

EDF to develop tidal power

Tuesday, 22 July 2008

EDF has decided to build the first pilot tidal turbine system in France in order to produce electricity from the energy in tidal currents. By 2011 between three and six turbines, with a total capacity of between 4 and 6 MW, will be installed and linked to the grid off Paimpol (Côte d'Armor, Brittany), where the currents are amongst the strongest in Europe. This world first is the culmination of more than four years of consultation and preparatory work along the coasts of Brittany and Normandy. The choice of the Paimpol-Bréhat site was based on technical and financial criteria. In addition elected representatives, environmental protection associations and all those involved with the sea are united in strongly approving the welcome given to the project by local decision-makers.

This pilot scheme will enable the technology to be tested under real conditions, thus allowing its profitability to be assessed and an administrative and legal framework that will lead to the development of a network in France to be drawn up.

In fact energy from tidal currents emits no greenhouse gases and has the advantage of being completely predictable. Therefore in the long term this new source of energy could make a significant contribution to the production of electricity from renewable sources, in particular in the United Kingdom and France, France alone having 80% of the potential for generating electricity from tidal currents in Europe, i.e. 10 million MWh per year.

According to Pierre Gadonneix, EDF's Chairman and Managing Director, 'EDF, which thanks to nuclear and hydraulic power is the energy producer that emits the least CO₂ in Europe, is making developing renewable types of energy one of its priorities. This tidal turbine project, which is in keeping with this policy, is a response to the work done at the French Environment Forum. In fact the power of the sea is a reliable and inexhaustible source of electricity that can help to respond to people's increasing energy requirements and to fulfil international commitments to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Source: Environmental-Expert.com