

## El salvador environmental sustainability

El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America and has one of the highest population densities in the region, with more than 300 inhabitants per square kilometer. Alongside Guatemala and Honduras, it also ranks among the poorest countries in the Americas, according to the UN organization UNICEF. More than 40% of children in El Salvador live in poverty.

Moreover, the country is suffering badly from the consequences of climate change: Drought and forest fires are destroying areas used for food production, while hurricanes and floods cause widespread devastation. Degraded soil and increasing urban sprawl pose a threat to water and food supplies.

Ricardo Navarro's small non-governmental organization CESTA (Salvadoran Center for Appropriate Technology) has been fighting for decades for greater climate and environmental protection and a sustainable future in El Salvador. Thanks to the NGO's perseverance, various laws have been passed, such as a ban on further metal mining.

A central point of CESTA's activities is teaching female smallholder farmers about organic farming and how to obtain seeds from local varieties. The women produce primarily for their own use and earn extra money by selling their surplus.

**Project goal:** CESTA is one of the first small organizations worldwide to receive support from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) to expand its climate commitment as part of the IKI Small Grants Program. One focus of the CESTA program is the support for women, especially through environmental education. In total, the IKI Small Grants program supports micro-projects for climate and nature conservation in 27 developing and emerging countries.

**Project partner:** The IKI Small Grants program is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the BMU.

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Towards sustainable energy, El Salvador is set to embrace a future dominated by renewable projects, contributing to the region's ambitious target of 95% renewable energy by 2024. According to the Latin American Energy Organization (Olade), this surge in green energy initiatives will revolutionize the energy landscape of the country.

Andrés Rebolledo, the Executive Secretary of Olade, recently affirmed, <<Ninety-five percent of the electrical generation projects set to go into production and operation in 2024 will be renewable. This includes parks in



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various stages, from implementation to those with environmental permits.>>

Statistics from Olade indicate a notable 12% increase in renewable energy generation in 2023, constituting 65% of the total electric generation in Latin America. Solar power led the charge with a remarkable 46% growth, closely followed by a 10% increase in wind energy.

Rebolledo anticipates a continued upward trajectory for renewables, stating, <<We expect that 65% to increase, driven by the region's structural potential and substantial capacity for growth. The current surge in investment projects is largely centered around renewable energies.>>

El Salvador stands at the forefront of this green revolution, with 80% of its energy matrix already being generated from renewable sources. Daniel ?lvarez, President of the Executive Hydroelectric Commission of the Lempa River (CEL), highlighted the nation's commitment to furthering its green agenda in 2024.

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