

Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm (AOWF): Second meeting of the EOWDC Scientific Research and Monitoring Panel

Meeting date: 17 March 2016
Venue: Marine Laboratory, Victoria Quay, Aberdeen

Participants: Stuart Gibb (University of the Highlands and Islands)
Frank Grant (FGDS Ltd)
Roger May (Marine Scotland Licensing and Operations Team)
Helen Jameson (Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm Limited)
Jesper Kyed Larsen (Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm Limited)
Edwina Sleightholme (Aberdeen Offshore Wind Farm Limited) *via teleconference*
Ian Davies (Marine Scotland Science)
Erica Knott (Scottish Natural Heritage)
Ian Francis (RSPB Scotland)
Alexander Downie (Scottish Environment Protection Agency) *via teleconference*

Apologies Mark Christie (MS-LOT)
Catarina Aires (MS-LOT)
Karen Hall (Joint Nature Conservation Committee)
Fiona Read (Whale & Dolphin Conservation)
Catriona Gall (SNH)

1. Background to meeting:

This meeting constitutes the second meeting of the EOWDC Scientific Research and Monitoring Panel, as comprised of individuals/organisational representatives deemed required by the Scottish Ministers. The Agenda for this meeting was drafted and circulated by MS-LOT.

The main aim for the meeting was to re-establish the programme of activity required in the initial stages of Panel implementation, to refresh members on the aims of the Panel and associated programme of environmental research and development, and to complete an exercise to define criteria for selection of topic areas required for the multi-criterion analysis process.

2. Status of actions from last meeting:

Actions		
AOWFL	Compile meeting notes and pass to Chair for input. Draft then circulated to Panel members (via Marine Scotland) along with Preliminary R&D Proposals document (as included in the Addendum). Once comments received, notes will be finalised and passed to Marine Scotland for publication.	Minutes were drafted and circulated for comment. Comments were not received from all parties therefore a final version is still outstanding. Will be picked up and circulated with final draft of MoM from second meeting.
AOWFL	Update Terms of Reference in line with discussions and circulate (via Marine Scotland) to all Panel members	AOWFL drafted and passed to MS-Lot, documents were not circulated for comment therefore final version outstanding. Likely to require review given elapse of time, to be picked up and at next meeting
AOWFL	Draft a list of terminology which will be circulated (via Marine Scotland) to all Panel members	Decided to incorporate into ToR, will be picked up at next meeting
All members	Draft BioPic's and pass to AOWFL	Only two BioPic's received, and these may now require updating. All parties to submit to AOWFL before the next meeting.
AOWFL	Compile list of BioPic's for publication	To be completed once information received.
Marine Scotland	Follow up with all invited members and confirm final list with level of membership (active participant or correspondence only)	Not completed, to be revisited at next meeting.
Marine Scotland	Maintain a record of Panel activities	Ongoing.
Chair	Provide further information on multi-criterion analysis and examples of	Complete.

	previous applications	
AOWFL	On receipt of the above information on multi-criterion analysis, discuss the possibility of conducting activities pre-FID internally	Complete. FGDS engaged to facilitate exercise.
AOWFL	To provide an update on the Rochdale Envelope at the next meeting	Covered by today's agenda.
AOWFL	To provide detail of consent commitments in relation to environmental monitoring	To be picked up during today's discussion.
Marine Scotland	Confirm date for pre-FID workshop	Requirement to be revisited.

3. Discussion:

3.1 Update on Legal Challenge (MS-LOT)

RM provided an update on the situation with regards to legal challenge. A decision was issued by the Supreme Court on 16 December 2016. MS-LOT will continue to provide updates to the Panel on legal aspects and associated risks.

3.2 Update on Project Rochdale Envelope (AOWFL)

ES provided an update on programme and refinements to the project design envelope since the last meeting.

Key points:

- The project expects a Final Investment Decision (FID) in summer 2016
- Onshore construction may start as early as the end of 2016 with site clearance/preparation works
- Offshore construction due to begin in late 2017/early 2018
- Procurement process is underway
- Grid connection is programmed for 1st April 2018

Proposed technology:

- One wind turbine generator (WTG) type has been selected for deployment across all 11 positions
- One foundation concept is currently been considered, a jacket structure with suction anchor foundations
- 66kV inter-array and export cables will be deployed
- Installation will be completed in a single phase

A key question of relevance to the Panel and resultant project selection is where the focus will be in terms of project phase, for example, pre-construction, during construction, during operation. The amount of pre-construction data collection required as part of the consent requirement and refinements to the project envelope will have a bearing on project selection.

The Panel needs to be clear on the distinction between 'consent monitoring' and 'environmental research and development' associated with the EOWDC, throughout the process of deciding which topic areas to investigate and in making recommendations on options to pursue. Whilst there may be overlaps (e.g. consent monitoring data may make a useful contribution to an environmental R&D project), the R&D funding is specifically for the delivery of research projects over and above what is required from a consenting perspective.

ACTION: AOWFL and MS-LOT to agree on what is required in terms of the Project Environmental Monitoring Plan (PEMP) for consent condition discharge. Final PEMP scope will need to be considered by the Panel when deciding on allocation of the environmental R&D budget.

3.3 Clarification on funding constraints

The question was raised as to whether the environmental R&D budget is geographically constrained, for example it must be allocated to projects which would be executed solely at the EOWDC site or in the Aberdeen locality, or whether there is the possibility for contributions further afield, to joint industry initiatives for example. Further discussion with MS-LOT will be undertaken to define more clearly the criteria which projects must meet to fulfil the Section 36 requirements and a full definition included within the ToR.

To confirm, the figure of just over €3 million (approximately €1.5 million funded by AOWFL, match funded by the EU grant monies) is entirely dedicated environmental research and monitoring. Other areas of innovation e.g. engineering, are funded separately.

AOWFL reiterated that the purpose of the Panel is to inform prioritisation of research areas, but AOWFL will be responsible for the final selection of third parties and subsequent contract placement to ensure compliance with AOWFL terms and conditions.

3.4 Introduction to the Multi-Criterion Decision Analysis and Prioritisation Exercise

The Panel has taken the decision to engage an external consultancy (FGDS Ltd) to assist in decision making to ensure the process of allocating funds to research areas is fair and transparent, and that the projects ultimately chosen are mutually agreed as the most likely to offer value for money and the greatest benefits.

Frank Grant of FGDS gave an introductory presentation into the philosophy behind, and applications of, the multi-criterion analysis method.

Following the presentation, the group conducted the initial exercise to define research 'themes' and the criteria against which proposed research projects will be assessed.

A number of research themes and draft assessment criteria were identified by mutual agreement and will be detailed further in a meeting note from FGDS which will be circulated for comment in advance of the next meeting.

ACTION: Following definition of the above lists, FGDS will use the information to draft a framework for the next stage – prioritisation of research areas. This draft framework will be circulated to Panel members for comment. The prioritisation exercise itself will take place at the next Panel meeting.

ACTION: AOWFL will attempt to schedule for w/c 11th April via a Doodle poll. MS-LOT to ,make arrangements to host the next meeting, once the date is agreed, and circulate an agenda.

Actions	
FGDS	Following definition of the above lists, FGDS will use the information to draft a framework for the next stage – prioritisation of research areas. This draft framework will be circulated to Panel members for comment.
AOWFL	To circulate draft MoM to members for comment. Once comments returned MoM will be finalised and re-circulated alongside a finalised version of the MoM from the first meeting.
FGDS	Draft the prioritisation framework and circulate to the group for comment/any additional criteria suggestions. These comments will be considered prior to the next meeting.
AOWFL	Arrange a date for the next meeting during which the prioritisation exercise be completed. AOWFL will attempt to schedule for w/c 11 th April via a Doodle poll.
MS-LOT	Make arrangements to host the next meeting, once the date is agreed, and circulate an agenda.
All	Complete/revise BioPic's and send on to AOWFL prior to the next meeting.
AOWFL	Compile the final list of BioPic's for publication once all information is received.
All	Revisit the ToR and terminology at the next meeting
MS-LOT	Follow up with all invited members and confirm final list with level of membership (active participant or correspondence only)
MS-LOT	Maintain a record of Panel activities and outputs
All	Agree list of Panel meetings/activities required pre-FID
MS-LOT	Continue to provide an update on legal aspects at subsequent meetings
AOWFL/MS-LOT	To confirm timescales associated with definition of PEMP requirements