

## Energy storage policy sao tome

The island nation of Sao Tome and Principe switched on the initial phase of its first 2 MW solar project in August. Construction of 1.4 MW of PV capacity is now underway at two airports, and developers plan to install a total of 1.7 MW by 2023.

The government of Sao Tome and Principe and Portugal-based Cleanwatts have signed a contract to develop 1.7 MW of solar in the West African island nation. The project will include three solar installations.

Cleanwatts told pv magazine that it started developing 1.1 MW at Sao Tome airport and 300 kWp at Principe airport in August. It expects to complete the arrays by the end of this year. Another 300 kWp will be installed next year at other communities in Sao Tome.

"Like many islands around the world, Sao Tome depends greatly on a stable and affordable supply of energy. What we propose to do in this country is precisely to reduce dependence on imported energy through the production of locally sourced clean energy," said Michael Pinto, the CEO of Cleanwatts. "We look forward to expanding this project into a second phase and broadening the perimeter of the communities that we serve."

The country's first solar project went online in August. The first phase of the 2 MW installation was built at a diesel power station in the city of Santo Amaro, with a capacity of 540 kWp. The project was backed by an investment of \$690,000, funded by the United Nations Development Program and the Global Environment Fund.

According to data from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Sao Tome and Principe did not have any grid-connected solar generation capacity installed at the end of 2021. The World Bank says Sao Tome and Principe has an electricity access rate of around 76%, with 92% of the total coming from imported diesel. The government has vowed to increase the proportion of renewable energy from 5% of the energy mix to 50% by 2030.

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Endowed with picturesque beaches, rainforests, and coral reefs that attract tourists from around the world, S?o

Tom? and Pr?ncipe is a small island country, located in the Gulf of Guinea, off the western coast of Central Africa. Its small size, distance from large markets, and lack of diversity in its economic sectors mean the country faces a number of challenges. Like many other small island developing states (SIDS), the country is also dealing with the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on international travel has temporarily brought S?o Tom? and Pr?ncipe's thriving tourism industry to a standstill. The country's authorities have moved to protect their population from the spread of the coronavirus, implementing social distancing rules, amongst other measures. Reduced maritime activity has led to an interruption of international supply chains, which are vital for the export of the country's cacao and coffee and for the import of manufactured products.

Whilst the priority for many countries, including S?o Tom? and Pr?ncipe, will be to prevent the spread of the virus and to protect livelihoods into the foreseeable future, many commentators are already calling for countries to "build back better," once the pandemic has passed. Specifically, the United Nations Secretary-General, Ant?nio Guterres, has proposed a number of climate-related actions to shape countries' recovery from the pandemic and to help them to address climate change.

In this vein, green stimulus packages that include strong renewable energy and energy efficiency components have garnered attention as viable options to help countries meet social, economic, and environmental objectives, once the worst of the pandemic has passed.

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