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RWE npower renewables welcomes £6m marine grant

A pioneering wave power scheme on the Scottish island of Lewis has moved a step closer to reality after leading renewables developer RWE npower renewables¹ received a £6m marine grant.

The cash injection from the WATERS fund (Wave and Tidal Energy: Research, Development and Demonstration Support) will support the construction of the Siadar Wave Energy Project (SWEP).

WATERS is a collaboration between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, with support from European Regional Development Funds.

Julia Lynch-Williams, RWE npower renewables Managing Director said: “We are delighted to be awarded this grant. This funding is a vital step towards construction of the Siadar Wave Energy Project”.

“However, there remain a number of commercial challenges which still need to be met. We are currently working on issues such as a grid connection along with securing potential suppliers but are confident of reaching a solution to these.”

The SWEP plans to power from the Atlantic waves in Siadar Bay to generate up to four megawatts of electricity. The energy produced each year could supply the average annual electricity needs of around 2500 homes in the Western Isles².

The project is a collaboration between RWE npower renewables and Inverness based technology company Voith Hydro Wavegen³. It will involve building a new breakwater, similar in appearance to those frequently used around the UK's coastline, the main difference being that the Siadar breakwater would incorporate oscillating water column chambers with Voith Hydro Wavegen's proven Wells turbines.

As well as providing green, renewable electricity, the SWEP could also provide shelter and facilitate the development of a fair weather harbour facility for small commercial and leisure craft.

For more information on SWEP visit

<http://www.rwe.com/web/cms/en/309656/rwe-npower-renewables/sites/projects-in-development/marine/siadar/the-proposal/>

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Page 2

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Editor's notes

1. RWE npower renewables is the UK subsidiary of RWE Innogy and is one of the UK's leading renewable energy developers and operators, committed to developing and operating wind farms and hydro plant to produce sustainable electricity. The company operates 19 hydroelectric power projects and 23 wind farms in the UK, including the country's first major offshore wind farm, North Hoyle. RWE npower renewables is also working with marine energy technology partners to deliver new wave and tidal stream power projects in the UK. Through our existing projects and those in development, we are working in close partnership with communities and companies throughout the UK. As Government policy drives the UK towards a target of supplying 10% of electricity from renewables by 2010, and 15% by 2015, we will be at the forefront of realising this aim.

In Scotland, RWE npower renewables operates 12 hydroelectric projects with a further one currently under construction. In addition, the company is currently building two new onshore wind farms; Lochelbank in Perth and Kinross and An Suidhe in Argyll and Bute. When completed in 2010, these wind farms will boost the total number of projects in RWE npower renewables' Scottish wind portfolio to nine

RWE Innogy pools the renewable energy expertise and generating plant of the RWE Group. The company plans, builds and operates renewable power generation facilities, and aims to vigorously grow its renewable energy capacity in the UK and Continental Europe.

RWE npower renewables is a sister company to RWE npower, a leading integrated UK energy company with around 6.8 million customer accounts. RWE npower also owns and operates a flexible portfolio of conventional power stations as well as a portfolio of cogeneration plant producing more than 10% of the electricity used in England and Wales.

For further information about RWE npower renewables and RWE Innogy visit www.npower-renewables.com and www.rweinnogy.com for further information about RWE npower visit www.rwenpower.com

2. It is estimated that the SWEP will produce approximately 12.3GWh per year based on an assumed installed capacity of 4MW. This is enough to supply the average annual electricity needs of around 2500 homes in the Western Isles. This is based on the UK average annual domestic electricity consumption of approximately 4700kWh per year over the life of SWEP. This figure may change as average domestic electricity consumption changes.

3. Voith Hydro Wavegen is a world leader in wave energy and wave power. Voith Hydro Wavegen developed and operate Limpet, the world's first commercial scale wave energy plant that generates energy for the grid. The Voith Hydro Wavegen head office is located in Inverness, Scotland, where they also operate state-of-the-art wave power research and development facilities. Wavegen is owned by Voith Hydro, a group division of Voith AG. For further information about Wavegen visit www.wavegen.com for more details on Voith Hydro please visit www.voithhydro.com.