The MinVayu project announced in the last newsletter, is moving along well, although its been set back by losing its workshop in Cyclone Thane, and Mitra will be with them in India until the end of January to help move it along. They've added new people to the team in India, and training of local mechanics is continuing.

They are raising $350,000 to enable them to hire a team, and bring the first low-cost, low-wind, turbine to the Indian market, enabling access to power Their business plan, which we helped developed, just made it into the second round of the William James Foundation competition, and has attracted serious attention from two groups of investors.

We are glad to add Mike Sontag to the Natural Innovation team. He is contributing his time as the lead engineer on the MinVayu project.

Solidworks have become a sponsor of Natural Innovation, generously donating three places of their leading design program, this will allow us to produce a 3D model of the MinVayu turbine. The model will be used to predict how the turbine will perform, for example under strong

Mike is proficient in Solidworks, and we look forward to sharing some of his designs on the website and in future newsletters.

Rural wind turbines have to be lifted above tree height to generate useful power, and an 18 meter tower contributes about 1/3 of the total cost of a system. We are exploring potential ways to reduce this cost, principally through needing less steel, and are also considering bamboo for areas where that is common and cheap.

We are still looking for engineering volunteers for this project, especially an electro-mechanics engineer to help with the generator design, and a structural engineer to analyse the stresses on the blades and the towers.