

A big opportunity is being missed by Scotland not investing heavily enough in tidal power. Unless it is done quickly, this technology will be adopted by another country from whom we will have to import the idea and the equipment. This could be a costly exercise particularly since we may already have the expertise and hopefully the design.

Until recently we had a cruiser based in the Solway Firth that we used to sail up the West coast of Scotland on an annual basis. For that we needed wind for the sails and tidal currents travelling in the right direction beneath us. As we all know the Solway and the West Coast are full of headlands and narrow straits of water round which and through which the tide flows very fast on a diurnal basis. No matter whether the wind blows (wind turbines) or whether it rains (hydro-power), Scotland possesses a natural asset that is not dependant on anything other than the position of the moon relative to the sun (neap and spring tides). As we know tidal rate and direction can be gleaned from any of several manuals every moment of the day. We know that the waters round the Mull of Galloway can reach speeds of 5 knots as can the Mull of Kintyre. Many of the Sounds can reach speeds of 7 knots+ eg the Kyle Rhea and the Cuan the Dorus Mhor, the Corryvreckan: and the Pentland Firth up to 10 knots. The main feature of these tidal rates are that they are totally predictable. All this feeds well into your consultation questions. Why isn't Scotland developing underwater/marine turbines?

Greater consideration should be paid to small hydro-electric schemes. We were recently on holiday and cycled up Strath Rusdale NW of Alness. At the head of the strath, there was a small HEP scheme – an idea which could be replicated without environmental detriment in many areas of Scotland. Glen Lochy has such a scheme. We don't mean returning to the large HEP schemes of the 1950's and 1960's but small can not only blend into the landscape unobstrusively but also be a vital addition to Scotland's energy.

The water in the river Dee in SW Scotland has been re-used for HEP several times as has the river in Glen Lochy before it reaches the sea. Why can't this be replicated on other suitable rivers in Scotland? The fishing lobby can be pacified by the installation of fish ladders. On the w side of the Nith at the Caul, a water turbine could easily be installed with no environmental damage.

I hope that these few comments and observations are of interest.

Kind regards, Margaret & John Burnett