supported by marine and maritime industry stakeholders.

✓

An established and sustainably resourced marine socio-economics capacity providing critical data, analysis and advice on Ireland's dynamic ocean economy and delivering annual ocean economy reports for 2023 through to 2027.

✓

Built and leveraged annual support to the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Ocean Economy Programme and bilateral partnerships with national and international agencies and experts in specific aspects of the blue economy are in place.

✓

New skills and technical expertise developed in a number of areas such as alternative fuels for the maritime and seafood sectors. Advice and support for government and agencies in the development of policies and planning for the blue economy, in an environmentally sustainable way.

✓

Increased funding from national and EU programmes that support marine and maritime development including sustainable seafood production, marine spatial planning, ORE and maritime transport.

✓

Marine Institute investment leveraged from other national funders under the Horizon Europe Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY
Empowering our people to deliver excellence

The Marine Institute has many high-performing, talented and diverse teams and colleagues who are committed to, and passionate about, the work that we do. We are building a workplace and workforce for the future; one that is evolving with changing work practices, employee expectations and service needs.

We aim to be an employer of choice, attracting high-calibre staff, retaining existing team members, and fostering an environment where they feel supported and enabled to innovate and deliver our services with excellence.

We will communicate and act in line with our shared values. We will communicate openly, succinctly and consistently, ensuring two-way communication with respect for the time and input of others.

The Marine Institute is committed to, and will continue to invest in, structures that provide equal access and opportunities for all.

OUR AMBITION:
Empowering our people to deliver excellence

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We will be a workplace where an agile, diverse, motivated, and valued team delivers service with excellence. This will be driven by a culture of collaboration, wellbeing, innovation and continuous development, aligned with our vision and mission, and enabled through living our values.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Embrace and implement flexible and adaptive working policies and practices, supported by innovative use of technology and blended working arrangements.
- 2 Advance, resource, communicate and deliver structures, policies and programmes that focus on retaining existing staff, attracting new skills, and ensuring the wellbeing, continuous development, and performance management of our staff.
- 3 Ensure continuous and adaptive workforce planning to ensure the additional resources we need are in place to meet new and evolving client demands.
- 4 Enable the Marine Institute Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group to advance equality of opportunity for all, with specific actions focusing on gender equality.
- 5 Implement in full our internal communications framework and charter, ensuring that our culture is one where new ideas are welcomed, creativity and innovation are fostered and communication is consistent with the Institute’s core values.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027

✓

The culture of the Institute and the values of our people are expressed in all aspects of our work enabling and inspiring our people to consistently deliver excellence.

✓

A dynamic and adaptive Strategic Human Resource Plan is in place ensuring that resources, skills and expertise are allocated according to business needs, supported by strategically aligned learning and development programmes.

✓

We are an employer of choice, attracting and retaining the best talent and expertise and fostering innovation and excellence across all aspects of our service provision and our work programmes.

✓

Blended working has enabled new levels of flexibility and agility for our staff and in the way we serve our clients and meet business needs.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY  
Our organisation,  
committing to  
sustainability

The Marine Institute is committed to being a sustainable organisation, making a positive contribution to society and to the conservation of the environment.

Our contribution to society is enabled through our governance structures with a focus on fairness, transparency, inclusion, ethical conduct, compliance, responsible and fair procurement, and value for money for the state and the public.

Through our services and how we operate, the Institute will minimise our impact on, and contribute to the protection and conservation of, the environment.

As an organisation committed to sustainability, our national infrastructures provide essential platforms for our government services, national and international research, and the development and testing of new technologies, contributing to the state’s sustainability agenda.

It is, therefore, essential that the Marine Institute invests in, and optimises, Ireland’s marine infrastructure; enabling critical marine observations to be made and supporting research in national and international programmes.

OUR AMBITION:

An organisation  
committing to  
sustainability

We will be a steward of the natural environment and make a positive contribution to society in all aspects of our work. Sustainability will be at the heart of how we work and a guiding principle for our organisation, our research, our scientific advice and our economic development services. Through access to state-of-the-art research infrastructures, data and digital services, we will enable the science community to contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Implement a comprehensive approach to energy management by combining energy reduction initiatives with the adoption of renewable energy sources throughout the duration of the strategy.
- 2 Continue to develop and foster top-class governance structures as the organisation evolves to meet the needs of an expanding client base, earning the on-going trust and support of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Marine (DAFM) and all external clients and stakeholders.
- 3 Undertake a review that will examine the organisation’s structure and capacity to meet the immediate and long-term needs of clients and stakeholders.
- 4 Invest in and optimise our infrastructure, including vessels, laboratories, and other facilities and equipment, to improve the way we do our work and provide the national and international research community with access to state-of-the-art, technologically advanced infrastructure.
- 5 Develop a business case and work with DAFM and stakeholders to lay the groundwork to replace the RV Celtic Explorer, ensuring our long-term national marine research vessel.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027

✓

A climate action roadmap for the Institute is in place, resourced and implemented to meet carbon and energy efficiency targets.

