

## ***Offshore Ireland: A whole new story***

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*“The Standard Stratigraphic Nomenclature of Offshore Ireland: An Integrated Lithostratigraphic, Biostratigraphic and Sequence Stratigraphic Framework”* (Project Atlas. Petroleum Affairs Division, Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, Special Publication 1/21) was completed in October 2020 as a new stratigraphic framework for the geology of Offshore Ireland and released into the public domain during 2021 (see download link below). The work provides an updated, consistent, and official naming system for the geological units offshore Ireland and will be an important geological reference for any future work in the Irish offshore.

The multi-year study, initiated by the Petroleum Affairs Division (PAD) and Petroleum Infrastructure Programme (PIP) members in 2016, and carried out by a consortium of companies led by Merlin Energy Resources Ltd., was a major undertaking covering all basins offshore Ireland. The project involved the task of interrogating and interpreting varied datasets generated over a 50-year exploration period to create a new national stratigraphic framework, covering the whole interval from the Palaeozoic to the Quaternary.

The substantial detail, the extensive quantity, and the range of multi-sourced datasets of variable quality together with the integrated nature of the study, provided a robust project deliverable. The objective of the project was twofold – firstly to compile all existing biostratigraphic data from offshore Ireland wells and secondly to propose a new chrono-lithological framework to be presented to the geoscience community. The study aimed to provide a common geological nomenclature for the use of offshore operating companies and their partners, government departments, academia, and contractors. This is achieved through seismic sequence recognition, sequence stratigraphy, biostratigraphy, lithostratigraphy, geochemistry, palaeofacies maps, rock unit distribution maps, and stratigraphic columns.

The presentation will concentrate on the biostratigraphic input to this regional study, with examples of innovative findings from selected intervals, the calibration of seismic and a focus on the value of this (unique?) unified dataset. The study is now available for all to access at the following site <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d4923-the-standard-stratigraphic-nomenclature-of-ireland/>