Tidal Stream Underwater Noise Study

Kongsberg Maritime, UK, has been awarded a contract to conduct underwater noise studies for an offshore renewables project that could eventually lead to 400MW being installed in the Inner Sound of the Pentland Firth. Awarded by MeyGen, the contract will involve Kongsberg Maritime conducting both baseline and operational noise measurements from prototype tidal devices to assess the potential effects of underwater noise on marine life.

David Shand, General Manager Offshore at Kongsberg Maritime Ltd, said that the MeyGen Tidal Stream Project is one of the most significant tidal initiatives in Europe. MeyGen is monitoring progress of turbine suppliers who are trialling their devices at the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC). The results of the underwater noise impact studies being carried out by Kongsberg Maritime at EMEC will affect how the devices are positioned on the seabed, to deliver optimum power while having minimal impact on marine life.

The tidal stream project could lead to 400MW being installed by 2020. The project is located 3.5km^2 in the Inner Sound of the Pentland Firth, between the north coast of Scotland and the island of Stroma, in water depths of between 20 and 40m. The results from the studies will be used by energy consultancy Xodus Group and MeyGen during the public consultation on the development.

Dan Pearson, CEO of MeyGen, said that with very strong and predictable tidal flows, Scotland is ideally placed to lead the way in the development in renewable energy. The technology that will be used will harness offshore tidal streams to provide clean, green energy to the national grid.