



Please respond to:

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09 November 2010
Ref: DSG(2010)C109

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The Scottish Government
EA Team
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Dear Sir/Madam

NATIONAL RENEWABLES INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN STAGE 2

The Dounreay Stakeholder Group (DSG) is an independent body representing over 20 community organisations. These are collective views of the DSG Socio Economic sub group.

DSG welcomes the report and as a general comment is disappointed that Caithness and Scrabster Harbour does not largely feature within this document. Caithness and North Sutherland are well positioned to capitalise on the emerging renewables industry with a skilled workforce and ambitious redevelopment plans for the harbour.

While the main focus of the report is Offshore Wind it is believed that Wave and Tidal should also be given a higher priority to allow the development timescales to be met, ie it is important to ensure that the infrastructure is in place both for the deployment of devices, including small scale arrays as well as later commercialisation. DSG looks forward to receiving the 'Build out' story for the Pentland Firth which we understand is due to be published by the Crown Estates shortly and will hopefully provide clarification on the extent of Caithness involvement, and more importantly, the likely timescales required for development.

The document lacks coherence between the infrastructure required to capitalise on the commercial opportunities for the Highlands and the various renewable technologies and this needs to be addressed within this document.

The report appears to suggest simultaneously that Scotland is in a unique position to be at the forefront of developments in wave and tidal power technology but that at present the focus is on offshore wind. Whereas the offshore wind technology has been successfully tested 'onshore' and we have no concerns on developments in this area, the report should display much more in the way of ambition and appetite to progress wave and tidal. If Scotland wishes to remain at the forefront of wave and tidal power development then the importance of identifying, initiating and developing infrastructure close to where the initial deployments will be in the Pentland Firth area cannot be understated. The urgency of this task requires to be highlighted in the report or the opportunity will be exploited by other countries with more ambition.

With the recent announcement that the inner sound has now been agreed the Meygen site will be the biggest single site in the Pentland Firth area and will undoubtedly require improvements to be made to Scrabster harbour. Therefore it is now urgent that Scrabster harbour development moves forward and Scottish Government should consider simplifying funding streams to ensure that there does not cause unnecessary delays in progressing the development of the harbour which undoubtedly can capitalise on the emerging industry and bring a positive socio economic impact to a county which needs to urgently diversify and utilise the skills and infrastructure which are available.

The report focuses on existing infrastructure, largely by way of fabrication/manufacturing facilities, within clusters which can lend themselves to offshore wind. It does not really discuss the availability of suitable clusters of resource close to the centres of activity which are likely to be required to develop wave and tidal power systems. Having, over the past 50 years built up a unique cluster of scientific, engineering and technical capability required to develop a completely new power source (fast reactor technology) Caithness is uniquely suited and situated for such a task.

In general we find the report is very disappointing from a Caithness point of view in that it does not convey any great desire by its authors to stay ahead of the wave and tidal power game globally by investing in infrastructure in the Pentland Firth.

Of specific comment:

Page 4: The report states, for wave and tidal, that the delivery of the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters commercial scale leasing programme from 2016 will require development of port infrastructure proposals alongside development of technology and deployment techniques. DSG believes that, given the timescales, it is essential that harbour developments, especially at Scrabster, are progressed to service earlier needs as well as later commercialisation.

Page 5: The report states that early assessment of infrastructure needs to support the wave and tidal energy projects, with a focus on the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters commercial assessment. DSG agrees with this and again urges Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise to progress the Scrabster Harbour development proposals as a matter of urgency. Scrabster Harbour's current proposals are for phase 1 of the harbour's infrastructure development. Any assessment needs to project forward and look at what might be required if the next order of magnitude of commercial opportunity was to be realised in the North Highlands would be useful in identifying the requirements for further phased development. The lack of information currently available

on the requirements of developers is

Page 31: Moray Firth Cluster: DSG is disappointed that there is no mention of Wick harbour in this cluster and yet on Page 22 the support already provided by Wick is mentioned.

Appendix 3: Given the importance of the Pentland Firth and Orkney Waters, the cluster which surrounds this should be included.

Yours sincerely

Sent electronically without signature

Derrick Milnes
DSG Socio Economic sub group chairman