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Few prospects for cleaning up in green sector A guide to some of the better bets

With the Copenhagen climate summit at hand, are you ready to do your bit to save the planet by investing in green stocks? If so, don't let a hopeless Troglodyte like me--an avowed skeptic on the theory of anthropogenic global warming--stop you.

There are lots of cleantech funds or alternative-energy stocks to consider, from wind power to geothermal to fuel-cell developers.

Unfortunately, Canada offers few cleantech plays that one could safely call investment grade. One of them --Canadian Hydro Developers--was recently acquired by TransAlta Corp.

Most of the rest are highly volatile stocks with short operating histories, small market caps, modest revenues, and little or no profits.

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The lesson? Timing is everything. These stocks aren't suitable for most buy-and-hold investors.

The WilderHill Clean Energy Index, one of the most widely followed cleantech indexes in the U.S., has declined 16.4 per cent since it was formed in August 2004. At one point, however, it was up by as much as 72 per cent.

INTERESTING PROSPECTS

Clearly, investing in cleantech isn't for the faint-hearted, and the biggest players tend to be from Europe, Asia or the U.S., not Canada. That said, here's a look at a few interesting prospects:

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