

Solar energy oman

SolarPower Europe says in a new report on solar development in Oman that the nation will need to install a minimum of 13 GW of solar by 2030 to meet its ambitious net-zero targets.

SolarPower Europe has urged Oman to pursue greater integration of renewable energy, liberalize its market structure, and optimize grid infrastructure to meet its ambitious net-zero targets.

The report said that Oman's current electricity mix is primarily based on natural gas, accounting for 96% (38 TWh) of power generation in 2022, compared to solar at 3.8% (1.5 TWh). While the country has 100% access to electricity, there is growing demand due to a growing population and the development of energy-intensive industries and infrastructure.

Oman has set a target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, while the Omani government's seven-year statement 2023-2029 set interim renewable energy development goals of an 11% renewables share in the electricity mix by 2025 and 30% by 2030.

SolarPower Europe said the country will need to install a minimum of 13 GW of solar in total by 2030 to meet its target. It noted that Oman's utility-scale PV capacity stood at 0.5 GW in 2022, thanks to the 500 MW Ibri II solar plant, developed by ACWA Power. The project started commercial operations in August 2021.

The report said several projects will go into operation in the coming years - namely, the Manah I and Manah II solar plants in the first half of next year, jointly adding 1 GW. Both projects were awarded through a public tender, with Manah Solar I given to Korean Western Power Company and Manah II to a joint venture between Singapore's Sembcorp Industries and China's Jinko Power Technology.

Public tenders are expected for three new solar projects and five wind projects between 2025 and 2029. The solar tenders are set to be the 500 MW Mis Solar IPP located in Al Dakhiliyah, northern Oman, expected to launch in 2025 and in operation by 2027 and two 500 MW projects currently titled Solar PV IPPs, due to be developed in Manah, northeastern Oman, with commercial operations starting in 2029.

It also said the market structure should be liberalized to ensure the "right opportunity for international investors." The report said adapting Oman's electricity market to include multiple buyers and off-takers will make it more attractive to independent power producers. It also calls for the optimization of grid infrastructure, including linking the grid to other countries in the region, stating this could open the country up to cross-border power purchase agreements, again boosting its attractiveness to investors.

SolarPower Europe also called for a more precise indication of how the country will fully decarbonize by 2050, as Oman's current strategy foresees an emissions reduction of 92%. It said the other 8% will "be

covered by new technologies and undefined natural negative emission resources.”

"Establishing a clear roadmap to close the final 8% will send a strong signal to international investors that Oman is committed to its energy transition," said the report.

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