



14th September, 2018 **His Majesty King Tupou VI marked the beginning of the work on Tonga's largest wind farm project worth over 40 million pa'anga in a ground breaking ceremony this morning at Niutoua Village.**

Dubbed as the 1.3 MW Wind Power System, the project is part of Japan's grant aid to Tonga. The new system once completed is expected to cover approximately 8 percent of Tonga's electricity supply.

Ambassador of Japan to Tonga H.E. Mr. Tetsuya Ishii said, "This Wind Power Generation System will be Japan's first-ever Wind Power Generation project under our grant aid scheme, and it is Japan's second major project in the field of renewable energy in Tonga, following the Solar Generation Facility."

He stated that the system together with the solar generation will help Tonga reach its goal by achieving 50% renewable energy by 2020.

"Through this system, the ratio of renewable energy in Tonga's whole power supply will also increase by 6 percent. I also hope this system, as a result of buying less petrol fuel, will further alleviate some of the financial burdens of the Government of Tonga and the TPL."

Mr. Ishii explained that the system consisted of two major components; 5 windmills and the Grid Stabilization.

"The windmills are unique and advanced because they are tiltable which will make them more resilient against cyclones and the effects of climate change."

"The Grid Stabilization System will play a very important role in providing excellent quality electricity which means the un-intermitting provision of electricity that is stable, both in voltage and frequency. When these features are combined, the advanced windmills and Stabilization

System will further improve the lives of the people in Tonga.”

The Minister for Public Enterprises Hon Saia Piukala said: “The groundbreaking ceremony this morning, marks not only another significant milestone in the life of this project, but also tangible progress towards the Government’s overall objective of reducing reliance on costly imported diesel, through substantial investments in renewable energy.”

He stated that more than 91% of Tonga’s overall grid connected electricity demand is supplied by generators powered by imported diesel and an estimated 13 million liters of diesel is used to generate the electricity at a cost of about 10% of the country’s GPD and 15% of the total value of imports.

Hon Piukala said that achieving 50% renewable energy generation and a 50% reduction in diesel consumption by 2020 is a “firm declaration of Tonga’s intent” and an important part of the government’s strategy to “guard against oil price volatility” to reduce Tonga’s carbon emission footprint.

CEO for Tonga Power Limited Mr Setitaia Chen said, “Severe Tropical Cyclones are a yearly risk to Tonga and hence the wind technology chosen has been tested to safely withstand up to a category five cyclone. TC Gita was a category 4.”

He said that Tongan technicians will also receive on the job training from Japanese technicians to ensure that the long-term operation and maintenance of the system are established locally.

CEO for MEIDECC Mr Paula Ma’u told guests that the new system will make a significant contribution towards Tonga’s ambitious renewable energy and energy efficiency targets to be achieved within 15 years.

“It is true that these targets are so ambitious but critically important mitigation measures against the devastating impact of climate change and we have to implement it now for our survival and for the future of our children.”

Specific national energy targets include:

- 50% of electricity generation from renewable sources by 2020, 70% by 2030, and 100% by 2035
- Improve energy efficiency like reduction of electricity line losses to 9% by 2020 and
- 100% access to electricity by 2020

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