Solar energy market sierra leone

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Serengeti Energy has started operations at what it claims is Sierra Leone"s first solar independent power project. The 5 MW solar installation is located in Yamandu, Southern Sierra Leone. A second project phase is planned for 2023, bringing its capacity to 25 MW.

Serengeti Energy has switched on a 5 MW PV plant in Sierra Leone as part of the Baoma 1 installation. The solar PV plant is is reportedly the west African country"s first independent power project, and was developed by the Kenya-based company and built under a public-private partnership.

The 5 MW installation is the first phase of a 25 MW PV project in Yamandu, near Bo town in Sierra Leone. The project will reportedly add approximately 15% to Sierra Leone"s total electricity generation capacity.

Serengeti expects to start building the project"s second phase in 2023. The entire project will require an investment of $35 million. It will sell electricity to Sierra Leone"s national distributor Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority (EDSA).

"I am delighted to announce that the 5 MW Baoma 1 solar PV plant in Sierra Leone has successfully reached commercial operations. This has been achieved through strong collaboration between EDSA and the entire Serengeti Energy team," said Chris Bale, Serengeti Energy"s CEO. "The project will supply low-cost electricity to the local power grid for many years to come and will help to diversify the electricity mix in the country," he added.

The renewable energy potential in Sierra Leone is abundant, primarily in hydropower, wind and solar resources. However, it remains underutilised while up to 80 per cent of the country"s electricity is generated from fossil fuels.

Driving a diversified approach to addressing energy access in the country, Planet Solar will be the first large-scale grid-connected solar Independent Power Producer (IPP). The 50MW solar capacity is expected to help avoid 53,000 tonnes of annual CO2 emissions.

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Currently only 23 per cent of the population in Sierra Leone have access to electricity. This project will increase the operational domestic electricity supply by c. 30 per cent in Sierra Leone, channelling it to commercial and industrial entities, public institutions, and households connected to the main energy- grid. This enables more power to flow to industries and communities in Freetown, Sierra Leone"s commercial capital, the Western Area, and beyond including four sites throughout the country.

Commenting on the transaction, Chris Chijiutomi, Managing Director and Head of Africa at BII, said: "We are delighted to help bring clean and reliable energy to underserved regions in Sierra Leone. Our investment in Planet Solar highlights our commitment to climate finance and accelerating progress towards net-zero emissions by 2050. We look forward to the transformational potential of this project as a beacon to unlock more long-term capital to advance the country"s energy sector and support a more sustainable future."

"Access to energy is a key enabler and driver of inclusive, sustainable, and resilient economic recovery and growth. We are therefore thrilled to support Planet Solar, the first large-scale grid-connected solar Independent Power Producer in Sierra Leone. We thank our co-investors and Planet Solar for the cooperation, supporting vital services to households and businesses in the country," says Jaap Reinking, head of the Private Equity department at FMO.

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