

Lightbulb entrepreneurs ready for auction

Fiona Robertson

Entrepreneur Tom Mackenzie says his company has proved sceptics wrong about the carbon-busting potential of efficient lightbulbs.

Mr Mackenzie and co-director Chris Mardon of Energy Mad first applied for carbon credits as part of a government-run programme back in 2004.

But the government was only prepared to offer about 10% of the carbon credits

Energy Mad wanted for ecobulb promotions.

"They were almost saying we're not going to save any electricity from energy-efficient lightbulbs," Mr Mackenzie said.

Now Energy Mad's credits have been certified and are ready for sale, Mr Mackenzie said their predictions had been justified.

"We got about 90% of what we'd said we'd do," he said.

Energy Mad has some 73,000 carbon credits to sell,

certified by Det Norske Veritas to meet the international Voluntary Carbon Standard.

The credits came from an Energy Mad promotion that sold 800,000 heavily discounted ecobulbs to New Zealand householders.

Energy Mad retained rights to any carbon credits earned when those bulbs were used.

But the company stands to lose about \$1 million if it can't sell the carbon credits – meaning each credit has cost

them at least \$14 to produce.

That might sound risky but it's the only way Energy Mad could claim official carbon credits for the ecobulb sales.

The logic of carbon credits is that they're a payment for emission savings that wouldn't have happened without the credit revenue.

Now Energy Mad plans to test the market for its credits via Trade Me auctions, starting today. And the company is also looking to target the corporate market, here and



ENERGY MAD: Tom Mackenzie and Chris Mardon

overseas, for larger sales.

The "voluntary" type of credit Energy Mad sells won't

be bought by the largest companies, which will have to trade in regulated carbon units under an emissions trading scheme.

But the voluntary market picks up interest from companies who choose to offset their carbon footprint.

Since the first carbon credit auction on Trade Me last year, a couple of regular sellers have emerged on the site.

Prices on previous auctions seem to have closed around the \$20-40 mark.