

Bunnahabhain zeroes in on distillation process



Bunnahabhain's new biomass energy center is under construction and will be operational by Spring 2022

Whisky producer Bunnahabhain is set to become Islay's first distillery to have a net zero emission distillation process following the installation of a biomass energy center.

The new energy center is powered entirely by forest biomass sourced 15 miles away and spent malt, known as draff, which is a byproduct of distillation.

Julian Patton, Supply Chain Director at Distell International, owner of Bunnahabhain Distillery, said: "This is an exciting new chapter for Bunnahabhain distillery and whisky production on Islay. The Scotch Whisky Association has set a net zero target of 2040 and a lot of work is under way by our team in pursuit of achieving this goal long before this.

"The biomass center makes Bunnahabhain Islay's first distillery with a net zero distillation process, and we're extremely proud, not only of the scale of the project but the entirely locally sourced fueling system, which supports the island's forests and economy."

Luke Maga, Managing Director Global Travel Retail at Distell International, added: "Sustainability has risen rapidly up the global agenda and this is particularly true in travel retail where consumers are increasingly looking to make informed, environmentally friendly purchasing decisions. In a category where differentiation is key, the opportunity to promote Bunnahabhain on the back of such strong sustainability credentials is extremely exciting and gives us a powerful message to take to single malt enthusiasts."

The combination of wood chippings from low value timber felled on Islay and spent malt helps to nurture the island's forests and promote sustainability and biodiversity as existing conifer forests are replanted with mixed hardwood and softwood. Some peat bog that is currently planted will also be restored. Ash from the nutrient rich biomass fuel will then be used as natural fertilizer for the replanted forest, creating a circular model for sustainability.

The £6.5 million (\$9 million) project has been funded by AMP Clean Energy which will own, manage and operate the biomass system. It is currently under construction and will be operational by Spring

2022.

The facility will save approximately 3,500 tonnes of carbon per year – a CO2 saving equivalent to the emissions of 1,800 diesel cars, which is more than the total number of vehicles based on Islay.