

Makai plant taps into ocean energy

Vancouver Sun (August 24, 2015)

Makai Ocean Engineering Inc. has built an ocean thermal-energy conversion demonstration plant in Hawaii. The 105-kilowatt project that cost about \$5 million to construct is the world's largest plant to date utilizing the evolving renewable source. It was funded by the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute and Makai. The ocean thermal-energy industry is in the research stage and yet to reach commercial scale. Electricity is generated from the differences in temperature of warm surface water and colder depths that can be used to drive a turbine. Ocean thermal-energy produces baseload power, a steady stream of electricity similar to a fossil-fuel powered plant. Makai recently signed a memorandum of understanding to build a 1-megawatt ocean thermal-energy plant with Japanese companies including Xenosys Inc., Yokogawa Electric Corp., Kobe Steel Ltd. and Japan Marine Ltd. Saga University on the island of Kyushu will also be involved.