

50 SMEs to help commercialise biomass tech

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The Biomass Industries in Malaysia Sustainable Production (Biomass-SP) Project will identify 50 local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to participate in the commercialisation of biomass technology.

Its chairman Tan Sri Ahmad Zaharudin Idrus said that SMEs with proper track records and potential biomass technology for commercialisation will be guided with relevant capacity building and access to funding such as grants, soft loans and venture capital.

"In 2012, we plan to bring 50 European Union (EU) companies to explore biomass technology and business collaboration with local biomass companies," he told reporters at the EU-Malaysia Biomass Stakeholders Forum here today.

The Biomass-SP Project is a collaboration initiative funded by the EU, of which 1.8 million euros have been contributed this year for a four-year period.

Ahmad Zaharudin said the project will provide support for SMEs to adopt sustainable production practices in their activities via direct implementation of good practices such as environmental management, clean development mechanism and carbon footprint reduction.

"It will give the SMEs in Malaysia the cutting edge they need to grow and excel in the biomass industry locally and internationally," he said.

Ahmad Zaharudin said Malaysia was producing a minimum of 168 million tonnes of biomass, including timber and oil palm waste, rice husks, coconut trunk fibres, municipal waste and sugar cane waste annually.

"The full potential for biomass commercialisation in the country remains untapped," he said. According to Ahmad Zaharudin, biomass has good potential to be used in the manufacturing of value added eco-products like bio-plastics, bio-composites, bio-fertilisers, bio-pellets, green building materials and furniture products.

"The generation of renewable energy using biomass as feedstock which adds value to the clean development mechanism activities will spur the green technology sector and contribute to the global climate change mitigation effort," he said. -- Bernama

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