



— PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS: RPS AND SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY ON OFFSHORE WIND CONSENTING

Partnerships will be crucial in supporting and scaling up offshore wind development, especially for new markets. As part of our series exploring the value of partnerships, we look at RPS' relationship with Seoul National University's Marine Environmental Impact Statement Institute (MESI).

RPS signed a rolling **MOU agreement with MESI** in 2021 and are supporting their five-year, national R&D project focussed on offshore wind consenting (also known as permitting), entitled "Development of advanced science and technology for marine environmental impact assessment". We were asked to support as an external advisor based on the MESI team's awareness of our international track record.

The R&D project is funded by the Korean Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries. Its aim is to develop existing local consenting requirements and guidelines for offshore wind or large-scale marine infrastructure development. One element of this is understanding and comparing with international best practice – an area in which the RPS team has deep expertise.

Looking into the future: keeping a finger on the pulse

At RPS, we strongly believe that partnerships are key to developing the offshore wind sector. These partnerships are sometimes needed to fill potential resourcing or skills gaps in this rapidly developing industry. At others, it's about helping newer markets to scale up, and to do so quickly, in order to meet pressing net zero deadlines.

With this in mind, RPS has been developing strong and valuable relationships in Korea – a market that is committed to renewables, with **ambitious targets** as well as the potential to develop and scale its related supply chain.

[Read more about understanding the renewables supply chain in this new article.](#)

As one of the top-tier universities in South Korea, Seoul National University is an important voice in this growing market. Our partnership helps support those who are shaping South Korea's offshore wind industry. In turn, we are able to deepen our understanding in this region. MESI is closely connected to industry regulators, allowing us to monitor the concerns and priorities for this market, which are undergoing an extensive evolution. It also helps us to support developers: project approvals can be slowed down by unexpected challenges, but having a good understanding of decision-makers' expectations can keep projects on track.

The value of offshore wind partnerships: knowledge, communication, speed

There are a number of [reasons why global offshore wind development lags behind targets](#), so speed is a crucial consideration for offshore wind development. Therefore, partnerships, knowledge transfer and above all, direct communication are essential tools in increasing the pace of development.

Our partnership with MESI provides a forum to ask about technical issues, with the ability to ask questions and get up to speed on certain topics – speeding up knowledge transfer. By definition, Korea's new offshore wind consenting regulations are less well-established than those of other regions; different levels of detail are required in areas such as environmental impact assessment, so there are many important cross references to be made.

As part of MESI's 5-year R&D programme, [Alun Williams, RPS' Global Offshore Renewables Director](#), has presented seminars on international experience in offshore wind leasing; offshore wind EIA; cumulative effects and the Project Design Envelope concept. We are planning to further the partnership between RPS and Seoul National University with more activities and programmes related to knowledge exchange and the creation of career pathways.

Sam Roh, RPS Country Manager, Korea, says, *"Our partnership with MESI, based at one of Korea's top academic institutions, came about through a desire to exchange insights and ideas, while supporting the industry. Interestingly, we were first introduced by our partner SEKWANG Engineering Consultants, known for their major marine and harbour infrastructure work. To me, the two partnerships represent the two sides of what Korea's offshore wind industry needs – technical strength and cutting-edge research and development. We're very honoured to be thought of as a trusted international consultant in these partnerships and to offer expertise from our long-standing experience in other global markets."*

Read more about the importance of partnerships: our [SEKWANG offshore wind case study can be found here](#).