## Ecodyfi's response to the Renewable Energy Route Map for Wales

Ecodyfi is a third sector organisation facilitating community regeneration and sustainable development in the Dyfi Valley. We have a track record in community based renewable energy developments (among other things), including helping the establishment of the hydro scheme at Maesglas (Mallwyd) and the two wind turbines of Bro Dyfi Community Renewables Ltd at Pantperthog.

We welcome the Route Map as representing a significant step forward to a more sustainable Wales.

We wish to comment on the following extracts from the consultation document.

**3.11** The greatest carbon emission savings arise from the use of locally grown biomass for the local generation of heat or electricity or in a combination. There is considerable potential for reproducing the community scale plants already common in central Europe with positive benefits for community development. **3.18** Our interim analysis indicates that ... a policy which gives highest priority 'to local biomass for local energy production' is likely to meet most sustainable development objectives.

Yes, we agree completely with these statements.

## 3.12 We propose to:

- support the development of community heat and power units under a new wood energy business scheme which could be funded through EU Structural Fund programmes:
- provide advice through the newly formed Sustainable Energy Network on opportunities for community heat and power schemes across Wales;

The support should not be restricted to combined heat and power schemes in the way these sections imply. There is significant potential for community scale heat only biomass schemes.

- > CHP is not feasible where the grid is very weak (and cannot export the electricity).
- Nor is it appropriate where a large scale development would be out of keeping with the properties taking the heat. Although the Talbot's unit is promising, micro scale electricity generation from biomass is not yet a mature technology so CHP units have to be quite large.

Dinas Mawddwy, Corris and Abergynolwyn are three communities in mid Wales with aspirations for wood fuelled district heating schemes. Such schemes have excellent potential for raising awareness and public support (for renewable energy more generally) as well as for carbon reduction, but need capital and support from the public sector. The Forestry Commission and Gwynedd Council are alongside ecodyfi in helping to move the Dinas Mawddwy proposal forward.

- **5.3** The main concern for new hydro schemes in rivers is their impact on water abstraction and on fish movements. This is regulated by the Environment Agency. We will:
- explore with the Environment Agency Wales the scope for enabling more inriver local schemes.
- assist the development of community hydro power proposals using new Convergence funds.

Good. The conflict between the policies for carbon reduction and watercourse protection continues to frustrate those wishing to see more micro hydro in-river schemes.

## 7.13 We will:

• develop, with partners, a strategic bid for a Convergence Fund project aimed at delivering a series of community scale wind energy generation projects across the eligible area.

Excellent. We would prefer such a support scheme not to be technology specific i.e. to include other renewable energy technologies such as micro hydro and biomass in its scope.

- **8.3** Under the auspices of a new National energy efficiency and saving plan (on which there will be a separate more detailed consultation later this year) we will take forward:
- The Sustainable Energy Network (SEN) The Energy Saving Trust has just launched its initial Sustainable Energy Network service for Wales, which the Assembly Government has helped fund. The SEN in Wales will expand the current service to offer advice to a wider audience of householders, communities and micro-businesses on energy efficiency. The Sustainable Energy Network of Wales' wide advice centres will also offer a greater scope of guidance, including green homes programmes, micro-generation and transport issues.
- Smart Meter Installations
- Higher standards through devolved Building Regulations would be aimed at delivering the aspiration for all new buildings to be zero carbon by 2011.

These are all positive moves that should be progressed quickly. The SEN should be adequately resourced to deliver effective support to the "wider audience", not simply to "offer a greater scope of guidance".

## 8.5 We will:

- issue planning guidance to make micro generation easier to install; in particular for:
- Roof mounted solar heat and solar (photo-voltaic) electric panels

Please hurry!