



10 June 2010:

POWER FROM THE WAVES

New Zealand's pioneer marine energy company has been granted the first resource consent for a wave generator to prove it can capture power from the waves.

It will be moored four kilometres off the Taranaki coast in some of the roughest seas in the country.

Wave Energy Technology – New Zealand, based in Wellington, has been developing a wave converter of its own design since 2004 with prototypes in the water since the end of 2006, mainly outside Lyttelton harbour.

WET-NZ, a joint venture between the Crown Research Institute, Industrial Research Limited, and Power Project Limited, received the second award under the government's four-year Marine Energy Deployment Fund to enable the building of a half-scale version of its device and its deployment and testing over five years.

Taranaki Regional Council has granted a resource consent for that deployment to be offshore from the Waitara rivermouth, about 20 kilometres each of New Plymouth.

WET-NZ hopes to complete construction and fitting out of the half-scale device this year, with deployment in the second quarter of 2011.

The project is one of five marine energy developments around the country including Crest Energy in the Kaipara harbour, Energy Pacifica in Tory Channel, Neptune Power in Cook Strait, and the Chatham Islands.

Chris Turver, executive officer of the umbrella Aotearoa Wave & Tidal Energy Association, says WET-NZ's progression to a half-scale wave converter is a major step forward in New Zealand marine energy design for New Zealand conditions.

"New Zealand has some of the toughest wave and tidal conditions in the world and it's already being said that if it works in New Zealand it will work anywhere."

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