

Suntech supplies solar PV modules to Aura Solar 1 PV project in Mexico

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Suntech Power Holdings Company Ltd. (Wuxi, China) has announced that it is supplying Martifer Solar SA (Oliveira De Frades, Portugal) with the solar photovoltaic (PV) modules for the Aura Solar 1 plant in Baja California, Mexico.

At 30 MW, Aura Solar 1 is larger than any operational PV plant in Latin America. Suntech is supplying 132,000 of its Ve and Vd series modules for the plant, which is under development by Gauss Energía (Mexico City) with financial support from the Mexican Development Bank (NAFIN, Mexico City) and the World Bank's International Finance Corporation.

The Aura Solar 1 will be Latin America's largest PV plant when complete

"The construction of Latin America's largest PV plant confirms our best expectations for 2013," states Martifer Solar CEO Henrique

Rodrigues. "This is an emblematic project for Martifer Solar, in a region that, due to its irradiation characteristics, finds solar electricity as a viable and more competitive alternative, when compared with non-renewable energy sources. We consider Mexico as a key market in Martifer Solar's internationalization strategy."

Power sold based on CTCP price "without a floor"

Suntech estimates that the PV plant in La Paz, Baja California Sur will effectively double the nation's installed PV capacity when complete. The plant is also Mexico's first utility-scale solar project with a power purchase agreement (PPA) with public utility Federal Electricity Commission (CFE).

Gauss Energía's 20-year PPA with CFE will be based on the "CTCP" price, which has no minimum value. This creates considerable risk, however Gauss has noted that the CTCP price in the state of Baja California Sur is relatively high on average, as the state's isolated power grid is fed mostly by diesel and other liquid fuel generation.

The plant will utilize single-axis trackers, and take advantage of the region's solar resource of 5.8 kWh per square meter. When complete, it will provide an estimated 65% of the electricity demand of La Paz.

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