

Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment

Offshore Renewable Energy Strategic Action Plan 2012 – 2020

First Year Progress Report

October 2013

Actions	Action / Status
<p>Publish SEA Post Adoption Statement</p>	<p>The SEA Post Adoption Statement was published in July 2012 and is available on www.offshoreenergy.gov.uk along with all the other SEA related documents.</p>
<p>Continue to work closely with The Crown Estate (TCE) to ensure the optimum benefits for Northern Ireland through successful offshore renewable energy leasing in Northern Ireland waters.</p>	<p>Following its detailed assessment of bids through a tender competition, The Crown Estate (TCE) announced the issue of exclusivity rights to three offshore renewable projects in NI waters in October 2012. First Flight Wind Ltd is taking forward a 600MW offshore wind project off the coast of south Down. Tidal Ventures Ltd and Fairhead Tidal Ltd are progressing two separate 100MW tidal stream projects off the north Coast at Torr Head and Fair Head respectively.</p> <p>Since then DoE, in its marine licensing role, has been working closely with the three developers and their stakeholders and these projects are now at the early stages of the survey/ research and stakeholder engagement work as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process to make the necessary application for the required licence and consents over the next two years or so. If approved and a lease is offered by The Crown Estate, initiation stages for these projects could be from 2016-7 onwards contributing to the Executive's target of 40% renewable electricity by 2020.</p> <p>DETI continues to liaise with TCE on the latter's ongoing policy development for offshore renewable energy commercial and test and demonstration opportunities across the UK.</p>
<p>Actions arising from the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Appraisal</p> <p>(i) consider a cross departmental approach to filling strategic data and knowledge gaps and increasing the collection and availability and accessibility of current</p>	<p>A sub group of the Forum has considered the strategic data gaps identified through the SEA process and DETI collated a wide range of literature/ information from a number of sources for DoE consideration given its lead environmental role. In Autumn</p>

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<p>data sets.</p>	<p>2012, a new Marine Division was created within DoE to centralise marine experience and expertise.</p> <p>DoE Marine Division is actively preparing a report on the issue of data and knowledge gaps, based on the most up to date and relevant information. Additional information has become available since the SEA was carried out and, in certain instances, some of the issues will be taken forward at the individual project Environmental Impact Assessment stage. This report is expected to be completed by end December 2013 for consideration by the Forum.</p> <p>DoE is currently developing a Marine Evidence Strategy which will include consideration of some of these SEA related issues. This Strategy will also examine how Northern Ireland can address the monitoring and management requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. A UK wide consultation on this Strategy is planned for early 2014.</p> <p>In addition ,TCE, DECC and Marine Scotland are taking forward key strategic research programme to de-risk the consenting of UK wide offshore wind projects through the Offshore Renewable Joint Industry Programme, on which DoE Marine Division is represented. The current focus is on work to address uncertainties about potential collision risk to birds and about potential impacts on marine mammals from underwater noise during construction. Consideration is also being given to a similar focussed approach with regard to wave and tidal development.</p> <p>DoE Marine Division is also represented on the Offshore Renewable Research Steering Group, chaired and co-ordinated by DEFRA's Marine Science Strategy Co-ordination Group.</p> <p>Through participation in these UK wide groups, their research activities and the ongoing deployment in GB waters, NI can benefit from this work which can help increase information and reduce uncertainties in relation to the deployment of offshore</p>

