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Press Release

Mitsubishi and TEPCO visit Oxfordshire for a fact-finding mission into Project LEO

9 January 2020:

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) yesterday welcomed representatives from Mitsubishi Research Institute (MRI) and Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) based in Japan, to discuss the opportunities presented by electric vehicles (EVs) for the transition to net zero carbon emissions.

The £40m Project Local Energy Oxfordshire (LEO) is exploring how the growth in local renewables, EVs, battery storage, vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology and demand side response can be supported by a local, flexible, and responsive electricity grid to ensure value for consumers and opportunities for communities and market providers in Oxfordshire.

Mitsubishi Research Institute and TEPCO visited the Osney Lock Hydro project, which generates clean electricity using the power of the Thames and shares its profits with the local community. TEPCO shared their experience of V2G technology and the opportunities and benefits it can provide to the network and customers. A pilot scheme in Japan has tested a bidirectional charge control system which balances customers' mobility needs with the grid needs.

In Project LEO, V2G modelling is providing the basis for using the built-in energy storage system in EVs to allow EV owners to earn money through providing power capacity to balance demand on the network. EV owners could also take advantage of charging during periods of low demand and pay less through a time of use tariff.

Richard Hartshorn, SSEN's EV Readiness Manager said:

"We were delighted to welcome the teams from Mitsubishi and TEPCO at Project LEO and to share our learnings on vehicle-to-grid technology and flexibility services. We shared our experience of the technical and regulatory issues around flexibility services and how SSEN is working to manage the expected rapid uptake of e-mobility.

"The electrification of transport will be critical if the UK is to meet its 2050 net zero target and projects like LEO will be critical in understanding how opportunities this transition presents can be maximised for our customers."

Noboru Araki, General Manager at TEPCO said:

“We are visiting the best European projects to understand how other businesses and countries are tackling the challenges of the low carbon transition. We were delighted to visit Project LEO and learn about the initiatives that this includes. We manage electricity networks on opposite sides of the globe but share many of the same challenges around decarbonising efficiently and cost effectively. When tackling the global climate emergency, sharing learnings is vital. We hope that this will be the start of an ongoing international conversation.”

Project Local Energy Oxfordshire (LEO) is one of the most ambitious, wide-ranging, innovative, and holistic smart grid trials ever conducted in the UK. LEO will improve our understanding of how opportunities can be maximised and unlocked from the transition to a smarter, flexible electricity system and how households, businesses and communities can realise its benefits. To find out more, visit https://project-leo.co.uk .

To find out more about Osney Lock Hydro Project please visit www.osneylockhydro.co.uk