



HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Baroness Ritchie
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

17 September 2024

Dear Margaret,

THE CROWN ESTATE BILL 2024

During the Second Reading of The Crown Estate Bill, I committed to write to you on whether The Crown Estate (TCE) had consulted with the fishing industry about the Bill. The Bill's purpose, as I set out in my speech, is to broaden TCE's investment powers, grant the ability to borrow, and modernise the governance structure of TCE. As the Bill will not directly impact how much commercial fishing takes place in areas managed by TCE, they have not undertaken a formal consultation with the fishing industry in respect of the Bill.

As I set out during the debate, the regulation of commercial fishing activities falls under the jurisdiction of the fisheries management regime managed by the relevant marine environment management organisation for each of the devolved governments (DAERA in the case of Northern Ireland). TCE is committed to sustainable management of the seabed and has a statement of intent in place with the Department for Economy (DfE) in Northern Ireland, supporting the progression of the Offshore Renewable Action Plan (OREAP). I understand that DfE have, as part of this, engaged with the fishing sector to integrate fishing data and activities into the design of the OREAP.

As part of the next steps for renewable energy in Northern Ireland, TCE will engage with the fishing industry ahead of progressing any plans for a formal leasing round. As I said in the debate, TCE welcome any engagement the industry wishes to have, and would be happy to meet them on this matter.

During the debate, you also asked about the impact Great British Energy (GBE) will have on the energy market in Northern Ireland, and about discussions which have taken place between GBE, the DfE and the Irish Government. Following the publication of GBE's founding statement in July, DESNZ will be taking steps to put GBE on a delivery footing over the next few months, including starting to recruit key roles into the organisation. I understand DESNZ are working closely with the Northern Ireland Executive on the scope of GBE's functions and opportunities for Northern Ireland and are committed to close collaboration with NI Ministers on this. Given the Single Electricity Market across the island of Ireland, GBE will also engage with counterparts in the Republic of Ireland as it looks to invest in and drive the deployment of clean energy. GBE will look to work closely with international partners where this is in support of its objectives to drive clean energy deployment, create jobs, boost energy independence, and generate benefits for UK taxpayers, billpayers and communities.

I trust I have answered the questions you raised. I look forward to engaging further on the Bill at Committee on the 14 October. I am copying this letter to all noble lords who spoke at Second Reading and placing a copy in the parliamentary library.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Livermore', written in a cursive style.

Lord Livermore
FINANACIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY