

WA Wave Power Harnessed By UK Company

UK-based Renewable Energy Holdings will invest \$6 million in a commercial prototype of its wave power generator, following successful trials off the Western Australian coast.

REH Chief Executive Mike Proffitt says the company's CETO unit, developed by Western Australian businessman Alan Burns, has produced both electricity and fresh water.

The company will undertake design and engineering for a medium-scale trial using multiple units before moving on to a commercial-sized plant, he says.

"People will then be able to get more comfortable with the technology, see it in action, and then that working unit will be the basis of the business and marketing plan going forward," he says.

The CETO unit sits on the sea bed where it extracts wave energy and delivers this energy to a turbine on shore, producing electricity. In addition, it can deliver water to a reverse osmosis filter for the production of fresh water. This activity is dictated by arbitrage between electricity and fresh water. No fossil fuel is used at any stage of the process, claims the company.

Proffitt says REH, which is listed on London's Alternative Investment Market and whose shareholders include Pacific Hydro (14 per cent) and Perth-based venture capital company Carnegie Corporation (8 per cent), has funding line up for the next stage of the CETO development.

Seven companies have installed wave energy systems producing small amounts of electricity in Scotland, Portugal and Hawaii. Burns says wave energy is more predictable than wind and even 10 centimetre waves are big enough to generate electricity.

[Source esaa news]