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Asean addresses forest degradation

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EDL considers prepaid accounts

Ekaphone Phouthonesy

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Miss Souliya Nanthavong, a representative of the Sunlabob Renewable Energy Company, receives the Development Marketplace award in Ghana.



Sunlabob wins World Bank award in Africa

Khonesavanh Latsaphao

Sunlabob Renewable Energy Company has won a Development Marketplace award from the World Bank at a ceremony in Accra, Ghana, the company announced at a press conference yesterday in Vientiane.

The 16 winners of the award, including Sunlabob, were chosen from among 52 competitors in the Lighting Africa 2008 contest. Each winner received US\$200,000 at the ceremony, which ran from May 5-8.

Sunlabob Managing Director Andy Schroeter and an employee, Miss Souliya Nanthavong,

represented the company at the presentation ceremony.

This is the second time the company has won a Development Marketplace grant from the World Bank, which was a very rare achievement, company director Saleumphon Vongsakhamphui said.

"We believe this is because yet again Sunlabob has proven to be spearheading an innovative approach that can break open a big worldwide potential in rural electrification," he said.

The World Bank Group and its partners held a competition for the design and delivery of

low cost, high quality, non-fossil fuel-based lighting products targeting low income consumers in Africa - a continent of more than 250 million people.

The Development Marketplace award is a key part of the Lighting Africa initiative to develop the African lighting market to meet low income consumer needs.

Sunlabob partnered with a Ugandan company, TSSD, and submitted a proposal for a franchise operation in Uganda to promote the solar lamps they had developed, Mr Saleumphon said. The scheme was called "Recharging Fees can buy Hours of Solar Light".

"Our stand with the new solar lamps and recharging stations drew the interest of diverse agencies, particularly the IFC, the World Bank and GEF. This led to Sunlabob being selected as a Development Marketplace winner," Mr Saleumphon said.

"This means we will be able to launch the project using the grant we have won. We are delighted, as this is an excellent beginning for our expansion in Africa along with our franchised partner TSSD."

Sunlabob has installed more than 5,600 solar power systems in more than 450 villages in Laos since 2000.

Thank you Global Young Leaders!

Sunlabob Renewable Energy and its directors would like to express their gratitude to the Global Young Leaders of the Global Institute For Tomorrow / Hong Kong for sharing their expertise in developing Sunlabob's rural service concepts in Lao PDR during the Laos Rural Electrification Enterprise Project Vientiane, Xieng Khuang, May 17-24, 2008


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