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Smith hails EU windfall for Scotland's energy sector

Press release by SNP MEP Alyn Smith

SNP MEP **Alyn Smith** has today hailed news that the European Commission has approved a series of renewable energy projects that will receive over €1.5 billion from the EU's economic recovery fund, bringing just over GBP 100 million to Scotland. Two Scottish projects have won through, the Aberdeen Offshore windfarm and a further project to upgrade the interconnector between Shetland and the mainland, adding in a connection platform to facilitate future development. The projects will receive GBP 36million and GBP 67million respectively.

Smith said:

"This proves the benefits of real engagement with the EU process. We have long said that Scotland's glittering renewable energy potential is the best in the EU, and these grants will help build infrastructure which will then create a momentum for further development. These grants will create real jobs in the real economy, at a time when the London government's stewardship of the economy has made them all the more important.

"While I'll confess I think the process could have been rather more transparent, this has been an open secret for weeks, I'm glad that it is now official and we can get on with the job of identifying more projects to promote. Likewise it is unfortunate that the CCS project at Longannet was unsuccessful in this round, but there will be others.

"We have put a lot of time and energy into promoting Scotland as Europe's green hub, and it is bearing fruit. The energy officials in the European Commission are in no doubt that in Scotland they have an enthusiastic and constructive partner, and this will bring us real benefits. There is no question that a great deal of investment will need to go into the infrastructure necessary to allow the renewable market to flourish, and I have long said that this will need to be government led. These two projects are a step in the right direction."

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