

Bissau microgrid operation

The African Biofuel and Renewable Energy Co (Abrec), which promotes renewables and energy efficiency across the continent, has awarded the contract to build Guinea-Bissau's first large scale PV plant to state-owned Chinese hydropower business Sinohydro.

The solar asset, planned for Gardete near the city of Bissau, will sell power to national utility EAGB under a long-term contract. The West African Development Bank is backing the project with a \$42.9 million loan.

Guinea-Bissau relies on fossil fuels and solar has seen limited development, with the exception of rural electrification initiatives. The nation has one of the lowest electrification rates in Africa, as well as electricity prices among the highest on the continent. As a result, around 95% of the energy consumed in Guinea-Bissauan households comes from biomass.

The African Development Bank recently stated Guinea-Bissau has only 11 MW of installed power generation capacity, almost all of it thermal generation. "Real capacity is only 8 MW, only 5 MW of which is available 24 hours per day due to the maintenance required and the inability of the electric power utility to obtain the necessary fuel," a report by the bank said.

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