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Honeywell Process Solutions has announced plans to install about 124 MWh of its battery energy storage systems alongside 140 MW of solar at six sites to help the US Virgin Islands cover 30% of its electricity needs.

Honeywell Process Solutions said it will provide Massachusetts-based renewable energy developer VIElectron with its first installment of battery energy storage systems (BESS) to accommodate six solar facilities across the US Virgin Islands (St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John).

The lithium-ion based BESS will add 124 MWh of energy storage co-located with the solar facilities. Grid-scale storage solutions can absorb fluctuations in demand, further stabilizing the grid by absorbing excess power during low usage and then releasing it during peak hours. The adjoining solar facilities will provide a total of 140 MW solar capacity.

According to the US Department of Energy (DOE), the US Virgin Islands have heavily relied on fossil fuels to generate electricity in the past. This means residents accrued expensive electricity costs that fluctuated with global oil prices.

"In 2009, the US Virgin Islands were almost 100% dependent on imported oil for electricity, water desalination and transportation, resulting in electricity costs nearly four times the US national average," the DOE said.

Since then, the US Virgin Islands have set a goal to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels for energy production by 60% by 2025. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) adds that the U.S. Virgin Islands also want to generate 30% of peak capacity from renewables by 2025. According to the DOE, the territory is well on its way to reaching these goals due to its growing portfolio of renewable energy projects that include:

Pramesh Maheshwari, president of Honeywell, said that the solar-plus-storage project will reduce the cost of energy for residents of the US Virgin Island and function as an example of how sustainable technologies can make renewables more affordable for islanders everywhere.

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