

New website provides comprehensive picture of wave energy trials

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Information collected during impact assessment activities at wave energy test centres across Europe is to be released through a new website. The site is designed to present detailed information to a non-technical audience, and will feature statistics on areas such as wave data, marine mammals, sea birds and reef ecology.

It is targeted at anyone involved with the [wave energy](#) industry, including developers, environmental consultants, regulating authorities, stakeholders and policy makers.

The data management platform contains a wide range of information from six sites across western Europe, which are part of the Streamlining of Ocean Wave Farms Impact Assessment (SOWFIA) network coordinated by Plymouth University.

Professor Deborah Greaves, a member of the SOWFIA board and Director of Plymouth University's COAST Lab, said: "The wave energy industry faces technical challenges before proving itself as a reliable energy source at commercial scale. Coupled with this is a complex regulatory and administrative framework, which is not fully reflective of the needs of the ocean energy industry. The new platform is a key tool developers can use to comply with the EU [Environmental Impact Assessment](#) Directive, which requires significant amounts of environmental data to support informed decision making and future management."

The SOWFIA project draws together 10 partners across seven European countries, including academic and commercial bodies, who are actively involved with planned wave farm test centres. This includes sites off the coasts of the UK, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, France and Sweden, and the partners also include the European [Ocean Energy](#) Association in Belgium.

Its aim is to provide recommendations and streamline impact assessment processes, thereby helping to remove legal, environmental and socio-economic barriers to the development of offshore power generation from waves.

Professor Greaves added: "The platform facilitates instantaneous access to the information collected from diverse sources and enables complex enquiries to be carried out. The database can be interrogated to select projects based on parameters such as their distance from the coast, the technologies at the site or the elements of monitoring they are carrying out."

The platform was launched in Brussels last week.

More information: [More about the SOWFIA project](#)

Provided by University of Plymouth

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