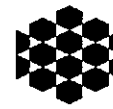


From the Office of the Minister



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Roy Beggs MLA
Northern Ireland Assembly
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17th January 2011

Dear Roy,

FOLLOW UP TO QUERY DURING BIC MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Following the First Minister's statement on the British-Irish Council Summit Meeting on 15 December, you asked what issues will be discussed at the European level on marine renewables.

The BIC marine workstream, chaired by the Scottish Government, has agreed that one of the key outcomes of the workstream would be to influence the European Commission's perception of the marine renewables sector and to raise that sector's profile with key Commission officials. In particular, workstream officials have agreed that integrating marine energy as part of the EU's Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan would be a key outcome, and one that would benefit the sector in terms of potentially unlocking significant new funding streams.

At the next meeting of officials, planned for the end of January, the group will hear from colleagues involved with the EU Marine Interest Group, which has been discussing these issues and raising the profile of the marine energy sector with the Commission. The BIC marine workstream will discuss how to ensure that these complementary efforts are fully aligned, prior to an approach to European Commission officials from DG Research and DG Energy to encourage a new focus on marine energy.

Given your interest in marine renewables, you may also be interested in DETI's current consultation on incentivisation for marine renewables which is available at: http://www.detini.gov.uk/consultation_on_incentivisation_for_offshore_renewable_electricity_generation.pdf

I will arrange for a copy of the letter to be sent to the Speaker's Office, the Business Office (for Hansard) and that a copy will be placed in the Assembly Library.

*Your sincerely,
Arlene Foster*

ARLENE FOSTER MLA
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment