

Mr Gianluca Gerich
MeyGen PLC
26 Dublin Street,
Edinburgh
EH3 6NN

Date: 17 July 2025

Dear Gianluca,

SCREENING OPINION UNDER THE MARINE WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017 AND THE ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2017

Thank you for your screening opinion request dated 23 May 2025 in regards to the proposed variation to MeyGen PLC (“the Applicant”)’s section 36 consent for the MeyGen Tidal Energy Project (“the MeyGen Project”) located in the Inner Sound, Pentland Firth. The proposed changes include the deployment of a single AR3000 First in Class (“FIC”) tidal turbine and associated infrastructure (“the Proposed Works”).

The Proposed Works form part of the MeyGen Tidal Energy Project whereby a section 36 consent and marine licence were granted in 2013 (“the Consented Works”). The Consented Works are an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) project therefore the Scottish Ministers consider the Proposed Works to fall under paragraph 13 of schedule 2 of The Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 MW Regulations”) and paragraph 2 of schedule 2 of The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 EW Regulations”) on the basis that they constitute a change to schedule 2 works already authorised. Consequently, the Scottish Ministers are obliged to adopt a screening opinion as to whether the Proposed Works are an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) project under the 2017 MW Regulations and the 2017 EW Regulations.

Under regulation 10(5) of the 2017 MW Regulations and regulation 8(5) of the 2017 EW Regulations, the Scottish Ministers have consulted with NatureScot (formerly Scottish Natural Heritage), the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (“SEPA”), the Highland Council and Historic Environment Scotland (“HES”) as to their view on whether the Proposed Works are an EIA project. Copies of the consultation responses received are attached for your review (at Appendix I).

When making a determination as to whether schedule 2 works are an EIA project, the Scottish Ministers must provide their reasons in a written statement, taking into account the selection criteria set out in schedule 3 of the 2017 MW Regulations and schedule 3 of the 2017 EW Regulations, as are relevant to the Proposed Works. In this regard, the Scottish Ministers have considered the following:

Characteristics of the works

Four tidal turbines were deployed during Phase 1a of the Consented Works, with Phase 1b to comprise the deployment of an additional four tidal turbines under the Consented Works.

The Proposed Works seek to reduce the number of tidal turbines to be deployed under Phase 1b from four AR2000 turbines to one single AR3000 FIC tidal turbine. The maximum rotor diameter of the single tidal turbine will increase from 16-20 metres (“m”) to 16-26 m. The maximum blade swept area will increase from 201-314 metres squared (“m²”) to 201-531 m². The minimum seabed clearance will reduce from 4.5 m to 2.0 m. The rated power capacity per turbine will increase from 2.4 megawatt (“MW”) to a maximum of 3.5 MW, however the overall generating capacity of the Consented Works will remain 86 MW. Similarly the number of tidal turbines in respect of the Consented Works will remain at 61. No changes are proposed to the parameters of the tidal turbines already deployed under Phase 1a of the Consented Works.

The AR3000 FIC tidal turbine will be connected directly to shore via a single 12 kilovolt (“kV”) alternate current export cable or a single subsea hub (“SSH”) will be deployed. Should a SSH be deployed, an inter-array cable will connect the turbine to the SSH, and a 12kV direct current export cable will connect the SSH to shore. The deployment of the SSH is not included in the Consented Works and will require a separate marine licence.

Location of the works

The Proposed Works lie within the North Caithness Cliffs Special Protection Area and within close proximity to a number of designated sites. A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (“HRA”) was undertaken by the Applicant in support of the application for the Consented Works, and an Appropriate Assessment dated 11 September 2013 was carried out by Scottish Ministers.. The screening report identifies sites that have been designated since these assessments were completed and, following a review of the potential impacts, concludes that the Proposed Works would not result in any additional likely significant impacts on the features of any designated site.

NatureScot advised that the Proposed Works are unlikely to result in new or intensified significant environmental effects. MD-LOT directs the Applicant to the additional advice provided by NatureScot in its response dated 16 June 2025 regarding ornithology and marine mammals that should be considered for any future variation to the Consented Works.

The Highland Council confirmed that further consideration of seascape, landscape and visual impacts is not required in relation to the Proposed Works. The Highland Council therefore concluded that the Proposed Works would not introduce any new significant environmental effects.

Characteristics of the potential impact

HES stated that it did not identify any potentially significant impacts on the historic environment from the Proposed Works in respect of its interests and therefore does not consider that an EIA is required.

SEPA had no site-specific comments to make in respect of the Proposed Works.

Conclusion

In view of the findings above, the Scottish Ministers are of the opinion that the Proposed Works are not an EIA project under the 2017 MW Regulations and the 2017 EW Regulations. Therefore, an EIA is not required to be carried out in respect of the Proposed Works under the 2017 MW Regulations and 2017 EW Regulations.

If you increase, alter or extend the Proposed Works, you are advised to contact Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team again to confirm if the screening opinion is still valid.

A copy of the screening opinion has been forwarded to the Highland Council planning department. The screening opinion has also been made publicly available through the [Marine Scotland Information](#) website.

If you require any further assistance or advice on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Taylor
Marine Directorate - Licensing Operations Team

