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### **COMMERCIAL SUPPORT FOR NZ 'BLUE ENERGY'**

New Zealand's marine energy advocate has welcomed positive commercial steps towards producing 'blue energy' through underwater tidal turbines and surface wave generators.

The Aotearoa Wave & Tidal Energy Association (AWATEA), formed three years ago to promote marine energy as a sustainable and renewable power source, says there is government support and a growing level of commitment by commercial developers

Executive Officer Chris Turver says the recent decision by Todd Energy to buy a 35 percent stake in Crest Energy Kaipara Limited, with an option to increase to 45 percent, shows increasing commercial confidence in the future of marine power.

Crest Energy is waiting for the result of an appeal against resource consents granted in 2008 to install about 200 underwater tidal turbines each of 1 MW near the mouth of the Kaipara harbour, estimated to start production by 2014.

Mr Turver says Energy Pacifica's latest announcement that it is preparing resource consent applications for twenty 30 MW tidal generators in the outer reaches of Tory Channel is another commitment to blue energy.

Similarly, Wave Energy Technology – New Zealand has launched a second small-scale prototype in Lyttelton Harbour for generating power from wave action with the aim of producing a 100 KW ocean-scale device, currently under development, by mid-2010.

Mr Turver says overall, there are 26 wave and tidal energy projects at various stages of development in New Zealand.

“While they represent substantial recognition for the potential of wave and tidal power generation, the lead time necessary to achieve it means it will be some years before renewable marine energy becomes a natural part of our power resources.”

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