

Sisal-run power plant in place in May

By George Sembony, PST, Tanga, 18-01-2007

The construction of Tanzania's first plant producing biogas and electricity using sisal residue is due to be completed by May this year.

The disclosure was made to a delegation of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) on a tour of the plant.

The plant is being constructed with funding from the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and UNIDO technical support at a cost of US\$ 1.1m/-. CFC is to provide US\$ 900,000/- while UNIDO will give US\$ 200,000/- for the project. Katani Limited is providing US\$ 50,000/- in cash and US\$ 300,000 in kind.

The delegation was led by the Deputy Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Mayra Sanchez Osuna. They visited the Hale Sisal Estate based plant yesterday. The installation of digesters and gas storage tanks at the plant started last week. The delegation also included CFC Senior Project Manager, Mr. Sieste van der Werff.

Chinese and German engineers are constructing the plant in cooperation with engineers from Katani Limited and the Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces.

Osuna said the organization would closely follow up the results of the trial plant with the aim of replicating it in other sisal producing countries. She said the project would establish technical and economic viability of the production of biogas, electricity and bio-fertilizer from sisal waste through the practical demonstration at pilot level.

``This is the first demonstration project for the total utilization of this commodity in an economically feasible and environmentally friendly way,`` she said adding that another positive effect is the possibility to generate electricity in rural areas from locally available renewable source.

SOURCE: *Guardian*