

Tunis city grid-scale energy storage

Tunisia's Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy has launched a tender for the construction of several large-scale PV projects with a combined capacity of 200 MW.

The selected independent power producers (IPPs) will sell electricity to Soci t  tunisienne de l' lectricit  et du gaz (STEG), the Tunisian state-owned grid operator, under long-term power purchase agreements. Interested developers have until Jan. 15 to submit their project proposals.

Tunisia is supporting utility-scale solar through a series of tenders, the latest of which was launched in January 2023. It also finalized a 500 MW solar tender in December 2019.

The country's cumulative installed PV capacity stood at just 506 MW by the end of 2023, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). Last year, it deployed around 309 MW of new PV capacity.

To learn more about the sector's challenges and opportunities, please read our recent blog entry on how Tunisia's energy sector can become an engine of green growth.

STEG, or the Soci t  tunisienne de l' lectricit  et du gaz (Tunisian Company of Electricity and Gas), is currently undertaking studies for the project, according to a news release from Agence Tunis Afrique Presse.

The project is being planned for a location on the Oued El Melah river, 17km from the nearest town, Tabarka, and will have a power of 400-600MW. A MWh capacity was not revealed, but pumped hydro energy storage technology's typical duration of between 6-20 hours would equate to potentially anywhere between 2.4GWh and 12GWh.

The French Development Agency (AFD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the German Development Bank (KfW) are all contributing to the cost of the studies. The work being done includes topographical, geotechnical, environmental, social impact and grid connection studies.

The country aims to have a renewable energy generation mix of 35% by 2035 versus just 3% today. Part of that involves building 3,800MW of solar by 2030, called the 30/30 initiative.

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