

## **NIRIG response to EirGrid consultation on Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios**

**21 April 2017**

The Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG) represents the views of the renewable electricity industry in Northern Ireland, providing a conduit for knowledge exchange, policy development, support and consensus on best practice between all stakeholders. Committed to making a positive difference, we promote responsible development, support good community engagement and deliver low-cost electricity generation from sources such as onshore wind, tidal, solar and storage using our greatest natural resources.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this EirGrid consultation.

Our primary concern with this scenario development is that it is only a partial approach, in that it only addresses future scenarios for part of the island of Ireland. Given that the (integrated) Single Electricity Market is an all-island electricity market, with increasing levels of interconnection, the absence of scenarios including NI appears to be an inefficient approach to such scenario planning.

Developing an all-island approach to scenario planning would be consistent with the joint SONI-EirGrid approach to the All-Island Generation Capacity Statement. It would enable a fuller picture of load profiles, demand, dispatch, generation portfolios and security of supply across the SEM. It would provide government departments in both jurisdictions with a more complete picture of future energy markets and create the conditions under which a more cohesive and integrated market would facilitate cost-effective network development and management.

We note that the 2009 All Island Facilitation of Renewables Study was conducted by EirGrid and SONI (in collaboration with consultancy firms) in a process commissioned jointly by the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources, Ireland, and the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment, Northern Ireland. This study facilitated the development of similar renewables targets on both sides of the border, which both ROI and NI are on course to successfully reach. Taking forward separate studies and scenarios at different

times in NI and ROI is unlikely to achieve such cohesive and successful sustainability goals in the future.

We note that a consultation with further detail will be forthcoming in spring 2017 and **we strongly recommend that this includes SONI scenario planning for NI**. Integrating an approach to the all-island market at the earliest stage is more likely to lead to effective and efficient planning in the long-term.

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Meabh Cormacain

**NIRIG**