
Martifer Solar wins EPC contract for Latin America's 'largest PV plant'

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By Julia Chan - 23 May 2013

Portuguese EPC firm Martifer Solar has been awarded an EPC contract for a 30MW PV facility in Mexico, which, according to the company, will represent the largest PV plant in Latin America to date.

The project, called Aura Solar I, will be located in La Paz, Baja California, and funded by local development bank Nafin, International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Corporación Aura Solar.

The plant is being constructed by Mexican PV developer Gauss Energía on a 100-hectare site and will become home to approximately 132,000 modules installed on single-axis trackers. The modules will help to generate around 82GWh of electricity every year. Upon completion, Martifer Solar will provide operation and maintenance services.

The plant will represent the first utility-scale solar power project tied into a power purchase agreement (PPA) between a private company and the Comisión Federal de Electricidad, Mexico's federal power company. The PPA will last for 20 years.

Scheduled to complete in August 2013, the facility will help to quadruple the total installed PV capacity in Mexico, Martifer Solar claims. Currently, the country has 13MW of installed PV capacity with its largest project being a 5MW PV array.

"Martifer Solar's experience and worldwide track-record were decisive during the analysis of the different proposals made by the main companies in the sector. Due to its dimension, this project in Mexico will open the way for the development of the photovoltaic sector in the country, where, to date, were installed 13MW of PV projects", says Hector Olea, CEO of Gauss Energía.

The PV facility will also bring Mexico one step closer to its target of generating 35% of its energy from renewable sources by 2026.