

## Energy alternatives explored

[By Liberty Dones](#)

Reporter

# SAIPANTRIBUNE.COM

Saturday, June 03, 2006

In view of the skyrocketing prices of fuel, the Fitial administration is now looking at renewable energy sources such as wind and ocean thermal energy conversion.

Lt. Gov. Tim P. Villagomez, who is currently in-charge of the Commonwealth Utility Corp., said he is in discussion with companies that are interested in bringing in needed technologies.

“We are looking at wind energy, OTEC. We are looking at having renewable energy sources. We have sun, water, wind around us. There’s no reason why we should not try to tap these alternative energy sources,” said Villagomez yesterday.

Another alternative energy source known as hydrogenesis, which he said is being done in South America, can be looked at. Hydrogenesis is defined as a process of natural condensation of the moisture in the air spaces in surface soil or rock.

A technology that is being used in Florida, he said, converts waste materials into energy. He said that for every 10 metric tons of waste a day, 33MW of power could be produced.

He said Saipan generates 120 to 200 metric tons of garbage a year.

Meantime, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial who just came back from a trip to Manila and Hong Kong, said that he and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos met with another group interested in power generation.

Inos said this company would visit Saipan middle of this month.

“They will come over to visit and assess the power situation,” he said.

Inos said the company, whose name was not immediately known, would make use of waste materials to produce energy.

“They’ve actually done some preliminary research. They’re saying that we can practically clean up Saipan by turning the waste into energy,” said Inos.

Likewise, Inos said that the company is also willing to bring in three 30-MW engines to Saipan for urgent use.

He said these decommissioned engines are relatively new but are not in use by the Philippines’ National Power Corp.

The government’s efforts to bring in new technologies for power generation come amid a current power crisis on island.

The administration plans to privatize the operations of CUC’s power plants to ensure a reliable and efficient power supply.

Part of this plan is to borrow \$40 million from the NMI Retirement Fund to repair CUC's rundown engines.