

More locals in central Vietnam exposed to solar cookers

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So far, 850 locals in central Vietnam are reportedly using green solar cookers instead of traditional cooking fuel like coal and wood thanks to a project initiated by two scientists.

Since 2000, the Solar Energy Heater Application Project has been carried out by two members of the Solar Serve Organization, Vietnamese Nguyen Tan Bich and Dutch Hans Van Beek, with the goal to introduce environmentally-friendly solar cookers as an alternative to coal and wood.

The duo overcame uncontrollable obstacles like sunshine and humidity to create two models of solar cookers in the past five years that are suitable for the Vietnamese,

In 2004, the duo created their second solar cooker model with the help of the Polytechnic College in Danang city. The cooker, in a parabolic shape, can effectively be used for cooking with maximum temperatures reaching 400 C.

Central provinces test cookers

After finishing the model, 50 solar cookers were then tested out by farmers in the central region for free.



Bich and Hans successfully persuaded the authorities and locals in Ninh Thuan province to use their cookers by reasoning with authorities and locals that if Ninh Hai forest continued to be exploited for firewood, the forest would be in ruins and the province would face great droughts.

Before that, many of the duo's first model solar cookers had already been distributed to poor locals in Danang city and Quang Nam and Ninh Thuan provinces.



"I save at least 200,000 VND (equal to 13 USD) per month," by using the solar cookers, said one local.

According to her, hundreds of locals had received free solar cookers after registering for a seminar on using the items.

Although the project has been widely popular with locals, Bich said it wasn't always easy to convince authorities to support the project.

We've, at times, faced indifference from many commune authorities, he said.

Bich added that if the project received support from the government, it wouldn't face so many obstacles.

In China, a similar project was supported by the government financially and marketing-wise. Thus after two years of promotion, solar energy cookers are now widely sold in the Chinese market and used by nearly 65,000 people.

"Free" copyright of solar heater

Designed to help the environment, the solar heater is an item that Bich and Van Beek want to share with everyone.

That's why Bich decided to freely share his solar energy heater design with a person from Quang Tri province who had written him a letter asking for the heater's specifications.

"I hope that people nationwide will copy my solar energy heater model so that they no longer deforest or pollute the environment in search for fuel," he said.

In the meantime, Solar Serve Organization plans to give 10,000 solar energy cookers to Vietnamese farmers in the near future, Bich informed

.(Reported by Kh. Ly – Translated by Trong Khuong)