



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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PUBLICATION

Science and Evidence Advisory Sub-group meeting: 14 December 2021

The focus of this meeting was the 6 monthly review, marine renewable energy and the deep dive into renewable energy.

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Consenting Strategic Advisory Group

Science and Evidence Advisory Sub-group

14 December 2021

Attendees

Jim McKie (Eurona): facilitator
Sharon Davies (Welsh Government – Marine Licensing)
James Moon (Natural Resources Wales)
Kirsten Ramsey (Natural Resources Wales)
Ceri Morris (Natural Resources Wales)
Tom Stringell (Natural Resources Wales)
Jay Sheppard (Marine Energy Wales)
Jennifer Fox (ORJIP-OE)
Sue Barr (Cambrian Offshore)
Gemma Veneruso (Bangor University)
Tania Davey (The Wildlife Trust)

Guests

Andrew Griffith (CEFAS)
Lee Slater (CEFAS)

Meeting

Members undertook a 6 month review of SEAGP with members being content with the progress to date. Actions for the following 6 months were suggested which includes building a stronger partnership with academia, consideration of funding opportunities to address evidence gaps and further engagement with industry to extend the knowledge base associated with wave and tidal stream technologies.

Marine renewable energy is an emerging sector with uncertainties around possible impacts on the marine environment. Gathering strategic evidence in the form of strategic baseline data for key marine species (mammals, birds and fish) could enable the sustainable growth of the tidal stream sector in Wales. To further inform our understanding of the value of baseline surveys the Welsh Government has commissioned the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) to advise on the practical considerations and needs related to strategic baseline surveys.

Cefas presented to SEAGP on the project, giving members an opportunity to discuss how baseline data is being defined, the objectives of the project and the associated outputs. A questions and answer session followed which gave members an opportunity to seek clarification and offer support to the project. The aim of the project is to inform future priority research and data sharing opportunities for the tidal stream sector.

SEAGP discussed the good progress being made on the Information Notes. The Information Notes are being co-produced by members and are intended to support consenting and facilitate early discussions between developers and Natural Resources Wales on the assessment of certain potential impacts. Once finalised the Information Notes will be hosted on the Welsh Government website for use.

SEAGP also discussed the Deputy Minister for Climate Change's recent deep dive into renewable energy and the recommendation for an end to end review of marine licensing. The group highlighted the noteworthy work that has been undertaken to date by the Consenting Strategic Advisory Group and SEAGP, highlighting Wales as being an exemplar on a global scale in respect of its review of consenting processes to support the marine renewable energy sector. The group expressed an expectation for the review to build on the work of CSAG and SEAGP to date and wishes to help inform the review into marine licensing which is due to conclude summer 2022.

Date of next meeting

8 February 2022

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