Tirana home energy storage

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Albanian state-owned power utility KESH is discussing a pumped storage hydropower project with the EBRD. Pumps would be added between the Fierza and Koman reservoirs. The system would be used for transporting water uphill when electricity demand is lower and release it through turbines when needed.

Pumped storage hydropower plants are complex, expensive, and often take up a lot of space. It is still the only conventional energy storage technology. It can also be deployed by adding an upper reservoir to an existing hydroelectric facility. But Albania has a simpler solution in mind: pump water from the reservoir of a hydropower plant to the reservoir of the next one upstream in the same cascade.

Government-controlled hydropower plant operator KESH held a meeting with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Delegation of the European Union to Albania. According to the company, the international financial institution is supporting the project and the EU would fund it through the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF).

The pumping facility would be activated when there is excess electricity in the national system so that the company can run the water through turbines to make power when needed. The goal of the project is to increase the uptake of solar and wind power plants and improve energy security and grid stability.

The energy transition implies vast solar and wind power capacity, but with energy storage systems that can keep unstable electricity production - which depends on wind and sunshine - in equilibrium with consumption. Hydropower makes up almost the entire domestic output in Albania, which helps balancing to a point, but it has no pumped storage hydropower plants.

Furthermore, the country is exposed to drought and often turns to emergency imports. Tirana-based Vega Solar, which develops, installs and maintains rooftop solar power plants, saw an opportunity to contribute to diversification with battery energy storage systems.

Chief Executive Officer Bruno Papaj said the firm signed a memorandum of understanding with an Indian investor on the construction of Albania’s first lithium ion battery plant. The facility is planned to come online within two years, with 100 MW in annual capacity.

Sainik Industries - Getsun Power, based in Uttar Pradesh, revealed that both partners would have an equal share in the joint venture. The project will include the production of inverters, according to the Indian battery producer’s update.

The deal was agreed at an Indian-Albanian business forum in New Delhi. Vega Solar, founded six years ago, earlier said it would pursue large renewables investments. The companies didn’t provide any other

details.

As for the rest of the region that Balkan Green Energy News covers, there is still very little battery production capacity, but several major projects are underway. They include mining investment proposals.

Lithium carbonate remains the predominant raw material for the production of batteries for electric vehicles as well as for storage within the electric power system and for solar power for self-consumption. Still, its market prices have been stagnating for the past few months around the levels held before mid-2021. That"s when they started to surge, reaching a peak after little more than a year later and reversing course.

The main producers are currently hesitating to proceed developing some lithium mines or they are exiting such projects altogether. In the meantime, alternative solutions are slowly emerging. They are based on, for example, sodium or calcium, and even gravitation.

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