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**Cuba Boosts Power Generation Through Biomass**

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Havana, Oct 21 (Prensa Latina) Cuba boosts power generation through biomass by building a plant capable of generating 60 megawatts (MW) a day of electricity, revealed a source related to renewable energy sources.

In exclusive statements to Prensa Latina, the manager of logistics and marketing of the building company Biopower S.A., Armando Urquiola, said that the bioelectric plant is being built in the agroindustrial complex Ciro Redondo sugar factory of Ciego de Avila province, could be ready to work by the middle of next year.

According to Urquiola, the project was not exempt of obstacles, but after five years, it is ready to supply raw material for the bioelectric plant, estimated in 1500 tons of biomass per day.

To use invasive plants such as marabou and turn them into electricity, it was necessary to design specific machines that Biopower (joint venture with British, Chinese and Cuban participation) imported mainly from Germany, said the official.

The equipment, already used in Camaguey could supply biomass of marabou to the sugar factory of the complex Ignacio Agramonte to refine sugar, leaving the field ready to make the rows and plant.

In the opinion of the official, three tons of biomass of bagasse for its conversion to electricity, save the cost of one ton of fuel oil to the country.

Urquiola stressed the benefits obtained from the study associated to the use of this form of generation.

With the first technology we had, we left a stretch of land without marabou, but it could not be planted, said Urquiola. Then, to leave the soil as clean as possible, we designed rotors capable of also using biomass from the roots.

This process, besides fertilizing the fields and save fuel, it increases the level of raw material which serves the bioelectric plant, added the official.

In Urquiola's opinion, to use this technology also favors the supply of biomass to sugar factories that need it when the Ciro Redondo plant is generating electricity with the bagasse resulting from its activity.

Once we finish this bioelectric plant, we will build another plant in the sugar Factory Mario Muñoz in Matanzas province, of the same dimensions and similar generation capacity, he detailed.

In the country's energy balance, composed also by contributions of the eolic and solar energy, biomass will represent 14 of 24 percent which will be contributed by renewable energy sources by the year 2030 in Cuba, as that sector's authorities have declared.

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