

Glossary

Definitions for technical and subject-specific terms and language used throughout this consultation.

Adaptive Management – a process of structured and iterative learning to amend and improve SCMs. Adaptation is required when new information, through monitoring data and environmental assessments, reveals that the current SCM is not achieving its intended objectives. The impact of management decisions will be monitored and analysed through a “learning by doing” approach, with management and actions being amended throughout the lifecycle of SCMs.

Appropriate Assessment – an assessment to understand how a plan or project will adversely affect protected habitats and species. The scope and content of an appropriate assessment will depend on the nature, location, duration and scale of the proposed plan or project and the protected features relevant to the site. What will be deemed ‘appropriate’ will depend on the circumstances. Generally, it indicates that an assessment needs to meet the requirements of the applicable legislation and guidance, and be proportionate and sufficient to support the task of the relevant authority in determining whether, and how, the plan or project will adversely affect the integrity of the site. An appropriate assessment is required if in the circumstances it is believed a project is likely to or may have significant effects on the site. Applicants will submit their Report to Inform the Appropriate Assessment as part of their DCO consent application. Other consents may have different processes.

Collaboration on Offshore Wind Strategic Compensation (COWSC) – a collaborative governance group that brings together industry, environmental Non-Governmental Organisations, Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies, the UK government and Devolved Governments, and other relevant stakeholders. Existing and future SCMs (see below) in the Library of Strategic Compensatory Measures (see below) are developed through COWSC.

Clean Power 2030 Action Plan – the plan outlining how Government intends to establish a nationwide power system that does not rely on fossil fuels by 2030.

Development Consent Order (DCO) – a legal instrument under the Planning Act (2008), that grants permission for major infrastructure projects to be constructed.

(The) DCO process – the means of obtaining a DCO (permission to construct and maintain developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, or NSIPs).

Final Investment Decision (FID) – in an offshore wind context, this term refers to the final decision of a company to invest or not invest in a particular project. An FID will typically confirm details of who will pay for the project, and how.

Library of Strategic Compensatory Measures (LoSCM) – a list of SCMs (see below) that have been approved by the Defra SoS which the MRF may deliver as compensation.

Marine Recovery Fund Implementation and Monitoring Plan (MRF IMP) – an applicant-specific IMP provided by the MRFO for the MRF applicant to include in their DCO application. (Separate from the SCM delivery body IMP, see below.)

Marine Protected Area (MPA) – areas of the ocean established to protect habitats, species and processes essential for healthy, functioning marine ecosystems. The purpose of an MPA is to protect and recover rare, threatened and important habitats and species from damage caused by human activities. These include areas protected under the Habitats Regulations ¹, Marine Conservation Zones (under s.126 of the MCAA), Ramsar sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Measure of Equivalent Environmental Benefit (MEEB) – used in the context of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) to refer to measures of equivalent environmental benefit to the damage that an act will, or is likely to have, in or on an MCZ.

Marine Conservation Zone (MCZs) – areas that protect a range of nationally important, rare or threatened habitats and species, established under MCAA.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) – under the Planning Act, NSIPs are large scale projects that fall into five categories: energy, transport, water, wastewater and waste. In the context of offshore wind arrays, they refer to windfarms with a generating capacity greater than 100MW.

Offshore Wind Activity – defined in the s.290 Energy Act, includes plan promoters and project developers.

Offshore Wind Environmental Improvement Plan – the reforms being delivered by government to achieve the twin aims of accelerating offshore wind deployment, whilst protecting the marine environment.

¹ 'Habitats Regulations' includes the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and in cases concerning Northern Ireland, The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).

Report to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) – a report that is compiled to support the appropriate assessment as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the project. In preparing the RIAA, an applicant will share their draft and supporting documents with relevant SNCBs and eNGOs to gather their comments and seek agreement on the conclusions of the assessment prior to the submission of a DCO application.

Strategic Compensatory Measure (SCM) – measures that work across a wide area, joining-up across projects and organisations. This will allow unavoidable impacts to Marine Protected Areas to be compensated for at a strategic level across multiple offshore wind projects or plans.

Strategic compensatory measure delivery body Implementation & Monitoring Plan (SCM delivery body IMP) – a plan setting out how and where a compensatory measure may appropriately be delivered, what compensation can be expected, the management and maintenance required and how the compensation achieved will be monitored. This is developed by the SCM delivery body, such as COWSC, and separate from the MRF IMP (see above).