

# RE share in PH energy mix tops 31% level

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The share of renewable energy (RE) in the country's power mix already reached as high 31.4-percent on combination of emerging and conventional technologies, according to Energy Secretary Alfonso G. Cusi.

In his presentation during a gathering of the Philippine Norway Business Council, Cusi noted that hydropower at 16.7-percent share still accounts for a big chunk of RE capacity in the power grids on a national scale.

The others are geothermal with 8.8-percent share; solar with 3.1-percent share; wind power cornering 2.0-percent in the pie; and biomass with 0.8-percent.

Gas share stood at 17.2-percent last year while oil-based plants accounted for 14.8-percent. Coal obviously was still the 'king' in the mix with the heftiest capacity share of 36.5-percent share.

According to Cusi, the country's total dependable power capacity already hovered at 19,097 megawatts as of last year with total available capacity placed at 14,996 megawatts. Peak demand in 2016 was at 13,272MW.

Visayas grid has the biggest RE share in its power mix at 47.2-percent, dominated by geothermal with 28.9-percent share, followed by solar with 11.8-percent share, and then wind with 3.2-percent share.

For Mindanao, its RE capacity had been partly eclipsed by the entry of new capacities on fossil fuels, primarily coal. Last year, its RE capacity had been at 37-percent — mainly hydro with 31.3-percent share. Luzon grid's power mix is comparatively more diversified with renewable energy capacity still building up — and had just been at 27.1-percent in 2016.

Hydropower cornered the biggest RE share at 17.1-percent; followed by geothermal at 5.7-percent; and then wind power capacity with 2.2-percent share.

Cusi said advancing an efficient and reliable electricity supply for the country in the long-term would still be a major challenge for him to hurdle on his tenure as energy secretary.

At this stage, he leans on pursuing the development of more traditional energy sources that could meet the country's need for heftier baseload power. His adherence to RE is anchored more on having their subsidies scrapped and their reliability improved with the coupling of battery storage.