



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Science and Evidence Advisory Sub-group meeting: 8 June 2021

The focus of this meeting was monitoring the interaction between tidal stream energy devices and marine species.

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## Consenting Strategic Advisory Group

### Science and Evidence Advisory Sub-group

**8 June 2021**

## Attendees

Jim McKie (Eurona): Chair  
Sharon Davies (WG – Marine Licensing)  
James Moon (NRW)  
Kirsten Ramsey (NRW)  
Manon Kynaston (Marine Energy Wales)  
Tania Davy (The Wildlife Trusts)  
Jennifer Fox (ORJIP-OE)  
Sue Barr (Cambrian Offshore)  
Aly McCluskie (RSPB)  
Kate Smith (Nova Innovation)  
Joe Kidd (Catapult)  
Gemma Veneruso (Bangor University)

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## Guests

Benjamin Williamson (University of the Highlands and Islands)

David Clarke (Swansea University)

Mikaela Freeman (OES-Environmental)

Andrea Copping (OES-Environmental)

## Meeting

This meeting of SEAGP was focused on abilities to monitor interactions between tidal stream energy devices and marine species to support the consenting of marine renewable energy projects. SEAGP received two presentations on monitoring capabilities. Presenters were Benjamin Williamson from the University of the Highlands and Islands and David Clarke from Swansea University. Both focused on approaches for monitoring interactions, providing an overview of the technologies available, any limitations and emerging technologies which will enhance our capabilities to monitor animal behaviour around tidal turbines to better understand species abilities to detect devices and avoid collision.

During discussions on monitoring technologies it was noted new evidence is emerging from the Scottish MeyGen project which will add valuable evidence to the current knowledge base on animal behaviour and interactions with tidal stream devices. The MeyGen project team has partnered with the Sea Mammal Research Unit at St Andrews University to consider data obtained from the monitoring of an operational device(s) at the MeyGen project site. Once this peer reviewed evidence becomes publically available it will be shared with SEAGP for members to consider how this evidence could be used to inform consenting in Wales.

To share knowledge, build links and learn from the international marine renewable energy community, OES-Environmental were invited to present to SEAGP on how low risk issues could be safely retired earlier in the consenting process to focus assessments on key significant issues. OES-Environmental

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also provided an overview of consenting guidance it is drafting. With input from ORJIP-OE, the internationally focused guidance will include country specific advice relating to the regulatory consenting processes which apply in different countries, including Wales. This guidance will be a useful additional resource for developers, regulators and interested parties, signposting to relevant evidence to support project developments in Welsh waters.

In addition, OES-Environmental also highlighted a new project which would take a deep dive into specific issues such as cumulative impacts, how we scale up from single devices to arrays whilst considering ecosystem effects, issues which are important to developing a thriving marine renewable energy sector in Wales. SEAGP will develop and maintain its positive relationship with OES-Environmental, ensuring Wales continues to benefit, engage and learn from work undertaken by the international marine renewable energy community.

Work produced by OES-Environmental can be found on the Tethys website, along with a range of other useful marine renewable energy information and evidence: <https://tethys.pnnl.gov/>

## Date of next meeting

10 August 2021

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