# Criticism mounts after Corio Generation withdraws Connemara offshore wind farm project



The recent withdrawal of Corio Generation from its planned large-scale offshore wind farm project off the Connemara coast has drawn criticism from environmental group Blue Ireland, which views the development as symptomatic of flawed Government policies on offshore energy.

Corio had been proposing to build a 450-megawatt wind farm at the Sceirde Rocks, a €1.4 billion venture anticipated to provide power to around 350,000 homes. This project was among six expected offshore wind developments due by 2030, of which five remain following Corio's exit. Four developers, including Corio, had secured state contracts under the prior offshore energy rollout plans.

The company submitted its planning application to An Bord Pleanála in January, and it remains active; however, Corio stated that recent site investigations uncovered specific conditions and engineering challenges, including vulnerabilities to extreme weather, which led to their decision not to proceed with the project.

Blue Ireland's spokeswoman Val Freeman criticised the existing policy framework, saying that the Government's previous "developer-led" system—which Corio’s application was processed under—has allowed projects to circumvent thorough environmental scrutiny. She noted that in late 2022, Corio received a 45-year site occupation licence based principally on technical and financial assessments, which failed to fully uncover the technical issues later revealed.

Ms Freeman highlighted that the Government had recently replaced the developer-led approach with a "plan-led" system, where designated sites for offshore wind development, known as DMAPs, are selected by the State to expedite projects. Despite this, she warned that remaining near-shore fixed turbine projects in shallower waters could still encounter significant difficulties.

She remarked, “Cancellation of the Sceirde Rocks project confirms the misguided determination of successive governments to push through flawed proposals such as this that have been allowed to circumvent all necessary environmental safeguards.”

Ms Freeman also criticised what she called the “purposeful setting aside of ecosystem-based marine planning” in Ireland. This approach, she said, has contributed to an ongoing “accruing mess” within Ireland’s offshore energy sector—a situation Blue Ireland has been alerting policymakers about for decades.

As global economic pressures mount amid tariff disputes, Ms Freeman argued that Ireland must avoid “delaying progress by pouring effort and money into legacy projects that are just stumbling along.” She called for a commitment to full compliance with EU legislation and stronger action in the public interest to ensure a sustainable future for offshore wind energy.

She also noted widespread concerns among environmental groups along Ireland’s east and south coasts. Such apprehension around near-shore projects could result in legal challenges, despite recent changes to the planning regime and Government efforts to accelerate offshore wind farm development.

The Irish Times is reporting this development in Ireland’s renewable energy sector and the ongoing debate about effective, environmentally sustainable policy implementation for offshore wind projects.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/2025/04/21/why-international-firm-corio-withdrew-from-plans-for-sceirde-rocks-wind-farm-off-connemaras-coast/> - This article supports the claim about Corio Generation's withdrawal from the Sceirde Rocks wind farm project due to challenges like harsh marine conditions and cost, which impacted Ireland's renewable energy plans.
* <https://www.irishtimes.com/environment/2025/04/11/connemara-offshore-wind-farm-will-not-go-ahead-dealing-blow-to-governments-climate-targets/> - This article provides details on the cancellation of the Connemara offshore wind farm project, which aligns with the information about Corio's withdrawal and its impact on government climate targets.
* <https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2025/0414/1507637-windfarm-project-halted/> - Although focused on a different project, this article highlights the challenges faced by wind farm projects in Ireland, including local opposition due to visual impacts, which is relevant to broader environmental concerns.
* <https://www.rechargenews.com/markets/corio-to-shrink-as-macquarie-gets-no-takers-for-offshore-wind-player/2-1-1804394> - This article explains Corio's decision to shrink its operations following a failed sale attempt by Macquarie, highlighting the global challenges in the offshore wind sector.
* <https://www.power-technology.com/news/macquarie-cancels-corio-generation-sale/> - This article details Macquarie's cancellation of the Corio Generation sale due to lack of interest, reflecting the tough market conditions for offshore wind energy.