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	renewable devices.
<p>(ii) promote proposals for the adoption of a “<u>deploy and monitor</u>” approach to the deployment of commercial scale development on a phased approach, to increase knowledge of possible impacts as well as building on information from other developments such as those being deployed in the Pentland Firth.</p>	<p>DoE has pioneered the ‘survey, deploy and monitor’ strategy through the Marine Current Turbines SeaGen tidal device in Strangford Lough, which was granted a marine licence in 2008. This approach has been at the forefront of marine renewable device technology and deployment and continues to evolve with the co-operation of DoE. DoE has subsequently been committed to this approach for all marine renewable projects within NI waters and DoE Marine Division is currently considering the need for separate developer guidance on this strategy.</p>
<p>(iii) develop a Project Level Mitigation Strategy to ensure that the necessary mitigating actions, as identified in the Environmental Report and the HRA are satisfactorily considered and addressed as individual projects come forward –e.g. that certain surveys/monitoring regimes would be a requirement for development consent.</p>	<p>All the project level mitigation measures identified within the SEA and the HRA have been drawn together for each of the SEA Resource Zones within a Project Level Mitigation Strategy as the basis for the identification of the specific requirements for each of the three offshore projects. This has been used by DOE in its discussions with each of the consortia as they commenced their EIA process. As noted in the ORESAP, this list is not exhaustive and the actual EIA requirements will be tailored to address the specific characteristics and locations of the individual projects.</p>
<p>Work with NIE, the System Operator (SONI) and the Utility Regulator of Northern Ireland (UREGNI) to facilitate the development of the NI Grid to handle the increasing renewable electricity generated offshore.</p>	<p>Through this Regulatory Price Control process, the Regulator is responsible for determining the timescale for grid investment and also its magnitude. In February 2013, the Regulator approved grid investment plans of £30m to support increased onshore renewables. It continues to consider NIE’s overall grid investment plans and the needs of the offshore consortia as their projects develop. The Utility Regulator consulted in Spring 2013 on options for a connection policy for offshore renewable</p>

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	<p>energy projects in NI waters and consideration continues on this work with a minded to decision expected from the Regulator by end 2013/ early 2014.. In addition, the Regulator has set up an operationally focussed group including the NI Renewables Industry Group at which DETI will attend as an observer.</p>
<p>Consider, with Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, the initial findings of the joint Isles Project to assess the potential for an offshore regional marine electricity grid linking Ireland and Scotland.</p>	<p>The initial results of the feasibility study were announced in November 2011 and a consultation on this and the various study reports closed in September 2012. Responses to the consultation have been considered by the three governments. The study concluded that a cross jurisdictional offshore integrated network is feasible, under certain circumstances. Work is continuing to explore the opportunities of developing a cross jurisdictional offshore electricity transmission network.</p>
<p>Continue to work with Invest NI, The Crown Estate and others in promoting the opportunities for local manufacturing and service sectors to secure offshore energy supply chain business in relation to projects considering investment in NI waters and also in the wider international and national market</p>	<p>In 2012-13 Invest NI implemented a full programme to promote the opportunities in offshore energy working closely with a number of partners. Key highlights of the programme included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A series of supply chain events in NI including a major event with TCE in May 2012 in Titanic Belfast which attracted almost 400 attendees; further niche events took place throughout the year with partners NOF and the NI Renewables Industry Group; - Maintenance and further development of a supply chain database which currently profiles capability of 240 NI businesses; - Support for local companies to attend and exhibit at leading industry conferences e.g. All Energy Aberdeen, Renewable UK Offshore Wind and Tidal events and the International Conference on Ocean Energy in Dublin; - Appointment of a Business Development Director in London working specifically on Renewables to promote the NI and assist NI companies access and build relationships with key suppliers; - Work with First Flight Wind to highlight supply chain opportunities to local companies;

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with District Councils to bring forward a programme of supply chain initiatives focused on small and micro businesses. <p>Some of the key successes to highlight in 2012-13 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The £52m DONG Energy Offshore Wind Logistics Terminal is now operational at Belfast Harbour; - Harland and Wolff completed the £22m contract for the design and manufacture of the two offshore transformer platforms for Siemens; - Ridgeway Renewables completed a major contract for EDF Energy for the provision of effective scour protection for offshore wind turbines, sub- sea cables & associated structures, a first in Europe for this specific application on the Teeside Offshore Wind Farm.
<p>Continue to work with the relevant authorities in the UK and Ireland to build on the progress achieved through the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for offshore renewable, as required.</p>	<p>Ongoing, as required.</p>
<p>Participate fully in the DOE led Inter Departmental Marine Co-ordination Group (IMCG) to ensure that DETI's offshore energy interests are effectively represented within the development of new marine environment policy and legislation.</p>	<p>DETI participated fully in the DoE led IMCG meetings/ activities in 2012-2013 and contributed to consideration of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; the preparation of the NI Marine Position Paper and the NI Marine Bill legislative considerations – now the NI Marine Act 2013. Emerging work from the Act involves consideration of DoE led work to develop an NI Marine Plan and Marine Protected Areas/Marine Conservation Zones in NI waters.</p>

