

29 March 2012 Last updated at 13:57 GMT

## One third of Scotland's energy needs coming from renewables



Wind turbines form part of the Scottish government's renewable energy strategy

Scotland is now generating more than a third of its electricity from renewable sources, according to new figures.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change statistics said the amount generated in Scotland rose by 45% last year to 13,750 Gigawatt hours (GWh).

The Scottish government's target for 2011 was to meet 31% of the country's energy needs from renewables.

If consumption remains at the 2010 level, they will have accounted for 35% of electricity needs.

Energy Minister Fergus Ewing said "great progress" was being made towards the longer-term goal of meeting the equivalent of 100% of gross annual electricity demand from renewables by 2020.

"Projects representing £750m of investment were switched on in 2011, with an investment pipeline of £46bn," he said.

"Scotland is a genuine world leader in green energy and our targets reflect the scale of our natural resources, the strength of our energy capabilities and the value we place on creating new, sustainable industries."

"Yet again the renewables sector in Scotland has grown further and faster than predicted"  
Niall Stuart Scottish Renewables chief executive

The figures were published the day after experts told the Scottish Parliament's economy, energy and tourism committee that they did not think the 2020 target would be reached.

Linda Greig, director of commercialisation and business development at Carnegie College, said Scotland did not have the necessary skills base.

Professor Sean Smith, from Edinburgh Napier University, voiced concerns about other sectors

pulling away some of the resources, adding: "It is a slow car crash waiting to happen."

However, WWF Scotland argued that the figures released on Thursday showed Scotland was on track to reach the 2020 target.

Niall Stuart, chief executive of Scottish Renewables, added that the interim target of 31% for 2011 had been seen as ambitious when it was set.

"Yet again the renewables sector in Scotland has grown further and faster than predicted, achieving 35%, and that's why we are confident we can meet the 2020 target," he said.

However, he warned that investment in renewables was still needed.

He said: "Government must continue to focus on delivering grid connections, getting the right balance in the planning system, and supporting investment in clean energy.

"By doing so we will make further progress in cutting emissions and securing more jobs for the future."