

AEA to assess potential for Bioenergy in Northern Ireland

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AEA Technology, one of the world's leaders in the field of climate change and energy consultancy, has won a contract to carry out an assessment of the potential for bioenergy development in Northern Ireland.

The work, commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment on behalf of the Bioenergy Inter-Departmental group, will be completed by mid-March. It will inform the development of a cross departmental bioenergy strategy later in 2008 on how the region can sustainably increase the production and use of bioenergy.

Whilst Northern Ireland is a big exporter of food, thanks to an agricultural based economy, nearly all of its energy is imported. There is a good potential to produce bioenergy using existing by-products from agriculture, livestock farms, food industry, wood industry and forestry.

There is also the possibility to grow crops specifically for energy production. Examples would be Willow Short Rotation Coppice, to provide energy for industrial and commercial use, and oil seed rape or wheat to produce biofuels for transport.

Dr Prab Mistry from AEA, who is heading up the project, commented: "This is an interesting project which will clarify the opportunities for bioenergy in Northern Ireland and could be replicated for other regions. We are excited to be playing a leading role in helping Northern Ireland develop more sustainable and secure energy sources."

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Notes to Editors:

AEA Technology is one of the world's leaders in the field of climate change and energy consultancy - operating in the UK, Europe, the US and China. It is the leading provider of advisory services to the UK Government and works extensively with the EU and major private sector organisations. With internationally renowned expertise in air quality and climate change, carbon management, resource efficiency and the environmental impacts of transport, AEA employs many world leading experts and provides a high-level of policy consultancy and a range of technical services to its public and private sector clients.

In October 2007, AEA was voted by environmental consultancy customers across the UK, as Best Consultancy for Climate Change and Renewables at the prestigious EDIE Awards.

For more information please go to www.aeat.com