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<p>With the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, develop during 2012-2013 streamlined administrative guidance for developers and officials on the licensing and consenting regimes for offshore renewable energy projects.</p>	<p>A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DETI and DoE has been signed which sets out key roles and responsibilities in relation to energy projects and arrangements for ongoing and improved co-operation. An MOU Implementation Group has been established for the offshore renewable projects comprising DoE Marine Division, DoE Planning, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and DETI Electricity Consents and the three offshore renewable energy consortia. DoE Marine Division is leading on this work and is the primary point of contact for the consortia through the Environmental Impact Assessment processes.</p>
<p>Establish through legislation, the necessary offshore energy production and decommissioning regime, similar to that in force in GB waters, for offshore renewable energy installations in NI waters.</p>	<p>A policy consultation on legislative proposals for an Offshore Renewable Energy Bill took place in Spring 2013. Three consultation events were held in Newcastle, Portrush and Belfast. It is proposed that the Northern Ireland regime addressing offshore safety zones, extinguishment of navigational rights and decommissioning of offshore renewable energy devices should be similar to that already operating in GB waters, with any necessary local amendments. This proposal was generally welcomed by consultees with key contributions from the fishing navigation and renewable energy sectors. It is planned to introduce the legislation to the NI Assembly in autumn 2014 with it to be in place by autumn 2015.</p>
<p>Continue to support the generation of electricity from offshore and marine renewables through appropriate incentivisation mechanisms.</p>	<p>New banding levels under the Northern Ireland Renewable Obligation (NIRO) came into force from 1 April 2013 – 5 ROCs for wave and tidal projects, subject to a 30MW project cap for projects for new accredited generation up to 2017. ROC levels for offshore wind projects are 2 ROCs reducing on an annual basis to 1.8 ROCs in 2016-2017.</p> <p>In February 2013 the Northern Ireland Assembly passed a Legislative Consent Motion in order to extend powers for the Electricity Market Reform (EMR) to Northern Ireland via the DECC 2012 Energy Bill which was introduced in Westminster on 29 November 2012. A Feed-In Tariff (FIT) with Contracts for</p>

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	<p>Difference will be used to incentivise large scale (over 5MW) renewable electricity generation across the UK when the Renewables Obligations close to new generation in 2017. DETI will continue to work with DECC and other Devolved Administration colleagues as this EMR work progresses.</p>
<p>Ensure that Northern Ireland benefits from the range of NI and UK wide regimes and groups supporting research, development and deployment of offshore renewable energy.</p>	<p>Both DECC and TCE have offered targeted support to bring forward the deployment of the first wave and tidal arrays in 2012-2013. While the Northern Ireland projects were at too early a stage, increasing experience and understanding of tidal device deployment issues over the next couple of years will be of benefit to these two projects.</p> <p>DETI has continued to represent Northern Ireland within UK wide groups such as the Offshore Wind Developers Forum/ Offshore Wind Industry Council and the Marine Renewable Energy Programme Board.</p> <p>In its lead environmental regulatory role, DOE has participated with counterparts in Marine Scotland and the Marine Management Organisation in the Offshore Renewable Energy Licensing Group to consider best practice/ consistent standards / shared research with regard to licensing and consenting offshore renewable projects across the UK.</p> <p>There continues to be NI participation in other UK wide groups such as the Offshore Renewable Energy Research Steering Group, Fishing Liaison with Offshore Wind and Wet Renewables (FLOWW) and the Nautical and Offshore Renewable Energy Liaison Group.</p>
<p>Produce an annual report on progress on ORESAP actions</p>	<p>This is the first annual progress report which will be forwarded to the Offshore Renewable Energy Forum, the Sustainable Energy Interdepartmental Working Group, the ETI Committee and placed on the DETI website.</p>