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Sucrogen to increase renewable energy capacity

Sucrogen, the sugar and renewable energy business of CSR Ltd, has increased its renewable energy capacity, today announcing construction of an expanded electricity cogeneration facility at its Victoria sugar mill, north of Townsville.

The \$24 million project replaces two of the existing steam turbo-alternators at the mill with a single, larger capacity turbo-alternator capable of producing 19 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity.

Sucrogen is already Australia's largest producer of renewable energy from biomass, using the waste cane fibre by-product of sugar cane production (bagasse).

It has current cogeneration capacity of 171MW to operate its own seven sugar mills with a surplus of 105 MW available for export to the QLD power grid which is enough to power around 36,000 households each year.

The new facility takes advantage of existing steam capacity at Victoria mill to provide a low capital cost option to expand the mill's total electricity exported to the grid by up to 12 MW.

"This project is in line with our strategy to develop low risk growth projects aligned to our focus on providing sustainable solutions from our sugar operations," said Ian Glasson, CEO of Sucrogen.

"Demand for renewable energy is expected to increase while recent changes to the Renewable Energy Target scheme have also resulted in a more favourable price outlook for Renewable Energy Certificates," he said.

Victoria mill is the largest of Sucrogen's two sugar mills located in the Herbert Region and crushes approximately 3 million tonnes of sugar cane each year.

The project has commenced and is scheduled for completion in June 2011 for the start of the crushing season.

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Note to editors:

Sucrogen is the new corporate identity for CSR Sugar. Sucrogen is the largest raw sugar producer in Australia and the eighth largest producer globally.

Sucrogen owns seven sugar mills capable of producing in total 2.1Mt of raw sugar per year. The mills also produce by-products including molasses, which is used to produce ethanol and also sold as stockfeed.

Sucrogen generates electricity from cogeneration operations at each of its seven sugar mills and is Australia's largest renewable energy generator from biomass, with a total cogeneration capacity of 171 megawatts. Through its interest in Sugar Australia and New Zealand Sugar Company, Sucrogen is the largest sugar refiner in Australia and New Zealand with its three sugar refineries capable of producing 970kt of sugar annually.

Sucrogen is Australia's largest producer of sugar-based ethanol, which is used as an additive in fuel and for a range of industrial purposes. Sucrogen produces fertiliser using by-products from its sugar milling and ethanol distillation processes.