

**SEPN NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2007**

Welcome to the February 2007 SEPN newsletter. Recent developments include:

Seeing the science of climate change in action - Wicks visits Antarctica

On the eve of International Polar Year, Science and Innovation Minister Malcolm Wicks visited British Antarctic Survey's Rothera Research Station from 20-25 February. International Polar Year, which runs from 2007-08, will be the greatest international scientific collaboration on global climate change for at least 50 years. During the visit the Minister had an opportunity to see first-hand the prestigious UK Government funded facility that carries out world-leading research into global environmental issues.

At Rothera he learnt how human impact on the planet is observed in Antarctica, from the discovery of the ozone hole to the unique record of the Earth's past climate found in ice cores, through to the impact that Antarctica has on the global climate system. For further information see the joint DTI/British Antarctic Survey press notice below.

[Press Notice](#)**Climate change film distributed to all secondary schools**

The powerful Al Gore film "An Inconvenient Truth" will form part of a pack on climate change sent to every secondary school in England, Environment Secretary David Miliband and Education Secretary Alan Johnson announced on 2 February.

The DVD will go to 3,385 secondary schools in England. It will be part of a Sustainable Schools year of action to support all schools to become models of sustainable best practice. Other tools and support being produced include teacher resource packs, a pupil "detective kit", guidance for bursars and governors and a new Teaching award.

The Sustainable Schools programme sets out a framework for schools to become models of sustainable best practice – in terms of teaching and learning; the impact of the school, pupils and staff on the environment; and the links of the school with the local community and wider world. This academic year is a year of action on sustainable development in schools. During the year, a suite of materials will be produced to help embed sustainable development in the schools and the curriculum. Further information on Sustainable Schools and the year of action can be found on the Teachernet website (link below).

[Teachernet website: Sustainable Schools](#)**Greater Gabbard wind farm announced**

A wind farm with the power to supply clean electricity to over 415,000 homes, more than all the demand in Suffolk, was announced by the DTI on February 19.

The Greater Gabbard (GG) scheme supplying 500MW through 140-turbines will cut CO2 emissions by 1.5m tonnes a year - the equivalent of

taking 350,000 cars off the road. The project is being developed by the companies Airtricity and Fluor.

It will be placed close to two shallow sandbanks - the Inner Gabbard and the Galloper - around 23km (12 miles) from the Suffolk coast. The sites will occupy an area of nearly 150 square kilometres within the outer Thames Estuary strategic wind farm area.

For further information see the press notice below.

[Press Notice](#)

World's first wind and gas offshore energy project given green light

A unique dual energy scheme to be sited off the Cumbrian coast was given the go-ahead on 8 February by Energy Minister Lord Truscott.

The Ormonde project from Eclipse Energy will be sited 10KM from Walney Island near Barrow in Furness. This innovative hybrid development has the potential to generate up to 200MW of electricity with almost half coming from the wind farm comprising up to 30 turbines. This is enough clean energy for around 70,000 homes. When the wind isn't sufficient, power will still come via conventional gas sources pumped from two fields in nearby Morecambe Bay for which DTI approval has also been sought. For further information see the press notice below.

[Press Notice](#)

£800,000 project to create 'greener' air-conditioning in planes, trains and buildings

It was announced on 12 February that the UK Government is funding a consortium to help develop 'greener' air-conditioning systems, which are more energy efficient, cost effective and environmentally friendly for planes, high-speed and underground trains and buildings.

Adoption of aircraft-style 'air cycle' air-conditioning technologies in buildings would eliminate emissions from conventional hydro fluorocarbon, or greenhouse gases.

Air traffic is forecast to double over the next 15 to 20 years, so this project is of vital importance. A reduction of only 10% in the fuel burn for heating and ventilating air for the 25 year lifetime of the current fleet could reduce emissions of CO2 by 14.4 Mega tonnes, the same energy usage as 2,526,315 homes.

The £800,000 two-year research and technology project, named New Environmental Control System Technology, or NECST, will create the technology needed to develop the air-conditioning systems.

Further information on the partner organisations can be found on the websites below.

[Honeywell Aerospace](#)

[BRE](#)

[Goodrich](#)

[GKN Aerospace](#)

[University of Manchester](#)

[Airbus UK](#)

