



# Freetown solar energy

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To access additional data, including an interactive map of global solar farms, a downloadable dataset, and summary data, please visit the Global Solar Power Tracker on the Global Energy Monitor website.

In July 2014, the government of Sierra Leone signed an agreement for a landmark renewable energy project, that could generate and supply much needed clean electricity to homes and businesses across the capital.

And no one in high places in Sierra Leone wants to talk about the Freetown Solar Park Project, despite attempts by the Sierra Leone Telegraph to obtain information about progress.

On the 31st of June 2014, Sierra Leone's ministry of finance and economic development announced that when completed, the Freetown Solar Park would provide six Megawatts of electricity.

Speaking at the signing ceremony for the project, minister of finance and economic development &#8211; Dr Kaifala Marah (Photo) said: "We wish on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone to thank Mr. Siray Timbo &#8211; Special Envoy and Ambassador to the UAE; the Ministry of Energy; Mr Bahige Annan &#8211; The Consul General of Sierra Leone in Dubai; and Mr. Filip Matwin &#8211; General Manager of Advanced Science and Innovation Company (ASIC) LLC / OGI, for coordinating and putting together the winning bid.

The \$18 million was meant to support both capital and revenue costs of establishing the Solar Park, as well as fund the training of local staff in technical skills development and management of the facility.

Minister Marah was clear about the funding arrangement put in place, as he extended his "gratitude to IRENA, for coordinating the selection process, the ADFD for extending USD 9 million as part funding to the Government of Sierra Leone and ASIC/OGI that will coordinate additional USD 9 million as private equity."

Marah also said at the time that; "The project will place Sierra Leone on the global map of Renewable Energy; and further strengthen the existing cordial relationship between the Governments of Sierra Leone and the United Arab Emirates."

With an estimated 90% of households in Sierra Leone suffering from electricity poverty, and total electricity production not more than 30 Megawatts from the Bumbuna Hydro-electricity plant in the north of the country (Photo), Sierra Leone's economy is being crippled by the lack of electricity and corruption.

Six megawatts of electricity may be a drop in the ocean for a country whose non-industrial consumer needs is estimated at 500 megawatt (MW). But for Sierra Leone, where every watt of electricity produced, can make the difference between life and death, an uninterrupted supply of 6 MW of electricity supplying 3,000 homes is more than welcomed.

In January 2014, president Koroma attended a renewable energy summit in Abu Dhabi (Photo: Was president Koroma interested in those discussions?), where interest in harnessing Sierra Leone's abundant sunshine and energy potential was seriously considered among 80 other competing applications.

And when the decision was announced by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), Sierra Leone was among a short list of six successful developing countries to receive funding totalling \$80 million.

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