

REVISION 2010

ESTABLISHING COUNTY/SUB REGIONAL TARGETS FOR RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY DEVELOPMENT TO 2010



FINAL REPORT JUNE 2004

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&
THE SOUTH WEST REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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REVISION 2010 - FINAL REPORT

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REvision 2010 is a project funded by the Government Office for the South West, in partnership with the South West Regional Assembly. The project follows on from the South West regional resource assessment carried out by Terence O'Rourke and ETSU, also funded by the Government Office for the South West and published in 2001. The Terence O'Rourke study provided the impetus behind the adoption of a regional target within Regional Planning Guidance.

REvision 2010 seeks to secure greater support for renewables within the region by encouraging the adoption of county or sub regional targets for the development of renewable electricity up to 2010. The project assumes seven county/sub regional areas including Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, former Avon and Gloucestershire.

1.1 The Consultation Process

The setting of the county/sub regional targets has been led by a full consultation process that has included county, unitary and district officers and members, the renewable energy industry, environment/landscape NGOs, energy NGOs, community groups and other interested parties.

The consultation process has included:

- Pre consultation meetings – to build strategic buy in at regional level and raise the profile of the project at sub regional level
- A stakeholder survey – outcomes used to help plan the consultation workshops and flag up key issues
- Consultation workshops – outcomes used to help develop draft target scenarios/ranges for further consultation
- Regional conference – to provide snapshot of progress and to initiate discussion on key issues affecting the delivery of the targets arising out of the consultation
- Follow up meetings in each county/sub region to facilitate the adoption of the targets by county and unitary authorities in each area.

The project has also provided technical inputs into the consultation process that have included:

- Sub regional resource mapping to identify potential for renewable electricity capacity in each area
- Target ranges for installed renewable electricity capacity to illustrate what might be achievable in each area

Alongside this project, Government Office for the South West also contracted Land Use Consultants to carry out a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for onshore wind and biomass in the South West. This enabled REvision 2010 to integrate landscape issues within the development of the target ranges.

These technical inputs have provided a framework for debate that has allowed participants to test their ideas against what is technically, economically and environmentally feasible in their own areas.

The response to the consultation process has been very positive. The region has given a clear steer in terms of support for renewable electricity and the development of targets to 2010. In addition to providing the foundation on which progress can be made in establishing the sub regional targets, the consultation process has also brought about greater understanding and awareness of:

- the need for renewable electricity
- the need for targets and the role they can play in promoting renewable electricity
- the opportunities and constraints for renewable electricity technologies within the South West
- the role that local authorities in particular can play in creating a supportive climate for renewable electricity
- the constraints on local authorities in creating a supportive climate for renewable electricity
- the opportunities and constraints facing the South West in meeting the 2010 targets
- the links between renewable electricity and the wider sustainable energy agenda

In all of the debate, a key theme has been the need for trust, whether it is between the local authorities and the industry or the industry and local communities. Renewable electricity of any scale is a relatively new thing to the region, with the exception of Cornwall, where the majority of the developments were early wind turbines. As a result it is not always clear what meeting the targets will mean in practical terms. Fear of the unknown is a powerful negative driver. Future work should focus on approaches that increase the understanding amongst all stakeholders of how renewable electricity will affect them.

1.2 The Targets

As of June 2004, targets have been adopted or approved in Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall and the former Avon. Devon and Cornwall's target has been approved by members within the modifications to their Structure Plan, though they still have to go for a final consultation before the Plans are adopted. Dorset's target has been approved by members within policy as part of Dorset's deposit Structure Plan, though it has a lot further to go than Cornwall or Devon's plan before adoption. Gloucestershire's target has been incorporated into the modifications to their Structure Plan which will be reviewed by members in July.

All areas are also now in the process of developing renewable energy/climate change strategies and/or associated action plans, which can also provide added weight to the target. More importantly these strategies provide the mechanism for supporting the target's successful delivery.

These targets are summarised in figure 1 below. The analysis shows that the existing regional target represents roughly a half way point within the range expressed from summing the target ranges in each of the seven areas.

The technology that has been hit the hardest in negotiations as part of the adoption process has been energy from waste using advanced thermal treatment. The short timescale to 2010, existing waste contracts and waste plans, and the lack of proven commercial examples of the technology all contrive to further constrain this option in some areas.

Throughout the South West as a whole there are just over 2 million homes. Reaching the lower end of the target range could therefore supply electricity to the equivalent of nearly a third of the homes in the South West.

The targets are not technology specific but for renewable electricity as a whole. This provides the flexibility for individual areas to respond to the opportunities as they arise rather than predetermining the technology mix in advance. However within the 2010 timeframe the principal technologies which are likely to deliver significant levels of renewable electricity are onshore wind, biomass and energy from waste.

For a full discussion of these targets and their implications please see sections 4.8 and 7.2 to 7.9.

