

Woodshed to power Britain

Melbourne-based alternative technology company, Woodshed Technologies, was recently granted a UK patent for a novel marine tidal energy system that can provide clean, reliable electricity. Together with two other Australian companies, it intends to co-develop British tidal energy facilities.

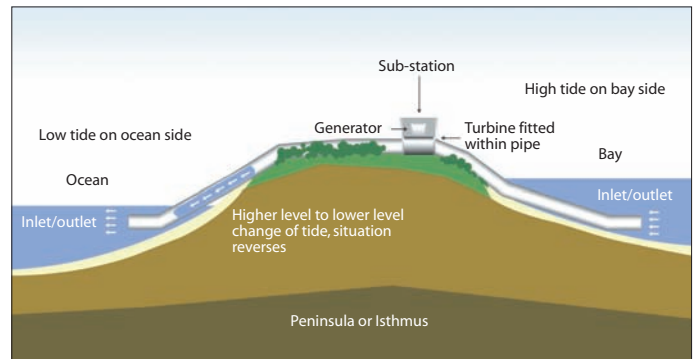
Woodshed's Tidal Delay® tidal power technology utilises an existing land formation, such as a peninsula or isthmus, that creates a tidal barrier separating moving, rising and falling bodies of seawater. As the seawater on each side of the natural barrier rises and then falls, Tidal Delay® captures the energy resulting from the difference in water levels across the barrier, using proven hydro-electric technology in a novel configuration.

The company is working together with fellow Australian

companies Lloyd Energy Systems and SMEC Developments to develop and implement combined Tidal Delay®/Lloyd Energy Storage System projects in Britain, supporting local engineering firms in the design and construction phases of the project.

The three companies will team up with a number of UK firms and technical institutions to investigate potential sites for plants in the UK.

Ideal conditions for the world's first pilot plant for Tidal Delay® apparently exist on the west coast of Scotland and possibly Wales. The pilot plant-site study, planned for this year, will determine the commercial viability and local acceptance of the chosen site, before the construction of a 1–5 MW range commercial plant in 2006/07.



The Tidal Delay® generator harnesses power from sea level rise and fall. Woodshed Technologies Pty Ltd

Woodshed Technologies Managing Director, Steve Hastings, said the Tidal Delay® technology will provide predictable, clean electricity day after day for decades. 'It won't create environmentally obtrusive man-made barrages, flood ecosystems or interfere with shipping channels.'

Woodshed Technologies was one of the first Australian companies to benefit from the UK Trade & Investment's

Global Partnership Programme, a free service that matches companies with unique and world-class technologies with partners in the UK.

Woodshed Technologies' UK patent adds to existing patents in Australia and the US for Tidal Delay®. Patents are pending in other countries.

More information:
www.woodshedtechnologies.com.au

Tasmania's tourism future brightens

Tourism looks set to be a big beneficiary of Tasmania's new \$250 million Community Forest Agreement package, announced by the Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments in May, to increase the state's reserves of old-growth forest.

As well as promising to further protect internationally significant areas of the Tarkine and Styx valleys, the two governments have pledged \$4 million over the next two years to improve visitor facilities in Tasmania's forest areas, and \$1 million towards developing bushwalking tracks in the Tarkine region.

Clare McFarlane, Chair of Australia's leading ecotourism body, Ecotourism Australia, said the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement was a good initial step in the right direction, offering a promising platform for even further growth in the state's flourishing ecotourism industry.

'Tasmania is already one of the great eco destinations in the world,' Ms McFarlane said.

'And with the increased protection of the old-growth forests in Tarkine and Styx valleys, there's absolutely no reason why

these areas can't have the same drawcard potential as the iconic, world-renowned Redwoods National Park in California,' Ms McFarlane said.

Ecotourism Australia defines ecotourism as 'ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.'

Ms McFarlane referred to the effect of the growing Tasmanian industry saying 'It's our hope that ecotourism is seen as a positive future for these regions.'

'The Tahune Forest AirWalk, a Forestry Tasmania initiative, is a classic example of an ecotourism venture that has breathed new life into Tasmania's southernmost communities.'

Ms McFarlane highlighted that the Tasmanian government now needed to act swiftly to take advantage of the publicity the Tarkine and Styx valleys had gained over the years.

'These Tasmanian old-growth forest areas are now household names owing to the massive exposure they've received



Scenery worth travelling for. Ecotourism Australia says Tasmania can look forward to an increase in jobs in the tourism industry. Suzanne Long

through the conservation battles.

'Millions of dollars in free marketing have therefore practically been gifted to the state – you couldn't ask for anything more if you were trying to build a tourism destination.'

'The key now is to capitalise on this exposure by developing and investing money in tourism infrastructure which will be ultimately converted into jobs.'