

## Company aims to boost wind energy 50%

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Wednesday, October 31, 2012

A new local company is aiming to establish a 24-megawatt wind farm in central Jamaica within a few years.

Clean Alternative Energy Limited (CAEL) is proposing to construct eight three-MW wind turbines in Great Valley Manchester, from which it hopes to sell electricity to the national grid as well as carbon credits to Europe.



CAEL hopes to build three new wind turbines in Great Valley, Manchester.



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Company executives declined to give details on the project financing, but they told the Jamaica Observer that it “will satisfy provisions of Jamaica National Energy Policy that targets alternative energy sources as a part of the country's overall energy mix”.

The Ministry of Energy and Mining has set a target for at least 20 per cent of energy derived from renewable energy sources.

Currently, the 42 MW of wind energy generated by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica-owned Wigton Wind Farm and Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS), represents three per cent of electricity generated in the country.

The project, which is now at the environmental assessment stage, would increase Jamaica’s renewable energy derived from wind by more than 50 per cent.

Wigton had already identified 80 MW more of wind energy potential in Jamaica, and had plans to develop Great Valley in a third round of expansion — having started operations in 2005 and commissioned its 18 MW phase two in 2010. But it said it would consider a third part operator for the build out.

CAEL leased the 124 hectares of land from the National Land Agency for a period of 25 years, even though sections of the property has been earmarked for bauxite mining, while just over 20 farmers presently cultivate 16 to 18 hectares of the proposed site.

The energy company identified 12 sites for its eight turbines, and plans to strategically place the generators “to ensure that turbines are not constructed on sections of the property containing bauxite and to minimise the displacement of farmers”, according to the environmental impact assessment report.

“This will allow the bauxite companies that have mining rights to conduct mining activities in the future without obstruction or hindrance from the wind turbines,” it said.

What’s more, the plan includes the construction of a new access road, which will run around the perimeter of the property and which will avoid farms.

After getting approval from the National Environment and Planning Agency, construction will take place over nine to 12 months.

The life span of the wind turbines is expected to be 20 years.