



aotearoa wave and tidal energy association

Press Release, 26 June 2006

More work needed to harness sea's power, says national association

A great deal of development work is needed to turn an "exciting possibility" into reality, says the Executive Officer of the newly formed Aotearoa Wave and Tidal Energy Association (AWATEA), Dr John Huckerby.

Dr Huckerby was commenting on a recent announcement of a project by Neptune Power to investigate the feasibility of a tidal energy project in the Cook Strait.

"This is one of New Zealand's first ventures into investigating the exciting possibility of harnessing the sea's power to generate electricity".

"New Zealand is acknowledged to have excellent wave and good tidal energy resources. There are a number of emerging technologies in marine power generation. But it is important to note that this technology and its commercial application are in its formative years. Marine energy technologies are at a similar stage of development to wind turbines about 10 to 15 years ago," Dr Huckerby said.

Dr Huckerby said that until now there have been no commercial marine energy projects: the first commercial wave energy project will begin operation later this year in Portugal. This is likely to be followed by the first commercial tidal energy project in the United Kingdom within the next two years.

He emphasised that the marine environment presented a number of engineering challenges for energy production. There had not yet been any studies of the potential or actual effects of marine energy projects in New Zealand waters.

"These studies and consultation with a wide range of parties, including the fishing and shipping industries, will be required before any proposal can

proceed. The experience of other marine industries will be important in developing workable options for marine energy projects”.

“We believe that marine energy will complement, rather than replace, existing forms of generation that are required to meet New Zealand’s growing energy needs. We must welcome any investment in new forms of energy that will make New Zealand’s supply more secure, resilient and environmentally acceptable,” Dr Huckerby said.

AWATEA believes that the Government has an important role in enabling the development of marine energy generation and has begun the process of consultation with relevant agencies and government departments. AWATEA is committed to working with all parties to bring this renewable and emission-free form of generation to New Zealand.

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About AWATEA

Established in April 2006, the aim of the Aotearoa Wave and Tidal Energy Association (AWATEA) is to promote marine energy in New Zealand. Its members comprise marine energy project developers, electricity and marine industry sector participants and interested individuals.

Dr. John Huckerby, Executive Officer, AWATEA

Dr Huckerby is the founder and executive officer of AWATEA. He is also the Treasurer of the Energy Law Association and sits on a number of advisory boards, including the Royal Society of New Zealand President's Panel for Energy.

He is also the director of Power Projects Limited, an energy industry consultancy advising overseas energy companies, domestic utilities, and public sector organizations on investments in New Zealand's energy industry.

Dr Huckerby worked for Fletcher Challenge Energy, leading the team that evaluated the Mangahewa and Pohokura gas-condensate fields. Before coming to New Zealand, he worked in the United States, Eastern Europe, Saudi Arabia, Scandinavia and the North Sea.