

04/12/2007 China opts for biomass solution to cut carbon emissions

Text of report in English by official Chinese news agency Xinhua (New China News Agency)

["China Turns To Clean Biomass Solution for Emission Cuts" - Xinhua headline]

Jinan, Dec. 4 (Xinhua) - China has launched eight biomass plants in five leading grain-producing provinces to cut carbon dioxide emissions in electricity generation amid growing global concerns over greenhouse gas and climate change.

The plants, with a total installed capacity of 200,000 kilowatts, are expected to burn 1.6 million tons of stalks annually. They will generate 1.4 billion kw hours of electricity, said Cui Mengshan, the manager in charge of planning and business development at the National Bio Energy Co., Ltd, a subsidiary of the State Grid Corporation of China.

"Compared with coal-fired power plants, these biomass projects are expected to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 800,000 tons annually," he said.

China has been turning stalks into clean energy since last December when the State Grid Corporation launched the first biomass plant in the eastern Shandong Province.

The project, which burns 200,000 tons of stalks annually, has enabled local farmers to profit out of what was traditionally waste.

Figures provided by the local government said the biomass project had brought a total annual income increase of 40 million yuan (5.33 million US dollars) for nearly 50,000 local families.

Similar projects have been launched over the past year in four other grain-producing provinces, including Hebei, Jiangsu, Henan and Heilongjiang.

China's installed capacity of bio-energy electricity is forecast to reach 5.5 million kilowatts by 2010, according to the country's 11th Five-Year Plan 2006 to 2010.

"This means China's carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by 2,200 tons by then," Cui added.

China produces about 660 million tons of stalks from its annual grain production, about 200 million tons of which can be used as clean energy. The stalks were previously burned at the end of the harvest, letting off pollutants that delayed air flights and reduced highway visibility.

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