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Blue Energy - New Zealand's place in the World

New Zealand is to stage the largest international conference on marine energy in the Pacific, attracting 18 nations and showcasing the best of what is happening in this country and overseas to harness the power of the sea.

The two-day conference in Wellington on April 19-20 is the fourth to be organised by AWATEA, the Aotearoa Wave & Tidal Energy Association, which promotes renewable marine energy from undersea turbines and wave generators.

Executive Officer Chris Turver says the conference will demonstrate that “blue” energy is a renewable power source that offers real potential for the future and recognise the part New Zealand is playing.

“The goal is to steadily replace non-renewable fossil fuels with renewable energy sources and marine energy is starting to take its place internationally as a silent and unobtrusive option.”

Conference delegates will include representatives from the International Energy Agency's Oceans Energy Systems Implementing Agreement, currently chaired by AWATEA's international representative Dr John Huckerby of Wellington.

In New Zealand there are 26 wave and tidal energy projects at various stages of development

There is government support for developers and growing interest by commercial companies, led by Todd Energy which recently bought 30 percent of Crest Energy Kaipara Limited.

New Zealand delegates will include current developers like Crest Energy, Wave Energy Technology – New Zealand which has launched a second prototype to generate power from wave action at Lyttelton, and Energy Pacifica which is close to lodging resources consents to install underwater tidal turbines in Tory Channel in the Marlborough Sounds.

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