Figure 1: Summary of target ranges and their status

Status of Relevant Policy/Strategy Development	Causes of Variation Between Draft Target Ranges and Adopted Target Ranges	Basis of Adoption		Draft Target Ranges (MW)	Adopted Target Ranges (MW)	Electricity Generated (GWh)	Equivalent homes supplied
		For Adopted Target	Equivalent				
Former Avon	35-52	35-52	171-250	42,750-62,500	Adopted by JSPTU Committee	None	Planning to develop joint SPG on renewable energy
Cornwall	93-108	93-108	367-407	91,750-101,750	Approved by members as mod's to structure plan to go for consultation	None – though County will be highlighting lower end of the range within their structure plan as being more likely to be met	County sustainable energy strategy and planning guidance currently being finalised.
Devon	136-166	151	623	155,750	Approved by members as mod's to structure plan to go for consultation	County selected figure as mid range. On the basis that the possible contribution from energy from waste was considered unlikely to be met. Assumed top end of wind range.	County renewable energy strategy completed
Dorset	64-84	64-84	295-347	73,750-86,750	Approved by Joint structure plan Committee	None	County renewable energy strategy under development
Glos	41-57	40-50	183-209	45,750-52,250	Included within mod's to structure plan to be considered by members	Contribution from energy from waste discounted. However the bottom end of the resulting range was also increased.	County renewable energy strategy under development
Somerset	61-81	61-81	359-412	89,750-103,000	Adopted by Full Committee	None	County renewable energy strategy complete. Planning to develop climate change strategy
Wiltshire	70-90	65-85	296-348	73,750-87,000	Adopted by Cabinet Committee	Contribution from energy from waste considered unlikely.	County renewable energy strategy under development
Offshore	56	56	153	50,000			
South West	555-694	563-665	2,796	623,250-698,750			

Note: Draft target ranges were presented as part of the Revision 2010 consultation process to stimulate debate. Adopted target figures have been adopted by the different areas as outlined within the table.

1.3 The Next Steps

1.3.1 *Regional locational guidance*

Publication of the regional locational guidance intended to be part of this project was initially held up by the delay in publishing PPS 22, the revised national guidance on renewable energy. Whilst PPS 22 is now out for consultation, the technical guidance initially planned to be published with it was not issued. As a result there is still debate underway within the Government Office and the Regional Assembly as to the appropriate form of regional locational guidance. This will be resolved shortly once there is greater clarity on locational guidance criteria at a national level.

1.3.2 *Targets*

Figure 1 outlines the current status of the targets currently under discussion throughout the region. It is clear that there is still some finalising still to be done. In Devon, Cornwall and Dorset there is still a wider consultation process that their Structure Plans need to go through. In Gloucestershire the modifications to the Structure Plan are still to be reviewed by members. In each of these areas then the process of integrating the renewable electricity targets into the relevant Structure Plans will need to be seen through to an end by officers in each county area.

1.3.3 *Renewable electricity targets and reviewing RPG*

The South West Regional Assembly will be developing the new Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) during the period 2004-2006. Due to the importance of moving forward to hit the 2010 targets it is proposed to develop the chapter covering renewable energy during 2004. This will then be consulted on and adopted by the Regional Assembly in late 2004/early 2005. The draft chapter will then be a material consideration in the development of Local Development Frameworks and in planning decisions by early 2005, but will not become statutory until the whole RSS (including the renewable energy chapter) has been examined in public and is published. The RSS will also need to address the need for policies and targets beyond 2010 as RSS will have a timescale up to 2026. However, due to the rapid changing nature of technology in this sector, there will clearly need to be regular reviews of this part of RSS.

The South West Regional Assembly has stated their intention to carry out a partial review of the current Regional Planning Guidance during 2004, prior to the development of the new Regional Spatial Strategy in 2005. This partial review will include renewable energy and it is expected that the renewable electricity targets outlined here will be integrated into the revised Regional Planning Guidance.

1.3.4 *Supporting strategy development*

The process of developing relevant policy to support the delivery of the target, as also outlined within figure 1, needs to be followed through to completion. In a number of areas this is being supported by GOSW through additional funding and as such, GOSW will continue to be in a position to oversee this process. Encouragingly, the level of commitment from within the local authorities to seeing this process through is very high.

1.3.5 Monitoring progress towards 2010

The South West Regional Assembly is proposing to work with the county sub regions to include progress towards these targets as part of their annual monitoring plans. Regen SW are looking to carry out a monitoring role at a regional level. However, in addition to this, it will be important for reasons outlined within section 7.10 that GOSW and SWRA look to build a definite review point in 2006 into the process.

1.4 Beyond REvision 2010

Within the Interim Report for REvision 2010 a range of ideas for future work were recommended as a result of discussions held during the consultation process within the project. These ideas fell within four key areas crucial to the delivery of the sub regional targets, namely:

- Timescale to 2010 and developing local authority and industry partnerships
- Public acceptability and community partnership/benefits
- Landscape impacts and landscape sensitivity assessment
- Sustainable energy agenda and developing a 2020 time frame

See section 8 for more information on these proposals and progress on achieving them.

Targets once established will be at county level. However, quick progress will need to be made to ensure that the targets begin to influence district councils. District targets might have some value, but could also cause delay whilst they are established and could therefore become counterproductive. There is a strong case to move to encouraging positive Local Development Frameworks (Local Plans) through enhancing understanding of the opportunities for renewable energy development within district areas, supported by specific Supplementary Planning Guidance. See sections 7.7 and 7.8 for further discussion on these issues.

Extending the 2010 timescale of this study becomes increasingly important in the wake of the government's decision to extend the Renewables Obligation to deliver 15% electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2015. In addition, it is likely that the 2020 aspirations in the Energy White Paper will be firmed up into targets in due course. Importantly this will not mean a proportional increase in the most important technologies in terms of scale, as considered here, biomass, onshore wind and energy from waste. It is likely that other technologies like wave and tidal stream and solar PV will become increasingly important as their unit costs fall.