

## SDC 2019 Annual Meeting Abstracts

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**Title: Building new institutions for preserving knowledge and reducing conflicts in Coastal Regions: the experience of Ocean Energy**

The development of the Marine Renewable Energy (MRE) industry is part of the industrial strategies of several global coastal regions, from U.S. states (e.g. Ohio) to regional economic blocs (e.g. the European Union) and nations (e.g. U.K.). Because of its spatial nature, MRE bring together a range of relationships across people, sea, and energy, from developers to local communities and policymakers. These relationships call for diverse socio-political approaches, moving beyond an oppositional mindset to one that can establish an inclusive community around MRE development. Using the context of the North Atlantic Ocean, results from a stakeholder panel held in February 2018 at the University of Edinburgh, and a specific case study from the Scotland-Ireland energy region, this work explores how combining regional energy use with regional institutional memories to facilitate the diffusion of MREs. We find that sustained community engagement and advocacy is crucial to developing an industry whose impacts are likely to be felt before its social benefits materialize. Crucially, stakeholders highlight how local communities could be supported by Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) research in creating new mythologies, memories, and imaginaries through which MRE technologies become an integral part of their culture, as well as part of their biophysical environment. From the case study, a new regional economic paradigm emerges for promoting the full implementation of MREs in the North Atlantic Ocean, one that combines public financing with the broader concept of “Blue Economy”. Finally, A complex physical, political, and legal environment provides the context for these new marine energy technologies, and its development provides opportunities for SSH research to address issues around the sea and to integrate into the design of new marine energy seascapes.