

## Solar energy storage sao tome and principe

The Government of Sao Tome and Principe has launched a tender to build a 1.5 MWp solar photovoltaic plant in the town of Santo Amaro in the Lobata District. The African Development Bank (AfDB) is financing the solar plant which is set to become the first grid-connected solar project for the country.

The Santomean Ministry of Infrastructure and Natural Resources has launched the call for expressions of interest which is open until June 6, 2022. The successful bidding company will sign an engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contract with the government. The company will also be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the plant.

The bidding document reads, "For this contract, the borrower will make payments using the direct payment disbursement method. The method, as defined in the AfDB's disbursement guidelines and procedures for financing investment projects, with the exception of payments that the contract calls for to be made by letter of credit."

The solar power plant is expected to be operational by the end of 2022. The facility is planned to replace a thermoelectric power station which is going to shut down by the end of this year. The project is financed as a part of the Energy Transition and Institutional Support Program (ETISP) of the government, being bankrolled by a loan from the AfDB to the tune of US\$12.46 million.

In addition to the construction of the Santo Amaro solar park, the ETISP also ensures the rehabilitation of the Papagaio mini-hydro electric plant, located on the island of Principe. The facility has a power generation capacity of 1 MW and is expected to be fully operational by 2024. The energy program is supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The island country located off the equatorial coast of Central Africa has a population of more than 219,000, with a total installed capacity of 35.8 MW. Renewable energy represents only 5% of the country's electricity mix.

According to the latest set of global statistics produced by the IRENA, Sao Tome and Principe did not have any grid-connected solar PV facility at the end of 2021. This is about to change after the completion of the solar plant at Santo Amaro.



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