Wealth Management through Engineering

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SOLAR ENERGY: A STEP TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Before the turn of the century, the idea of switching to solar power as an energy source is an option that is only appealing on speeches. Businesses and individual end-users shun solar energy due to its huge capital expense requirement, with no concurrent savings in electrical cost. However, with increasing government support, advances in technology, and the ongoing paradigm shift to green energy sources, solar power using well-engineered photovoltaic cells may just be the thing of the present.

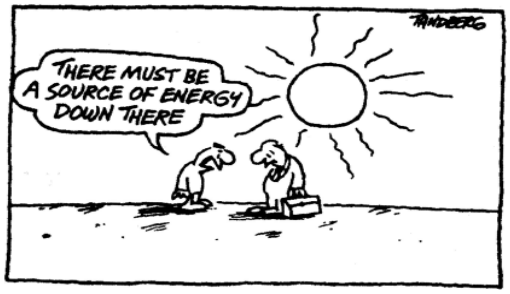
The widespread attention currently enjoyed by renewable energy sources is attributable partly to forecasts of higher energy costs in the future, resulting from limited supply of coal and petroleum. For another, the Fukushima incident in Japan has discouraged the construction of nuclear power plants, which are the most practical source of clean energy. As such, the government issued several mechanisms and incentives, including income tax holidays and other fiscal incentives, net-metering arrangements, and feed-in tariff mechanism, to encourage investments on renewable energy and decrease dependence on fuel. Corporations are also expressing more interest in incorporating renewable energy into their systems to demonstrate corporate social responsibility. Solar power is receiving a whole host of this attention as one of the most reliable and easy to maintain renewable energy sources.

For the Philippines, the potential for solar power as an energy source is great due to its location near the equator. As such, solar insolation, which is the measure of solar radiation received by a particular location over a period of time, can be higher. This translates to higher solar input, which can be converted by a solar facility into energy output or bigger volume of electrical power for the same units of solar panel. This, in turn, provides more opportunities for profit and faster recovery of capital expense.

The task of putting up a solar facility is, however, not as simple as it seems. Several challenges still need to be conquered by potential solar energy users. Two of them are as follows:

1. Despite developments in technological developments and decrease in costs for installing a solar facility, solar energy is still not the cheapest in the market compared to other traditional sources of power like coal, geothermal and petroleum-based power plants.

2. Radiation from the sun is an uncontrollable variable and may easily be affected by seasons, weather and other external developments that can dampen the entry of sun rays in the photovoltaic cells.



On the other hand, the sun can give us more energy than we can use clean and free. With good engineering and financial planning, these challenges can be addressed to make solar power a feasible energy solution. It is always advisable to consult an expert in determining the best financing or contract arrangement, and finding the best location, design, and components to suit each client's needs. For these needs, Exergy Phils. Corporation can be your perfect partner. With the help of its various affiliates and strategic partners, Exergy can guide you towards achieving clean and green energy solutions using the sun as an energy source.

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