



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme

2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories

Scotland – Policy Brief; Existing Policy Baseline



<http://recent.interreg-npa.eu/>



@recent_npa



<https://www.facebook.com/recenteu/>



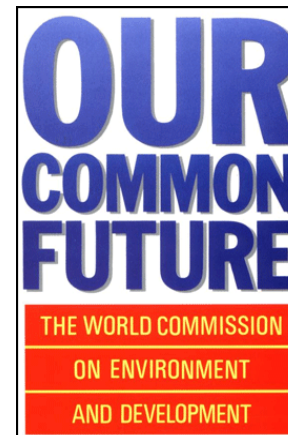
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/recenteu/>

Introduction

On an international level, sustainable development has been driven by the Bruntland Report of 1987 which defined it as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.”

Subsequent to publication of the Bruntland Report there have been several global summits relating to Climate Change, each seeking to put mechanisms in place to control Climate Change and reduce emissions of harmful gases. These summits include the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which agreed international targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a target percentage of 1990 levels and allowed for emissions trading between nations. Several major countries opted out of this, however, including the USA and Canada. More recently a new agreement, in the form of the Paris Agreement of December 2015 saw major nations including the USA sign up to an agreement to, amongst other targets, a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.



The outcome of signing up to such agreements has been seen in the creation of sustainable development strategies cascading down from global to European to national and regional levels.

In Europe, the EU put in place the Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2001 (Revised in 2006 and 2009) as an overarching policy to drive work in this area. All members were required to agree and sign up to the policies and outcomes set out within this policy. The EU SDS sets out several key objectives that form the backbone of the strategy and feed down to local level. The objectives include “To promote sustainable consumption and production patterns” and this is particularly relevant to the work SEAI hopes to carry out.

Another key document at European level is the Europe 2020 document. This is a ten year strategy setting out targets in the areas of employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy with targets to be reached by 2020. This document provides targets at a European level for various topics including green-house gas emissions, level of energy consumption from renewable sources and other topics. Individual Nations can set their own targets, for example the European target for energy consumption from renewable sources is 20% by 2020 but Ireland has set a target of 16%. Latest figures available show that in 2013 Ireland had reached 8%.



Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories

Local Policy Background

Draft Scottish Energy Strategy: The Future of Energy in Scotland

In January 2017 the Scottish Government published a draft energy strategy and opened a consultation which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for the future energy system in Scotland, to 2050. It articulates the priorities for an integrated system-wide approach that considers both the use and the supply of energy for heat, power and transport.

One of the key sections of the strategy is the ambitious new 2030 target of 50% of Scotland's energy consumption to be met by renewable energy. Great progress against these targets have already been made Renewables generated the equivalent of 59.4% of Scotland's electricity requirements in 2015, from just over 10% in 2001. This has mostly through onshore wind showing that there is scope for much further growth via other technologies.

The Scottish Government has been carrying out an extensive range of consultations including on a draft Onshore Wind Policy Statement; Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme; and Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies, and Regulation of District Heating, and Unconventional Oil and Gas at the same time to get a wide range view of all areas of energy issues. All of these will encourage growth of sustainable, renewable secure energy sources.



Community Energy Policy Statement

Scotland is a very progressive nation when it comes to sustainability and renewable energy and has several policy documents related to this area. One of the main documents to consider is the Scottish Government Community Energy Policy Statement published in 2015.

The policy states the Scottish government's aim to see community energy mainstreamed within a whole systems approach, with opportunity for community ownership and control across the full range of components in the system: generating low carbon energy, improving energy efficiency, distributing energy and storing energy.

The community can have a stake in the full range of heat and electricity generating technologies, from onshore wind, to solar PV and solar thermal, hydro, biomass and heat pumps.

However it is noted that community energy faces a number of barriers to its growth: energy projects are often high capital cost and can be subject to delayed grid connection for example and these issues need to be addressed which is what this policy sets out to do.



Local Policy - continued

2020 Routemap For Renewable Energy in Scotland

The Scottish Government recognises that renewable energy is one of Scotland's most important industries, providing jobs, economic growth, and a way to play our part in tackling climate change.

The initial routemap was developed in 2011 and the 2015 document is an updated position on this and notes that there has been significant progress since the initial policy – for example renewables overtook nuclear as Scotland's largest single source of energy in 2014 in part due to the policy work of 2011.

