

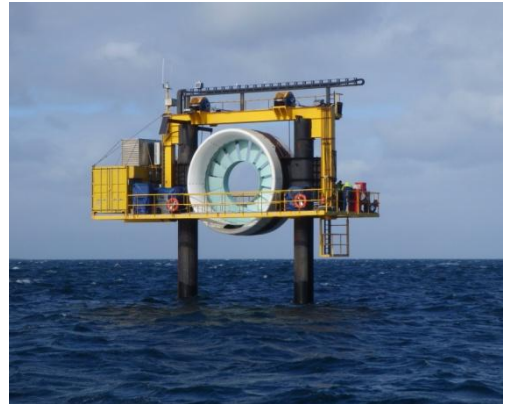
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Innovation Collaboration Aims to Assist Ocean Energy Developers

Fife, Scotland - SMRU Ltd, part of the Scottish Oceans Institute based at St Andrews University, and the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC) Ltd, Orkney, are working to develop hydroacoustic systems and methodologies for the detection and monitoring of marine mammals and diving birds and potential interactions with Ocean Renewable Energy devices. This project is an important undertaking that will help to prioritize marine areas for use as potential Ocean Renewable Energy project locations and will help project developers and device manufacturers address permitting issues and concerns over turbines placed in marine habitat areas.



The hydroacoustic, or SONAR, systems used for this project will be provided by Seattle based BioSonics, Inc. After an intensive evaluation process by a panel of UK experts, BioSonics and their DT-X digital echosounder technology were selected based on their unique capabilities and potentially “mammal friendly” characteristics. BioSonics has an established track record in deploying fixed position monitoring systems at ocean energy projects and performing baseline studies for site selection. Their systems are capable of three-dimensional tracking and classification of marine mammals, fish, and diving birds at long ranges and operate at frequencies and energy levels above the hearing ranges of marine life.



The synergies afforded through this alliance between SMRU Ltd, EMEC, and BioSonics are significant. SMRU Ltd staff includes some of the world’s leading authorities on marine mammals and over the next several months these researchers will contribute expertise and collect data on marine mammals and their swimming behavior. This information will allow BioSonics engineering staff to develop specific classification matrices and optimize their existing hydroacoustic systems for the defined purposes. BioSonics company president, Tim Acker stated “The end product will be a revolutionary new technology to help tidal power

move forward in a safe and environmentally responsible manner.”

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Work began in early April at EMEC in Orkney. BioSonics and SMRU Ltd technical teams worked in tandem on initial field trials and data collection. “This is an exciting first step in what we expect will be a long and productive partnership. It’s also an excellent demonstration of government, academic, and private sectors working together to expand the use of marine renewables” said Douglas Mundie, Managing Director at SMRU Ltd.

Contact

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