

March 18, 2011

## Blue seas, Green energy

### Blueprint unveiled of Scottish territorial waters offshore wind energy potential

The huge potential for offshore wind energy projects in Scottish territorial waters took a significant step forward today.

The Scottish Government has published a Plan for Offshore Wind development in Scotland's seas. Blue Seas, Green Energy confirms that offshore renewable developments are viable in at least six sites, with a potential to deliver almost five Gigawatts of electricity generating capacity by 2020.

The Plan sets out the Government's vision for developing offshore wind energy up to 2020 and beyond. It has been developed following a successful and engaging consultation last year and informed by a substantial evidence base of possible social and environmental interactions with offshore wind development, as reflected in the accompanying Post Adoption Statement.

The Plan has identified:

- Six areas for development of offshore wind up to 2020, with a potential to deliver almost five Gigawatts of electricity generation capacity;
- 25 areas for further exploration beyond 2020, to harness the additional capacity from Scotland's considerable offshore wind resource;
- Three previously proposed sites have not been included in the plan based on their environmental and economic impacts.

Developers can now move forward to the licensing stage and potentially deliver almost five Gigawatts of offshore wind energy capacity by 2020, which is enough to power over three million households.

Working with The Crown Estate, we will continue to discuss with industry the huge potential for offshore wind projects around Scotland. This process will be done in a way that best meets the developer ambitions, but remains consistent with the results of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and public consultation. A further announcement regarding next steps will be made by the end of June.

Rural Affairs and Environment Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

"Scotland has huge potential to become Europe's leader in clean, green energy generation. Offshore wind offers massive business opportunities and allows us to be at the forefront of emerging technology and development.

"The Scottish Government is committed to the successful and sustainable development of an offshore wind sector, which could lead to a potential generation of over 7 billion pounds to Scotland's economy and support up to 28,000 direct jobs by 2020.

"Realising and harnessing this must be done in a sustainable way that ensures communities can also benefit from the new economic opportunities presented by this growing industry. That is exactly what today's publication is about – understanding the effects that offshore renewable developments might have on the surrounding area.

“Marine Scotland officials held two rounds of consultation workshops in the local communities around the proposed sites to ensure the views of the public and other local interests were accurately heard. Views raised at these meetings and 856 formal consultation responses were taken into account during decision making.

“Offshore renewables represent a huge opportunity for Scotland; an opportunity to build up new industries and to deliver on our ambitious renewable energy and carbon reduction targets. It is estimated that Scotland has 206 Gigawatts of practical offshore wind, wave and tidal resource – almost 40 per cent of the UK total. Harnessing just one third – 68 Gigawatt – would result in net value of 14 billion pounds in electricity sales alone by 2050.”

## **Background**

The Crown Estate was asked by the Scottish Government in 2007 to undertake a leasing round in Scottish Territorial Waters. Site selection was a developer lead process and not completed by The Crown Estate. Scottish Government is responsible for stakeholder consultation through the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

Any decision to pursue development following today’s publication will be a commercial one and subject to existing planning and licensing procedures.

Blue Seas, Green Energy can be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/15162617/bluseas>

One of the original 10 short term options (Bell Rock) was withdrawn as a result of issues arising from possible radar impacts. The sectoral marine planning process and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment raised particular issues surrounding three short term sites in Kintyre, Solway Firth and Wigtown Bay, which has meant that Scottish Ministers have decided that the three sites should not be progressed as part of the offshore wind Plan. This decision was also informed by the developer of the Kintyre site withdrawing from the site due to the available wind resource, technical and environmental effects and issues raised during consultation.

The Crown Estate has awarded lease agreements for two Round 3 offshore wind sites in Scotland’s offshore zone (offshore beyond 12 nautical miles). These two sites have a potential generating capacity of 4.8 Gigawatts. The six Scottish Territorial Waters and the two Round 3 sites amounts to around 10 Gigawatts of potential generating capacity.

## **Contact**

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