Monaco first solar

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The Principality"s energy and climate policy aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050; to this end, reducing energy consumption and increasing the share of renewable energies are two key driving factors.

With regard to the latter objective, the Government is pursuing an active policy to develop solar energy in the Principality, with subsidies for installing photovoltaic and thermal solar panels and the online publication, in June 2017, of a solar survey, which enables property owners and tenants to identify the photovoltaic solar energy production capacity of their roofs ().

Now, in order to be involved in energy transition beyond its borders, the Prince"s Government and the Soci?t? Mon?gasque de l"Electricit? et du Gaz (SMEG) have shared their skills, with the creation, in late 2017, of the Monaco Energies Renouvelables company (Monaco Renewable Energies) (M.E.R.). The Company"s mission is to seek investment and development opportunities in renewable energy production projects abroad.

In line with this objective, Monaco Energies Renouvelables has just acquired eight photovoltaic parks, with a total production capacity of 39 MWpeak, located in seven Departments in the south of France.

"M.E.R. aims to make Monaco one of the first States to have 100% green electricity production capacity, equivalent to consumption in its territory," stated Marie-Pierre Gramaglia, Minister of Public Works, the Environment and Urban Development. She added, "at present, we are interested in developing photovoltaic power plants, but we are also considering the possibility of using hydropower, biogas and wind power to control our energy supply costs."

The sites that have been acquired represent total production of 46,000 MWh/year, or approximately 9% of the Principality of Monaco"s electricity consumption. Thomas Battaglione, Director and Chief Executive Officer of the SMEG and Managing Director of M.E.R. stated that "The SMEG, as an energy company and operator, is working alongside the State of Monaco to offer its expertise in the renewable energy sector, identify the best development opportunities and ensure the best possible operating returns."

To support the installation of solar panels, it should be recalled that, since 2014, the Prince"sGovernment has offered a financial incentive with an electricity buyback rate of EUR360 excluding taxes/Megawatt hour for flat roof systems that are not integral to the construction and EUR 530 excluding taxes/Megawatt hour for integrated systems. A 15-year subsidy is therefore guaranteed for the production of photovoltaic energy.

The future of cars automatically being powered by the road they are traveling on comes one step closer as scientific progress and advanced engineering come together – and Monaco is in the forefront of testing this advanced technology. If you go to Fontvieille, in front of the parking, "Quartier de la Mer", you will see that fifty square metres of road surface there resembles a roof with solar panels on it – the first solar

road in the Principality.

In earlier testing at sites outside of Monaco and at speeds between 50 km/h and 90 km/h there had been a reaction by the public to the different noise that vehicles make on this surface -though other noise pollution often drowns out this particular sound issue. However, in Monaco testing, so far so good as it is reported that up to now there have been no such complaints, nor are there likely to be with the Heliport so close.

Monaco is in good company. The other test sites are in the US, in Canada, in La Reunion, in Marseille and in Grasse. Testing is critically important to proving, and then improving the technology. And the future – what is in store for us. The direction is becoming clear – roads that communicate to us and that provide power. Electric cars may be able to get their power directly from the roads in future. And given these advances in working with micro-materials how long will it be before a whole communication network forms part of the millefeuille sandwich.

In what other sites in Monaco might we see this technology? Any road on which the sun shines and is not shadowed most of the time by buildings or vehicles would be promising. The VoieRapide with its 1 km in a straight line and in full sun might be ideal. And roads at a slight incline like that at Fontvieille improve the efficiency of the photovoltaic capture process.

Economics will play a role in the selection by the Government of Monaco of the exact mix of new technologies to generate power. The price-tag of the first project of an “electrified road – Wattway” will not go unnoticed at 5 million euros for the first kilometer.

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