✓

The use of, and access to, technological advances and modern marine infrastructure supports ocean research and observation to meet national and international monitoring, reporting, policy and planning requirements.

✓

Excellent governance structures are maintained and evolved, ensuring the optimal delivery of our services, the trust and support of all stakeholders and a positive contribution to society.

✓

A plan is in place to adapt the organisation’s structure and capacity where required to meet the medium-term (2023-2027) and long-term (post 2027) needs of clients and stakeholders.

✓

Our activities have a low carbon footprint when benchmarked against organisations with equivalent capacities and infrastructure.

✓

An approved and resourced plan for the design, construction and delivery of a new national, state-of-the-art, ocean-class research vessel is completed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Inspiring our stakeholders and society

More than 40% of the Irish population live within 5km of the coast; but no matter where we live or work, we are all ocean stakeholders.

As a leader in ocean knowledge, the Marine Institute is uniquely placed to engage, inform and inspire stakeholders and society about the role and importance of the ocean that surrounds our shores, defines our weather and climate, and provides substantial opportunities for employment and growth across multiple maritime sectors. There is also a growing recognition of the value of blue spaces for human health and wellbeing.

Guided by our communications strategy, the Marine Institute will manage and resource its engagement activities to deliver maximum impact, targeting the right messages to the right stakeholders and the right time.

We will be strategic in our communication, engagement and outreach activities and seek to innovate and tell our story in a way that inspires people from all sections of society.

OUR AMBITION:

Inspiring our stakeholders and society

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We will engage and communicate with our stakeholders and with broader society in an innovative, targeted and strategic way. This engagement will focus on our work, and raise awareness about the role and value of the ocean, and inspire interest and support to address ocean challenges and opportunities.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2023-2027

- 1 Refresh and upgrade the Marine Institute Communications Plan in line with the strategic priorities and ambition set out in Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires.
- 2 Carry out a targeted stakeholder consultation and a review of the signature public event, SeaFest, and make proposals on future options and opportunities for a major national ocean engagement event, programme or initiative.
- 3 Deliver pro-active policy advice to key stakeholders on issues of strategic importance, e.g. through leading and engaging in national and international fora and events, and the publication of policy briefs, reports and technical communications.
- 4 Conduct a review of the role and mandate of the Marine Institute in relation to education at all levels from primary to third-level.
- 5 To support strategic engagement and deliver impact, build external partnerships and internal capacity in the area of social sciences and behavioural economics, linked to the Marine Institute socio-economics programme.
- 6 Create and deliver a communications campaign that raises the profile of Ireland’s marine and maritime industries and creates a better understanding of the contribution they make to economic growth, regional development, and reduced carbon emissions.



STRATEGIC OUTCOMES 2027

✓

The Marine Institute and its staff are recognised nationally and internationally as informed and expert leaders in communication on issues related to the ocean and its role and value to society.

✓

Clear and ambitious proposals are made for a new national-scale event or programme of communication that will replace or build on the former SeaFest festival, with input and support across government and key stakeholders.

✓

The Marine Institute has established clearly its role and mandate in relation to education and this is reflected in the updated communications plan and in programming and investment decisions and actions.

✓

A new series of policy communications is established, addressing specific topics of strategic importance and targeted at key stakeholders. This will enhance our role and reputation as an expert provider of policy advice and foresight to government.

✓

The Marine Institute’s communication activities have a much greater and more measurable impact and influence in relation to societal views, values and actions linked to the ocean and its role for society.

✓

Irish society, policy makers and industry stakeholders are better informed about the role of the Marine Institute and the socio-economic benefits delivered by Ireland’s blue economy.

Transforming Ambition into Action

Our five-year strategy, *Ocean knowledge that informs and inspires*, is centred on the delivery of excellent marine services in response to existing and emerging demands from government and society. The strategy proposes an ambitious vision for the Marine Institute as a national and international leader in ocean knowledge that benefits people, policy and planet.

