

Ballard trip to Brazil to explore clean energy

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Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard announced this morning that he and city officials will travel to Brazil in May to explore renewable-energy production, in hopes of making the city a leader in the technology.

The United States and Brazil are the world's top two ethanol producers. American ethanol is made from corn and Brazilian ethanol is made from sugar cane, but both work in automobiles virtually the same way.

The Indy Racing League recently found itself at odds with Midwestern farmers over a decision to make a Brazilian consortium its ethanol supplier this year.

"Just like life sciences, we can embrace the clean-energy sector," said Ballard, who made the announcement this morning while speaking to directors of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee.

Local efforts to develop alternative fuels from resources other than corn are under way. For example, startup **Xylogenics** is using research hatched from the Indiana University School of Medicine to produce ethanol cheaply by using grasses and other common plants.