

UK firm offers biomass power to remote islands

By **BERNIE CAHILES-MAGKILAT**

Clenergen Corp., a UK-based US-registered public company involved in renewable energy projects, has proposed for the establishment of integrated biomass-based power plants in the islands with an initial 2-MW plant and gradually increasing this to 500-MW power supply by 2014 and by planting --- hectares of beema bamboos to produce woodchips as feedstock to the biomass-based power plant.

Mark Quinn, Clenergen's chief executive officer, is in town to finalize his proposals with the National Power Corp. as its projects would fall under the agency's Small Power Utility Program (SPUG), which allows the electrification to the various small islands in the country not covered by the national power grid.

"We are not creating a big solution for the country but small power plants for the island using renewable energy sources," Quinn said.

Based on its proposal, the company would initially invest \$2 million for the establishment of a pilot 2-MW power plant in one of the SPUGs of

Clenergen is also seeking pioneer incentives with the Board of Investments and securing an endorsement from the Department of Energy.

Quinn said that once all the documentary processes and MOAs have been signed, the company could immediately start planting beema bamboo trees by February or March next year in an 8-acre lot in the island where the power plant would be put up. The company is looking at three islands already for this pilot project. An acre requires 1,000 beema bamboo seedlings.

The high-density beema bamboos can be harvested in two years, converted into woodchips to be used as feedstock for the biomass-based power plant.

After commercial operation of the pilot power plant, Quinn said the company has the option to list in the local stock exchange to help raise the capital for the next project or bring in other investors for their next project or tap other financial institutions. The

company plans to build up a \$50-M global facility for its RE projects.

Quinn assured this new RE biomass-based technology would enable them to supply power to the islands at significantly cheaper

price than the current coal-based power plant.

"We want to be the number three biggest supplier of electricity in this country in ten to 15 years," Quinn said.