

Department of Energy & Climate Change
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Ref No: EIR 12/0161

1 March 2012

Dear

Freedom of Information Act request 12/0161

Thank you for your email of 2 February 2012 where you requested information on the following:

"My request relates to the impact of renewable energy installations such as wind turbines, wind farms and associated structures on wildlife, especially bats and birds. It applies to DECC and all its subsidiary agencies and relates to the last five years:

- A list, including a short descriptive abstract, of all research projects involving your department in any way relating to the impact of renewable energy generation installations, and transmission installations, on wildlife. This includes projects carried out directly by the department or sponsored partially or wholly by the department.
- A list, including a short abstract, of all research projects involving your department in any way relating to the impact of wind turbines, wind farms and associated structures on wild birds, bats and other wildlife. This should include offshore and onshore installations.
- For each project please list the name and location of the installations and details of the source of funding for the research.
- Has any such research been published in any form including conference abstracts, newsletters, electronic PDFs and so on? If so please include copies.
- Has any such research whether relating to birds or not, been published in, or submitted to, peer-reviewed journals, scientific conference or seminar programmes or any other paper or electronic formats? Please list with a short abstract or description.
- Will any of the current research be published in any form, including peer-reviewed? "

We have considered your request in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) as the information you have sought disclosure of, does in our view, fall within the definition of 'environmental

information' as stated in the Regulations. The disclosure of such information is governed by the Regulations and not by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I note that your request relates to the last five years. The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) was created on 3 October 2008. We are therefore treating your request as relating to relevant recorded information from that date to the present.

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the information you have requested in respect of the impact of transmission installations on wildlife is not held.

The Department has, however, been involved in the following studies which include the possible impact of renewable energy installations on wildlife. All of the below information is publicly available from the listed websites:

- DECC has published a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of its offshore energy plans and programmes (including offshore wind and wave and tidal energy), and includes an assessment of the impact of offshore wind farms on birds. The SEA and accompanying technical and supporting documents can be downloaded from a dedicated website at: <http://www.offshore-sea.org.uk/site/index.php>.
- You may also be interested to know that DECC was part of the COWRIE (Collaborative Offshore Wind Research Into The Environment) partnership project. This funded a number of research reports and best practice guidelines into the impacts of offshore wind. Although the COWRIE partnership no longer exists, historic environmental impact documents can be downloaded from the COWRIE data site at http://data.offshorewind.co.uk/white_papers/.
- In October 2010, DECC published the findings of a feasibility study into Severn Tidal Power. This included the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Options Definition Report and a number of other studies, all of which are available from the National Archive via the following link: http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/meeting_energy/wave_tidal/severn_tidal_power/severn_tidal_power.aspx.
- DECC is jointly funding with Defra and other organisations a project to determine the risks posed to bats by wind farms in the UK. Further information can be found on Defra's research website at <http://randd.defra.gov.uk/>

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to me at the above address.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

