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GREEN POWER SRI LANKA

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Dialog Telekom to deploy 10 solar and wind-powered base stations

The GSMA announced that it is working with Dialog Telekom to deploy ten solar and wind-powered base stations in Sri Lanka as part of its Green Power for Mobile program. The trial, which will deploy five off-grid and five on-grid base stations, will see two sites go live this month and a further eight sites go live in March and April this year. The goal of the trial is to use a number of different scenarios with equipment from nine different vendors to demonstrate the range of options available and the commercial viability of rolling out mobile networks using renewable forms of energy.

The base stations, which rely on a sophisticated methodology for calculating the optimum mix between solar and wind technology, such as the size of the wind turbine or solar panels, will save up to 109,000 litres of diesel per annum and cut carbon emission by up to 294 tonnes. Up to now, off-grid base stations have primarily been powered by generators running on diesel fuel, which is increasingly expensive, generates carbon dioxide emissions, and can be difficult to transport to remote locations. There are also issues with the reliability of the electricity grid in Sri Lanka, so the trial will also investigate powering on-grid base stations, during downtime, with renewable energy.

"Being able to utilise practical, cost effective and renewable sources of power is crucial for operators wanting to provide a broad range of mobile coverage, over vast rural areas, far beyond the reach of national electricity grids," said Rob Conway, CEO and Board Member of the GSMA. "Dialog Telekom, as part of the GSMA's Green Power for Mobile program, has used a number of different scenarios to prove to the industry that renewable energy is a real and viable alternative to on-grid and generator power."

The trial will assess the plethora of renewable energy providers in the marketplace today, further demonstrating the viability of non-traditional forms of power. The GSMA's Development Fund, which initiated the Green Power for Mobile program, will make the results from the trial, public later this year. The nine top-tier vendors chosen to provide the technology for the trial include BP Solar and Tenesol for solar panels, Southwest Windpower, Bergey Windpower, Proven Energy and Kestrel for wind turbines, PowerOasis for power controllers and remote monitoring technology, and Exide Technologies and BYD for batteries.

"We have consistently striven to extend modern technology access to rural communities and thereby enrich lives," said Dr. Hans Wijayasuriya, Group Chief Operating Officer of TM International Berhad and Group Chief Executive of Dialog Telekom PLC. "Social and environmental responsibilities matter to Dialog Telekom as much as economic performance, and this trial epitomises this commitment to integrate sustainability into our operations."

Don Price, Group Chief Technology Officer of TM International Berhad, commented: "TMI is delighted to be associated with the GSMA in pioneering this initiative in collaboration with our Sri Lankan operation, Dialog Telekom PLC. We are confident this much-needed program will enable the industry at large to move the green power debate from hype to reality, ensuring that a renewable energy agenda can present a pragmatic business case to connect the unconnected."

The GSMA's Green Power for Mobile program, launched last year, is backed by 25 mobile operators and has built up a deep pool of expertise in selecting the ideal combination of renewable energy sources to suit local conditions.

The program aims to help the mobile industry to take advantage of renewable energy to power 118,000 new and existing off-grid base stations in developing countries by 2012. Today less than 2,000 base stations worldwide are powered by renewable energy sources.

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