

Renewables – obstacles removed...

Plans to improve the development of renewables in Scotland were unveiled by Energy Minister Jim Mather today.

Two separate consultations have been published, one proposing the combination of capital grants plus Renewable Obligation Certificates for wave and tidal stream projects, and the other shifting the determination of all onshore hydro scheme applications of 50 Megawatts or less to planning authorities.

Energy Minister Jim Mather said:-“Scotland has a fantastic competitive advantage in developing renewable energy. This Government is providing leadership by taking steps to drive progress and overcome obstacles to energy generation.

“We have an estimated 25 per cent of Europe’s offshore wind and tidal resource and 10 percent of its wave potential, a renewable energy resource which is unrivalled in Europe. That’s why we’re making sure that our renewables policy remains responsive to the needs of the market.

“Scotland has a proud tradition of generating hydro electricity, which continues to provide clean and reliable power to homes and businesses across Scotland. We have listened to the views of many within the sector and decided to give Councils the powers to take planning decisions on projects between one and 50 MW. This will encourage developers to size their scheme appropriate to its environment and not be deterred by a low threshold.

“Looking forward, it is essential the Westminster Government delivers a level playing field when it comes to the costs of supplying energy to the grid – that means ending the system whereby punitive charges are imposed on energy suppliers in Scotland, while those in other parts of the UK are paid

subsidies.”