

First Uncrewed Vessel Seabed Survey in Irish Waters



In a first for Ireland, an Uncrewed Surface Vessel (USV) was launched by XOCEAN off County Louth in the last week of January 2022, to undertake an environmental survey of the seabed in collaboration with Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT). This is the first time an uncrewed vessel has operated in Irish

waters and it represents a major step forward in reducing the carbon footprint associated with offshore survey operations.

XOCEAN takes a carbon-neutral approach to delivering marine data and has seen demand for its services grow steadily since it commenced operations in 2019. With clients across the globe and revenue tripling in 2021, the company is set to continue its impressive growth trajectory in 2022.

Characterizing the Seabed of the Irish Sea

XOCEAN is pioneering uncrewed marine technology and to-date has delivered over 100 projects globally for some of the world's largest companies. In the last 12 months, the XOCEAN team has grown from 41 to 120 and plans to recruit 100 additional hires in the next 6 months. Ireland is fast-tracking the development of its offshore wind sector in line with commitments to increase offshore wind capacity to 3.5GW as part of the government's ambitions to deliver 70% of electricity from renewable sources by 2030, as a result of the 2019 Climate Action Plan. This environmental research survey will use multibeam echosounder sensors to characterize the seabed in this area of the Irish Sea.

XOCEAN's USVs offer significant benefits, including safety for operators who remain onshore, efficiency with 24/7 operations and ultra-low emissions, which together lead to significant economic savings for customers. The uncrewed vessel is around the size of an average car (4.5 metres) and half its weight (750kg) and emits just one thousandth of the carbon typically produced by traditional offshore survey vessels. Throughout the survey, a team of qualified mariners and surveyors monitored the USV 24/7 to ensure the safety of navigation and that the highest quality data was collected.

Having operated in 16 jurisdictions globally in North America, Europe and Asia, XOCEAN is delighted to have completed last week's survey in Irish waters and is grateful to the Minister of State at the Department of Transport, Hildegard Naughton T.D., and the Marine Survey Office for their engagement and support in enabling this highly innovative project to be delivered.

Low-carbon Approach to Deliver Marine Data

Commenting on the project, James Ives, CEO of XOCEAN said: "Our USV platform has demonstrated itself to be a safe, reliable and low-carbon solution for the collection of ocean data. We are delighted to be working in Irish waters and in collaboration with Dundalk Institute of Technology on this important environmental project."

Hildegard Naughton, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Transport and former Chair of the Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action, has been keen to highlight the government's responsibility to address the urgent issue of climate change, stating: "We are constantly looking for innovative ways to promote positive sustainable action on climate change and XOCEAN's low-carbon approach to delivering marine data in the safest way possible is a very positive step forward. The vision and innovation demonstrated by Irish-based [XOCEAN](#) creates opportunity for the development of sustainable projects to be conducted in a sustainable way, such as the preparation of sites and route planning for offshore wind energy projects. Transport has an important role to play in terms of tackling our emissions and the technology development of uncrewed marine vessels in a

safe and carbon-neutral manner is to be welcomed and embraced.”

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<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/first-uncrewed-vessel-seabed-survey-in-irish-waters>
