

Wales gives consent to pioneering tidal array scheme

- **Welsh Government approves the 10MW Skerries Tidal Stream Array**
- **Wales' first commercial tidal energy farm and one of the largest to be consented in the UK**
- **The array will be developed by Siemens-owned Marine Current Turbines**
- **Skerries will supply up to 10,000 homes with eco-friendly electricity**

The Welsh Government has given its approval to the development of the Skerries Tidal Stream Array, which will be Wales' first commercial tidal energy farm. The Skerries tidal array, one of the largest of its kind to be consented in the UK, will be developed by Siemens-owned Marine Current Turbines (MCT) and will supply up to 10,000 homes.

Following commissioning, the array, located off the north-west coast of Anglesey in North Wales will consist of five SeaGen 2MW tidal stream turbines in an area between the Skerries group of rocks and islands and Carmel Head about 1km off the Anglesey coast close to the port of Holyhead, in approximately 20 to 40m water depth.

SeaGen is the first proven full-scale commercial tidal turbine developed by MCT, which has operated successfully in Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland since 2008.

In addition to the generation of eco-friendly electricity for up to 10,000 homes in Anglesey, the 10MW Skerries tidal array will deliver other significant benefits to the local community and supply chain during construction and installation as well as in the long-term through jobs in operations and maintenance and environmental monitoring. The project will make use of the local port facilities at Holyhead for the

installation and operations and maintenance.

The first minister of Wales Carwyn Jones said:

“I am delighted to announce that the Welsh Government has granted a Marine Licence for the Skerries Tidal Stream Array project, which moves Wales a step closer to hosting the first scheme of this kind in the UK. This demonstrates the significant benefits of choosing Wales for marine energy investment, with our unique tidal resources, good port facilities and proximity to the grid.”

“We have supported and worked closely with the company from the minute they showed their initial interest in the development of the site, including financial support towards early feasibility studies. The next step is to develop the industry so that tidal power can contribute towards our future energy mix.”

Acquiring a Marine Licence from the Welsh Government was part of the eligibility criteria for the Marine Energy Array Demonstration (MEAD) Fund. Granting consent has enabled the Company to secure the award from DECC.

Greg Barker, minister of state, Department of Energy and Climate Change commenting on the MEAD Fund said:

“This £20 million will give MeyGen and SeaGeneration Wales the boost they need to leap to the next level and test their innovative turbines in formations out at sea. These projects will provide valuable insight into how best to harness the power of the sea and take us one vital step closer to realising the full potential of marine in our future energy mix. The UK, with its amazing natural resource and outstanding technical know-how is already leading the way on marine power for the rest of the world to follow, and I want to ensure we stay top of this table. I am delighted that MeyGen and SeaGeneration Wales are rising to the challenge and wish them every success.”

The approval of the Skerries Scheme by the Welsh Government has followed extensive environmental studies and technical assessments as well as widespread public consultation over the past four years. The consent reflects the ambitions of

the Welsh Government to develop a low carbon economy, especially renewable energy sources, such as wind and tidal.

Achim Woerner, chief executive officer of Siemens Energy Hydro and Ocean Unit said:

“We welcome the Welsh Government’s decision to grant approval for the Skerries scheme, the largest of its kind in the UK to date. The consent is an important milestone in Wales’ transition to a low carbon economy and the tidal farm will provide a very positive economic boost to Anglesey and North Wales.

We are also delighted that the Skerries project which is being developed by Sea Generation Wales Ltd* has been selected for the £10M Marine Energy Array Demonstration award. These developments confirm the viability of the SeaGen technology for larger scale deployment and the overall potential for the sector.”

RWE npower renewables which supported the development of the proposals by MCT throughout the consenting process, said it was delighted the project had been consented and looked forward to seeing the array installed and operational off the Anglesey coast. RWE npower renewables' Hydro Development Manager, Richard Church, said:

“Our involvement in the development of the Skerries scheme has proved to be valuable, in terms of the knowledge we have gained about the consenting process and about this new and innovative technology.”

The project is targeted to enter commercial operation in 2015.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

About Sea Generation Wales

Marine Current Turbines Ltd is a Siemens Business and was fully acquired by Siemens in March 2012. Sea Generation Wales Ltd is a project development company owned by Marine Current Turbines Ltd and has received grant support funding from the 'European Regional Development Fund' and financial support from RWE npower renewables Ltd.

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