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SeaGen completed:

World's first megawatt scale tidal turbine installed

Marine Current Turbines Ltd, the global leader in tidal stream technology, has successfully completed the installation of its 1.2MW SeaGen tidal energy system in Strangford Narrows in Northern Ireland. There will now be a 12-week period of commissioning and testing before it starts regularly feeding power into the Northern Ireland grid.

After being carefully positioned by the heavy-lift crane-barge "Rambiz" in the early hours of 3 April there has been a six-week operation to secure the 1000 tonne structure to the seabed and link up SeaGen's grid connection to the electricity sub-station on the southern shore of Strangford Lough.



The completion of the installation was achieved with the placing of the superstructure on top of SeaGen last week and the departure of the Missing Link support vessel which has now slipped its moorings and headed back out to the Irish Sea.

Martin Wright, Managing Director of Marine Current Turbines said:

“This has been a ground-breaking operation, the like of which has never been attempted before and it has attracted interest from around the world. SeaGen’s installation has been filmed by TV crews from North America, Germany and France as well as from Ireland and the UK. “MCT’s engineering team is to be congratulated for the excellent progress it has made over the past few weeks in very challenging conditions and we now move to the commissioning phase and commercial operation.” When fully operational the tidal system’s 16m diameter, twin rotors will operate for up to 18-20 hours per day to produce enough clean, green electricity, equivalent to that used by a 1000 homes. This is four times greater than any other tidal stream project so far completed, including MCT’s earlier 300kW SeaFlow system installed off Lynmouth in Devon in 2003.

ESB Independent Energy, the retail subsidiary of Ireland’s ESB, has signed a Power Purchase Agreement to supply to its customers across the island of Ireland with the electricity produced by the SeaGen system.

An official ‘switch-on’ ceremony is scheduled for late summer.

-Ends-

Notes to Editors

1. Marine Current Turbines Ltd (www.marineturbines.com) is based in Bristol, England. The company was established in 2000 and its principal corporate shareholders include BankInvest, ESB International, EDF Energy, Guernsey Electricity and Triodos Bank. With SeaFlow, the world’s first offshore tidal stream device and SeaGen, the world’s largest grid-connected tidal stream system, MCT is the “first mover” in the development of tidal turbines and has a significant global technical lead in this field.
2. In February MCT announced a joint initiative with npower renewables to take forward a 10.5MW project using several SeaGen devices off the coast of Anglesey, north Wales. It is hoped the tidal farm will be commissioned around 2011/2012.

3. As a renewable energy company, Marine Current Turbines takes its responsibilities to the environment seriously. It has established a £2million programme to closely monitor the environmental impact of SeaGen, involving scientists from the Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and from the Sea Mammal Research Unit at St Andrew's University (SMRU). The programme includes the presence of a Marine Mammal Observer on SeaGen at all times during the commissioning phase, when SeaGen will only operate during daylight hours, to observe how the Lough's marine life interacts with the structure. There is also a sonar system monitoring seal movements, operated by SMRU, which has been partly paid for by the Npower juice fund

4. The juice fund is financed by Npower on behalf of juice customers to further the research and development of marine renewable energy generation

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