

Scottish Government announces support for marine energy projects

A global engineering hub is to be established in Edinburgh following the announcement of nearly £5m of investment today at the RenewableUK Wave and Tidal Conference and Exhibition in Belfast by Energy Minister Fergus Ewing.

Scotland's marine energy sector is to benefit from the distribution of funding from two initiatives.

Speaking ahead of the event, Mr Ewing said five marine energy innovation projects are to benefit from a £2.8 million share of the Marine Renewables Commercialisation Fund (MRCF), while tidal power company Atlantis Resources Corporation is to receive a £2 million investment from the £103 million Renewable Energy Investment Fund (REIF) to help establish a global engineering hub in Edinburgh.

The Atlantis hub, which will become the company's global centre of excellence is expected to create around 20 new high value jobs once fully operational.

The MRCF grant funding is critical to facilitating the success of the first wave and tidal arrays in Scotland, while reducing the cost and risk of the technology. The funding will help build Scotland's marine energy industry, bringing important socio-economic benefits to remote and coastal areas of Scotland.

Initiatives benefiting from the MRCF funding include:

- Construction firm McLaughlin & Harvey, along with SeaRoc and Nautricity to fund the foundation system which will be used for Nautricity's 500 kilowatt turbine off the

Mull of Kintyre.

- The European Marine Energy Centre in Orkney to design and build a seabed monitoring pod.
- Marine energy company Green Theme to develop a cable-mounted device called 'CableFish' that includes a camera and GPS to help with cable installation in fast flowing conditions.
- Marine data experts Partrac, along with partners, to carry out surveys at two Scottish sites to understand turbulence in tidal flows.
- Design and engineering company Tension Technology International and partners to design a novel mooring system that can be used for wave and tidal arrays.

Energy Minister Fergus Ewing said:-“Scotland is at the forefront of developing offshore and low carbon energy generation technology with some of the world’s greatest wind, wave and tidal resources heavily concentrated in the waters around our country.

“Today’s allocation of almost £5 million in MRCF and REIF funding highlights our commitment to supporting the growth of the marine energy sector in Scotland.

“Our ambition for Scotland’s emerging wave and tidal sector remains great. We know that the successful harnessing of ocean power takes hard work and persistence and the Scottish Government is determined to support those within the industry.

“The funding announced today will help facilitate some of the country’s most innovative and exciting marine energy projects and I am delighted we are able to assist these companies.”

Andrew Lever, Director of Innovation Scotland at the Carbon Trust said:-“Scotland has a world leading resource and is a hot bed of innovation and deployment making marine energy an exciting green growth sector. The Carbon Trust are delighted to be working with the Scottish Government to deliver the

Marine Renewables Commercialisation Fund (MRCF).

“Dramatically reducing the costs of marine energy is the sector’s number one objective as it moves towards large scale deployment. The MRCF is central to that goal. We will now work closely with the companies involved to support them to deliver these important innovations to help accelerate the development of wave and tidal arrays. The solutions developed are applicable to future array projects in Scottish Waters and will help keep Scotland, and the rest of the UK, in pole position to capitalise on the tremendous commercial opportunities we have in marine energy.”

Atlantis CEO Tim Cornelius, said:-“This £2 million of investment is clearly a serious vote in confidence in Atlantis’s plans as a tidal energy developer and our plans to deliver Scotland’s first major tidal energy project in the Pentland Firth.

“However, its benefits won’t stop there. It will not only create Scottish jobs here today but also help create new foreign markets to export Scottish skills to tomorrow, putting Scotland at the forefront of the fast-growing global tidal energy sector.”

Andrew Smith, head of the Scottish Investment Bank’s REIF said:-“Supporting development of Scotland’s marine energy sector is a key priority area for Scottish Enterprise and that’s why through our range of investment funds, including REIF, we continue to invest in Scotland’s most ambitious and exciting marine energy projects.

“Atlantis represents the cutting edge of this new emerging industry and we are pleased to be able to invest to support development, test and demonstration of exciting new technologies in Scottish waters.”