
British Hydropower Association
PRESS RELEASE
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New Jobs with the pioneer of renewable energy

The British Hydropower Association (BHA) welcomes the publication of the Scottish Government's report, The Employment Potential of Scotland's Hydro Resource.

BHA Chief Executive, David Williams, said "We are particularly pleased that the renewable policies that have been put in place since the major Scottish Hydro Resource Potential survey, published in late 2008, have increased the number of financially viable hydro projects. This increase, which is mainly due to the wider acceptance of micro-hydro generation, boosts the overall generation capacity from 657mw to 1204mw, which would generate up to 4 million MWhrs a year – up to a third of Scotland's domestic demand."

However, the report reviews different growth scenarios up to the year 2030 and the major bottleneck is in the amount of skill available in Scotland and the rest of the UK to achieve worthwhile targets.

To create jobs, meet renewable energy targets and fight climate change Scottish and UK government support is needed to optimise hydro development in areas such as:

1. Training in hydro skills
2. Streamlining of consents processes
3. Removal of unwieldy and inappropriate bureaucracy
4. Improved infrastructure

"Hydro is better placed than some other renewable energy technologies and can accelerate quicker to meet demand. We have an existing hydro industry which before the rush for UK renewable energy development relied heavily export work. Now, with a flourishing home market, we are well placed to provide the bulk of equipment and services required to maximise on this opportunity."

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Notes to Editors

- Today hydropower contributes 1.5GW to the UK's electricity supply capacity (4.3GW with pumped storage). In Scotland, hydropower provides about 40% of the renewable energy capacity.
- Taking account of the load factor, a 1MW hydro plant produces 1.5 times as much energy as that provided by a 1MW wind turbine.
- Most hydro schemes operate at a load factor greater than 80% over the winter period when energy is needed. The average load factor for hydro in the UK is 35-40%.
- Hydro storage is the most economic and efficient way of storing energy, helping to balance the intermittency of other renewables and providing security of supply and frequency regulation.
- The existing pumped storage schemes were built to supplement the original nuclear programme and will serve the same purpose should nuclear development proceed in the UK.
- With climate change predictions there will be more rainfall in the North and West of the UK – areas where the topography is best served by hydro plants.
- Hydropower provides 20% of the world's electricity. It is the largest producer of global renewable and sustainable energy.
- The availability of grid and distributed connection is an economic and technical challenge to the development of hydro projects causing unacceptable delays/cancellations to their implementation.
- With increased business opportunities from global hydropower development, British companies and businesses are experiencing large skill shortages. Filling this gap is universally difficult giving distinct advantages to overseas competitors.

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