Finnish multi-national utilities firm Fortum has signed an agreement to secure a berth at Wave Hub, the offshore renewable energy test facility in Cornwall, it was announced today.

The leasing agreement gives Fortum the opportunity to deploy an array of advanced full scale wave power converters in real sea conditions at one of Wave Hub’s four berths.

Fortum is a leading energy company focusing on the Nordic countries, Russia and the Baltic Rim area, with annual sales of EUR 6 billion and employing some 10,000 people. The company has been actively involved in wave energy development since 2007.

Heli Antila, Chief Technical Officer at Fortum, said: “For Fortum it is important to be able to quickly move forward into actual full scale array testing of wave power converters once they have passed the first stages of evaluation.

“The Wave Hub facility offers a unique opportunity to do this. As the site is consented, constructed and grid connected this significantly reduces the time it takes to get devices into the water. This is as much as plug and play as it will get when it comes to power generation.

“From the very beginning, Wave Hub has been very supportive of our project development which is important as this is a testing environment. One wave power solution that we are evaluating to be deployed at the site is ‘the Penguin’, developed by Finnish wave power company Wello.”

Today’s announcement by Fortum follows the news in December that leading UK-based wave energy company Seatricity is to develop a 10MW array over the next two years at Wave Hub. Seatricity plans to deploy its second generation device at Wave Hub during 2014 before building out to a full scale grid-connected array in 2015.
Wave Hub managing director Claire Gibson said: “Wave Hub was designed to provide a crucial link in the development of wave device technology by offering the industry the opportunity for full scale array testing of devices.

"While much of the initial device design and development within the sector has been driven by individual developers, the direct involvement and investment by major utilities companies is likely to play a significant role in realising the potential of wave technology. We are therefore delighted to have one of Europe’s biggest utilities businesses taking a direct interest in the development of wave devices using Wave Hub’s facilities.”

UK Business and Energy Minister Michael Fallon said: “The Government is committed to developing a dependable and sustainable energy mix, and to investing in the ideas and technologies with the strongest potential to create growth and jobs. This partnership combines world-class private-sector skills and expertise with smartly targeted public investment in infrastructure, and could play a significant role in helping Britain commercialise a potent source of power.”

Chris Pomfret, chairman of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) said: "Marine renewable energy is a key focus for the LEP because of the global opportunity it presents for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. For Wave Hub to have attracted a customer of Fortum’s stature is testimony to the unique facilities on offer to the industry in our region and puts us at the forefront of wave energy array development in the world. It is also vindication of the original public sector investment in Wave Hub. It is those sort of bold investment decisions, which are not without risk, that are essential to transforming our economy."

Copy ends
24 February 2014

Notes to Editors

A graphic of Wave Hub is attached for information.

Wave Hub

1. Wave Hub consists of a giant ‘socket’ on the seabed connected to the grid network onshore by an underwater cable. It has consent for wave energy devices to be ‘plugged’ and tested on a scale not seen anywhere before. The project has four berths available and a capacity of 30MW.
2. Wave Hub is publicly-owned by the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) which has set up a stand-alone operating company, Wave Hub Limited, based in Hayle, Cornwall, to manage the day-to-day operation of the testing facility on its behalf.
3. Wave Hub is a £30 million construction project funded with £16.5 million from the European Regional Development Fund Convergence Programme and £13.5 million from the UK Government.
4. Wave Hub is a partner in the South West Marine Energy Park.
5. Follow Wave Hub on Twitter @wavehub, or visit www.wavehub.co.uk

About Fortum

Fortum’s purpose is to create energy that improves life for present and future generations. Catering to the versatile needs of our customers, we generate, distribute and sell electricity and heat, and offer related expert services. Our operations focus on the Nordic and Baltic countries, Russia and Poland. In 2013, Fortum’s sales totalled EUR 6.1 billion and comparable operating
profit was EUR 1.6 billion. We employ approximately 9,900 people. Fortum’s shares are traded on the NASDAQ OMX Helsinki. www.fortum.com

**Information to editors on Fortum’s wave power development:**

Fortum has been actively involved in wave energy development since 2007 and has participated in the development of several technologies. One of these is the Finnish AW-Energy’s WaveRoller™ technology, which has been successfully tested off the coast of Portugal. Last year, Fortum also signed a cooperation agreement with the French marine technology company DCNS to further test and develop AW-Energy’s technology off the coast of Bretagne, France.

In Sweden, Fortum and Seabased AB are currently cooperating around a 10-megawatt wave power park on the west coast of Sweden, in Sotenäs. It is one of the world’s largest wave-power demonstration projects, and will start production during 2014. The technology of choice in Sweden is Seabased’s technology with linear generators anchored to the bottom of the sea.

The new agreement with Wave Hub will be another step in the ambition of Fortum to test new and promising wave power technologies in order to develop new renewable energy for the next generation.

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