



UK research consortium gives GBP 20m to offshore renewable-energy projects

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(ADP News) - Jan 15, 2009 - UK Government-backed energy research consortium Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) Wednesday said it will pour GBP 20 million (USD 30m/EUR 22m) in four projects for offshore renewable energy generation.

The projects are the first to draw funds from the GBP 1.1 billion which ETI could provide to projects contributing to the achievement of the UK's challenging targets for the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

A project dubbed Nova will try to assess the feasibility of a wind turbine with a pair of giant vertical wings. According to developers this kind of wind turbine has the benefit of ruggedness, stability and simpler maintenance access, compared to the horizontal axis concept of conventional turbines.

The second project aims to deliver a concept design and feasibility study for a new offshore-specific wind farm and seeks to overcome the issues facing today's systems including turbine reliability and accessing equipment for maintenance. This project, named Helm Wind, is developed by a UK-based consortium led by E.on Engineering and including representatives from Rolls-Royce (LSE:RR), BP Alternative Energy and the University of Strathclyde.

Another UK-based consortium led by Rolls-Royce and including Tidal Generation Limited, Garrad Hassan, the University of Edinburgh, EDF Energy, E.on AG (FSE:EOAN), Plymouth Marine Laboratories and the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC), will install and test a 1 MW tidal turbine in Orkney, delivering detailed environmental and performance information never before achieved at this scale in real sea conditions.

The last project that won financing aims to design and determine the feasibility and potential of an integrated solution for a 5 MW floating offshore wind turbine for deepwater deployments between 30 and 300 metres (98 - 980 feet).

Dubbed Deepwater Turbine, this project was proposed by a consortium led by Blue H Technologies with representatives from UK groups including BAE Systems (LSE:BAES), the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture (CEFAS), EDF Energy, Romax and SLP Energy.

The funding for the projects currently comes from the six private sector partners – BP (LSE:BP), Caterpillar (NYSE:CAT), EDF Energy, E.ON, Rolls-Royce and Shell (AMS:RDSA). The ETI's public funds are received from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) through the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) with additional funding from the Department for Transport.

The UK's target for 2050 is an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on 1990 levels covering all sectors of the economy, including shipping and aviation. To help deliver that, 15% of energy should come from renewable sources by 2020.

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