The document analyses progress to date on the 2011 targets – “our target for renewable electricity generation is for renewables to generate the equivalent of 100% of gross annual consumption by 2020, with an interim target of 50% by 2015. Using 2013's gross consumption as a proxy for 2014, around 49.8% of Scotland's electricity consumption came from renewables in 2014, up from 44.4% in 2013. This (provisionally) means that the 50% renewable electricity target for 2015 has almost been met one year ahead of schedule.”



Scottish Business, Energy and Innovation Minister, Paul Wheelhouse opens a 13MW Solar Farm on the Errol Estate, Perth (Picture from Scottish Government)

Renewables Obligation Scotland and Renewable Heat Incentive

The Renewables Obligation Scotland, known as the ROS, is the Scottish Government's main means of increasing renewable electricity generation in Scotland. The ROS works in tandem with identical legislation covering the rest of the UK.

It obliges electricity suppliers to produce a certain number of certificates - ROCs - as a proportion of the amount of electricity which they supply to their customers in Scotland. Alternatively, instead of producing these certificates, suppliers may choose to make a payment to Ofgem (the body which administers the ROS on behalf of the Scottish Ministers).

The Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme in place in Scotland is the same as the scheme in place in the rest of GB but different from the scheme that was in place in Northern Ireland.

The Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a government environmental programme that provides financial incentives to increase the uptake of renewable heat by businesses, the public sector and non-profit organisations.

Eligible installations receive quarterly payments over 20 years based on the amount of heat generated.



Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories

Hydro Nation and Conclusions

Scotland the Hydro Nation

This is a key driver for the future of Scotland in relation to the development of community energy and in particular the incorporation of water assets. The Scottish Government aims to support the development of Scotland’s hydro economy and the enormous potential that this brings.

There are 3 main aspects of the Hydro Nation agenda:

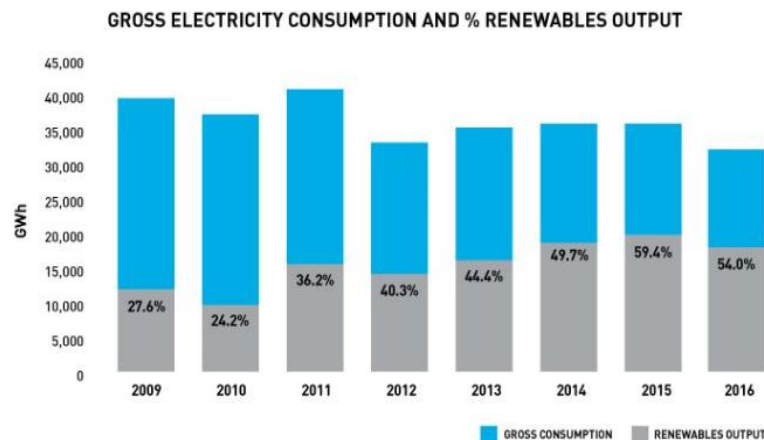
- Utilising Scottish expertise to maximise the economic benefit of our abundant water resources within a sound ecological context by reducing energy use, improving efficiency and creating a low carbon water nation.
- Raising Scotland’s international profile through recognition as an international leader on water management and governance – The first Hydro Nation.
- Developing a water centre of expertise and research with international reach.



Scottish Water is on track to facilitating more energy generation across its estate than it consumes by 2018 – contributing to lower costs for customers and enhanced service resilience. With partners SW are prioritising work in support of Sustainable Rural Communities, developing a comprehensive research and pilot project programme to address key policy challenges of rural service provision and the recovery of priority substances. Hydro Nation has also seen work completed as far afield as Malawi!

Conclusions

Scotland has shown itself to be incredibly active in the areas of sustainability and renewable energy and especially where these relate to community led energy schemes. The Scottish Government has set a range of challenging targets – such as 50% of energy consumption being met by renewable sources by 2030 – and has shown good progress in attempting to achieve



Source: Scottish Government - Energy Statistics Summary

Indeed, as the table to the left shows, in both 2015 and 2016 over 50% of energy consumption was met by renewable sources showing that the policies being put in place are bearing fruit.

Scotland has shown a willingness to embrace alternative technologies and make efforts to use these disruptive technologies to ensure energy security. The proportion of renewable energy in Scotland sits at 42% versus 25% in the UK overall in 2015. Many of these policies could be flagged up as potential best practice for other regions looking to attain similar levels of success.

