

Fergus Ewing comments on British Geological Survey report [30/06/2014 15:46]

Commenting on a study undertaken by the British Geological Survey into shale gas and oil reserves in Scotland, Energy Minister Fergus Ewing said:

“I note the publication of this British Geological Survey report, which highlights that only relatively modest amounts of shale gas and shale oil are likely to be present in the central belt, only a fraction of which could be realistically recovered.

“We are taking a balanced, evidence-based approach to the development of unconventional gas, and convened an Expert Scientific Panel on Unconventional Oil and Gas to examine the issue.

“At this time there are no proposals which involve the use of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) techniques in Scotland, and proposals for coalbed methane or shale gas production will be studied on their merits, and considered through the normal planning process

“Our responsible approach to the development of unconventional gas was confirmed in the Scottish Planning Policy published last week, which introduces rules to ensure that no operator can undertake hydraulic fracturing unless they first gain explicit planning consent for that activity.

“In addition, the SPP brings in a requirement for operators to consult with communities on their proposals, and introduces buffer zones to ensure development only proceeds if communities and the environment can be protected.

“Scotland is an incredibly resource-rich country – both offshore and onshore – and has huge renewable electricity potential, with 25 per cent of Europe’s offshore wind and tidal potential, and ten per cent of its wave potential. Figures published last week show that the first quarter of 2014 was an all-time record quarter for renewable electricity generation in Scotland. In addition, there are estimated to be up to 24 billion recoverable barrels of oil, with a potential wholesale value of £1.5 trillion remaining in the North Sea.”

## **Millions for renewable energy projects [21/05/2014 14:30] New investment will boost green energy.**

Scottish Enterprise has announced £3.5 million of new investment in Scotland's growing renewable energy sector, Energy Minister Fergus Ewing announced today.

Four projects are being supported through the enterprise agency's Renewable Energy Investment Fund (REIF).

- Islay Energy Community Benefit Society will receive a £735k loan to install a community owned 330Kw turbine on the island, with the potential to power the equivalent of 300 homes.
- Edinburgh-based Nova Innovation has secured a £700k loan from REIF to support the first phase of the 0.5MW Shetland Tidal Array, believed to be the first deployment of a tidal energy array anywhere in the world. Scottish Enterprise is backing the project with a £1.2 million R&D grant that will lever in an additional £1.85 million of private sector investment.
- Fintry Development Trust, a body dedicated to making the village in Stirlingshire a zero-carbon, zero-waste community, is being supported with a £615k loan. It will help refinance a commercial agreement that gives the trust an income stream from the nearby Earlsburn Wind Farm. This income will be invested in local renewable projects.
- Inverness company AWS Ocean Energy has received a loan of £250k to support further development and testing of its AWS-III, a wave energy device which offers the prospect of wave energy on a farm scale. AWS also received support through the first round of WATERS funding.

In Aberdeen, attending the All-Energy Conference, Mr Ewing said:

“This latest round of Scottish Enterprise funding underlines the Scottish Government's commitment to Scotland's growing renewables sector.

“Scotland is a world leader in deploying renewables technology. We have tremendous green energy potential and vast natural resources, about a quarter of Europe's wind and tidal energy and 10% of its wave power.

“Clean, green energy is creating opportunities for communities across Scotland and delivering jobs and investment.”

Welcoming the investment, head of REIF Andrew Smith said:

“These are really ambitious and exciting projects, which clearly demonstrate the wide range of initiatives that REIF was set up to support. They also show how by working with other funders we can leverage significant investment from the private sector.

“Scotland is fast gaining a global reputation for being at the forefront of developing and testing new technologies in the development of wind, wave and tidal energy, and all of these projects will make a real contribution to the ongoing development of the sector.”

Calum Davidson, Director of Energy and Low Carbon at Highlands and Islands Enterprise, said:

"The investment in each of these projects is particularly welcome given their pioneering nature and potential impact on economic and social development in the Highlands and Islands.

"Not only will they contribute to further development of wave, tidal and community owned renewable energy, but their innovative nature ensures that yet again Scotland remains firmly in the renewable energy spotlight.

"This is further demonstrated this week at All-Energy, where the largest regional presence is held by the Highlands and Islands."

### **Notes to editors**

The Renewable Energy Investment Fund was launched in October 2012. Its aim is to promote the use of energy from specific renewable sources and drive further investment into key areas of Scotland's renewables industry.

REIF is delivered by the Scottish Investment Bank – the investment arm of Scottish Enterprise – on behalf of the Scottish Government and its Enterprise Agencies.

WATERS is a collaborative venture between Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, with funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Companies based in Scotland and Scottish subsidiaries of overseas companies are invited to submit project proposals that will advance wave and tidal energy devices.