

# Cuba to use sugar cane in new electricity plant

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A sugar cane harvester at work in Calimete, Matanzas province, Cuba. Cuba will open its first electricity plant using sugar cane as a biofuel hoping eventually to meet 30 percent of its energy needs from the fuel source, the official Granma daily said Thursday.

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The plant, being built in Ciego de Avila province, some 400 kilometers (240 miles) east of Havana, will use "biomass from sugar cane (the residue from agricultural products) and forestry" particularly an invasive hardwood species known as "marabu" which provides good quality charcoal.

Initially the aim is to supply the energy needed to run sugar processing plants, an official from the state Azcuba sugar group, Angel Mendez, told a parliamentary committee.

"Increasing the production of sugar and electricity in a parallel fashion is Azcuba's top priority," Granma added. "The aim is meet 30 percent of the electricity needs" of the country.

In 2005 Cuba launched an extensive program to expand and modernize its [electricity grid](#). The plan which hit a setback amid the economic crisis in 2009 aims to install new generators, replace millions of appliances to ensure they are more energy efficient and repair power lines.

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