We are committed to the future of our oceans as thriving, sustainable ecosystems that support life and provide opportunities for economic development and employment. We will strive to cultivate a society that is knowledgeable about the ocean and values the importance of preserving its critical resources. We will achieve our ambition through new technology and innovative approaches towards transforming the way we live, work, and interact with the ocean around us.

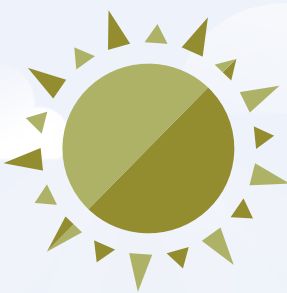
In implementing the strategy, we will establish clear targets, timelines, milestones and performance indicators to monitor progress towards the outcomes detailed under each strategic priority. We will review and adapt through regular monitoring, evaluating the effectiveness of our approaches and making adjustments along the way, based on feedback and results. Our annual work plans will focus on the implementation of our strategic priorities.

Ocean Knowledge that Informs and Inspires supports a sustainable future for Ireland’s marine environment and blue economy, while enabling the Institute to meet new challenges and embrace new opportunities. We remain committed to working together with all our stakeholders who helped to enrich the content of this strategy. We are proud and grateful for the collective effort and collaboration of our dedicated teams and colleagues. Together, we will realise our shared ambition, united in our commitment, purpose and determination.

List of Acronymns

BIM	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CEF	Connecting Europe Facility
CFP	EU Common Fisheries Policy
DAFM	Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine
DCMAP	EU Data Collection Multi Annual Programme
DECC	Department of the Environment, Communications and Climate
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DOO	UN Decade of the Ocean for Sustainable Development
DOT	Department of Transport
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
ECV	Essential Climate Variables
EI	Enterprise Ireland
EMFAF	European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
EU	European Union
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
HEI	Higher Education Institutes
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IMDO	Irish Maritime Development Office
INFOMAR	Integrated Mapping for the Sustainable Development of Ireland's Marine Resources (Sea Bed Mapping)
JPI	Joint Programme Initiative
MARA	Marine Area Regulatory Authority
MCA	Marine Climate Adaptation
MIIN	Marine Ireland Industry Network
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
NATURA	EU Network of Important Ecological sites
NMPF	National Marine Planning Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ORE	Offshore Renewable Energy
ORED	Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
OSPAR	Oslo Paris Commission – Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic
RV	Research Vessel
SDG	UN Sustainable Development Goals
SCF	EU SCARFISH Group
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
STECF	EU Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
UN	United Nations
UNG	Údarás na Gaeltachta
WDC	Western Development Commission
WFD	Water Framework Directive

KNOWLEDGE
BLUE ECONOMY
DIGITAL OCEAN



DATA
ADVICE
SERVICES

PARTNERSHIPS RESEARCH FUNDING
INSHORE FISHERIES EU CLIMATE NATURA BLUE GROWTH
CHANGE 2000 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
MSP OCEAN KNOWLEDGE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING
SEAFOOD SUSTAINABILITY

SHIPPING AND ORE SHIPPING SERVICES AQUACULTURE ADVICE FOOD SAFETY AND RESIDUES CLIMATE ADAPTATION WFD OUR ORGANISATION DIGITALISATION SOCIETY TRANSFORM MPA'S OUR PEOPLE EMFAF MSFD COASTAL COMMUNITIES BREXIT
COMMUNICATIONS MARINE UNDERSTANDING ECOSYSTEMS
SEA BED MAPPING MARINE INFRASTRUCTURE

ENGAGE FOOD SAFETY PORTS
INFORM PEOPLE, POLICY AND PLANET INFORM
COLLABORATION THE ATLANTIC INSPIRE
AND CO-OPERATION ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES



Marine Institute Rinvile

Oranmore
Co. Galway,
H91 R673

Tel: +353 91 387 200

Email: institute.mail@marine.ie

Marine Institute Dublin

Three Park Place,
Upper Hatch Street,
Dublin 2. D02 FX65

Tel: +353 (0)91 387200

Email: institute.mail@marine.ie

**Marine Institute Catchment
Research Facility**

Furnace, Newport,
Co. Mayo. F28 PF65

Tel: +353 (0)98 42300

Email: institute.mail@marine.ie

www.marine.ie