

Leo Moggie: Study shows potential use of renewable energy

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MINISTER of Energy, Communications and Multimedia Datuk Leo Moggie said the Government has agreed that renewable energy be included in the country's energy mix which currently comprises oil, coal, gas and hydro. Having studied and agreed on incorporating renewable energy as the fifth fuel in Malaysia's fuel strategy, he said there is now a need to look at the possibility of connecting the power generated by renewable sources to the national grid.

The Government has also estimated that by the end of the Eighth Malaysia Plan in 2005, 5 per cent of the total national electricity consumption will be met through renewable energy resources.

Speaking to reporters after opening the National Stakeholders' Workshop on Grid-Connected Power Generation Using Oil Palm Biomass Wastes in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, he said

oil palm mills should consider extending the power generated using biomass wastes into the national grid.

Grid-connected power generation using palm oil biomass wastes should be considered by mills currently using biomass wastes to generate electricity as these companies may find it feasible and profitable, he said.

The use of renewable energy has been discussed to complement current sources which are both depleting and have environmental impact.

At the opening of the World Renewable Energy Congress last year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the Eighth Malaysia Plan will identify appropriate strategies for the development and utilisation of energy sources as an important component of Malaysia's total energy mix.

In his speech earlier, Leo Moggie said a Malaysian Electricity Supply Industry Trust Account study showed that the potential recover-

able energy from the empty fruit bunches alone is equivalent to 2 million tonnes of oil equivalent.

"This gave the impetus to the electricity supply industry to begin to seriously consider this important resource," he said, adding that Tenaga Nasional Bhd has a subsidiary that is dedicated to the development of renewable energy resources.

The Government, he added, is looking at various energy resources and oil palm biomass wastes offers a huge potential.

A study by the Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development has estimated that the total fuel value of all the oil palm biomass wastes is worth more than RM6 billion a year.

In addition, the hectareage of oil palm cultivation is set to increase by another 40 per cent by the year 2020.

Other sources of renewable energy are photovoltaics (PV), solar, wind, ocean thermal, tidal wave, geotherma and hydrogen.