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## 13 companies eye coal mining contracts in Philippines

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According to a senior government official, the Department of Energy received a total of 25 contract proposals to explore and develop 18 prospective coal areas in the country.

Mr Ramon Allan Oca Energy Undersecretary said that the proposals were submitted under the fourth Philippine Energy Contracting Round 2009 for coal, wherein a total of 30 coal contracts were offered beginning last month.

Mr Oca said that 13 local companies submitted their proposals, some of which were for the same contract areas. These companies were mostly new, meaning they have not participated in earlier contracting rounds.

He said that "Proposals were mostly in Zamboanga, adding that the DOE intended to finish the technical, legal and financial evaluations of the proposals within a month. I don't want to take this long to avoid any doubts as to what we're doing."

It took the DOE almost 3 years to award all the contracts under the PECR 3, the previous contracting round which began in 2006.

PECR is a public bidding round aimed at encouraging companies to invest in the country's energy sector. These contracting rounds, which showcase the country's potential areas for exploration and development, are expected to spur investments and help cut costly oil imports as well.

(Sourced from [Businessinquirer.net](http://Businessinquirer.net))

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