

## Building a sustainable blue economy



The renewable energy and aquaculture group Simply Blue has selected Esri's ArcGIS system to help it advance renewable wind and wave energy projects and leverage ocean resources in an ethical and sustainable manner. ArcGIS will replace the organisation's previous open source GIS and be used to help narrow down the search for suitable sites for floating wind farms and wave power projects. In the future, Simply Blue plans to use ArcGIS to share data in real-time with consultants and clients, improving its collaboration with these third parties. The organisation also aspires to take advantage of the interactive, online capabilities of ArcGIS to help it engage with stakeholders and communities, to keep everyone well informed about proposed new marine developments.

Simply Blue is simply passionate about oceans and the huge potential that they offer for renewable energy generation and sustainable aquaculture. Working with partners, the organisation pioneers marine development projects, such as floating wind farms and wave power, with the aim of optimising the ocean's vast resources in an ethical manner. ArcGIS is now set to play a key role in helping Simply Blue to achieve this vision and build a sustainable blue economy.

Simply Blue had successfully used open source geographic information system (GIS) software as a start-up business. However, with growth, and the formation of strategic partnerships with traditional energy companies like Shell and Total, came the need for a more robust, full-featured GIS platform.

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“ We needed a reliable GIS that would meet our immediate requirements, but also support us in achieving our longer term goals ”

Sam Bouma, Energy Resource Modeller and Data Specialist at Simply Blue

“ We selected ArcGIS because it has credibility. It is used by lots of other companies in this industry, so contractors and partners are familiar with it. ”

Sam Bouma, Energy Resource Modeller and Data Specialist at Simply Blue

Initially, ArcGIS will be configured to support decision making in house. It will be used, for example, to help the organisation identify the best locations for wind turbine fields and assess how productive they might be. ArcGIS is ideally suited to the challenge of analysing vast amounts of data and narrowing down a shortlist of sites, based on a wide range of commercial and environmental criteria.

Looking further ahead, Simply Blue aspires to take advantage of some of the advanced interactive mapping features of ArcGIS to help it collaborate more effectively with consultants and clients. Its goal is to be able to view and share geospatial data in real-time and leverage GIS, especially in the planning and development phase of new sustainable energy projects, which is a focal point for Simply Blue as an early stage developer . “We don’t live in a paper world anymore,” Bouma says. “Being able to interact with maps to open up and explore data on demand creates all kinds of opportunities.”

In addition, Simply Blue dreams of using ArcGIS to help it communicate projects to stakeholders and communities. It believes that ArcGIS could, in the future, play a critical role in helping to explain how big wind farms are, where they are and even what they will look like from different vantage points. Bouma eagerly awaits the time when he and his colleagues will be able to use online, interactive maps to reassure fishermen that proposed marine developments are away from fishing grounds and even show people in communities what offshore wind farms will look like from their homes. “ArcGIS will help to open up conversations and avoid any misunderstanding,” he says.

There is rising interest in renewable energy, and Simply Blue aims to be right at the crest of this marine development wave. However, the organisation is also engaged in pioneering aquaculture projects, such as a scheme to create new low-impact salmon farms in Scotland. ArcGIS is likely to play a role in such fishery schemes in the future, as well as other ocean-based sustainability projects not yet conceived.