

## Island microgrids saudi arabia

The Red Sea Project, a huge tourism enterprise under construction on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast that is set to cost \$500bn (R1.88trn), aims to be the first city to run entirely on renewable energy.

In a press release, Huawei said the president of its digital energy global marketing service group, Yang Yougui, had confirmed that the company had finished building the power station.

According to Yougi, the microgrid power station can provide 400MW of photovoltaic power and 1.3 gigawatt-hours of energy storage. Huawei has been working on the technology for ten years.

Saudi Arabia is relying on Huawei to provide power for its Red Sea project. As part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan to restructure the kingdom's economy, the project aims to turn 50 islands into luxury tourism destinations hosting an airport and numerous hotels, covering 28,000km<sup>2</sup>.

In the recent past, China has made other investments in Saudi Arabia, including in the construction of the North-South railway, the Makkah Light railway and agreements to build the hotels in the Red Sea project.

According to local information outlet Arab News, China became the top greenfield foreign direct investor in the desert nation in 2023, with investments totalling \$16.8bn.

While China is investing in Saudi Arabia, Beijing hopes the relationship will work both ways. Last year, the mayor of Beijing told the governor of Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund that his city was ripe with investment opportunities, specifically in areas such green development and energy transition.

In case the world still hadn't caught on to the power and potential of microgrid technology, the world's largest off-grid, solar-powered microgrid is beginning to take shape along Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast.

Aptly named the Red Sea Project as part of the Saudi kingdom's ambitious SaudiVision2030 initiative, the microgrid will encompass 28,000 square kilometers and power critical parts of the Red Sea City, including 50 hotels with 8,000 rooms along with more than 1,000 residential properties.

Built by Chinese industrial giant, Huawei, the complex will feature a 400MW solar farm tied to a 1.3GW storage system, making it the first of its kind as well as the world's largest microgrid.

The sheer scope and scale of the Red Sea Project microgrid is expected to inspire more interest in micogrids, especially as it establishes new standards for island-only power generation and storage capabilities.



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