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El Salvador has experienced a remarkable 160-fold increase in solar energy generation capacity from 2015 to 2023, according to data from the Latin American Energy Organization (Olade). This surge is attributed to the growing number of solar farms across the country, which now contribute significantly to the national energy grid. The nation boasts over 60 solar plants, with 21 of them receiving construction permits during the administration of President Nayib Bukele. These projects represent a $152.6 million investment.

Among the most prominent solar projects are the San Isidro Photovoltaic Solar Park in Caba?as Este, La Independencia 2 in La Libertad Oeste, and La Esperanza Solar Plant in Cuscatl?n Norte. The state-run Talnique Solar plant, operated by Inversiones Energ?ticas (INE), stands out as the first government-owned solar facility, inaugurated in December with a capacity of 17 megawatts peak (MWp).

Currently, El Salvador"s solar plants generate 539.07 gigawatt hours (GWh), accounting for 7.31% of the national energy mix. This marks a significant leap from the 94.8 GWh produced in 2017, according to the General Directorate of Energy, Hydrocarbons, and Mines (DGEHM).

Oscar Funes, Vice President of the Salvadoran Renewable Energy Association (ASER), highlighted that El Salvador is now better positioned in solar energy compared to other countries in the region. He attributed the surge to favorable solar radiation levels and a 33% drop in installation costs over the past five years, as well as streamlined government processes for obtaining permits.

Looking ahead, Funes noted that the development of solar energy projects combined with battery storage is gaining traction, ensuring continuous energy supply day and night. AES El Salvador, a key player in this sector, has built 34 solar plants since opening its first in 2015, further solidifying the country"s position in renewable energy innovation.

In recent years, El Salvador has significantly increased its solar energy capacity, marking a pivotal shift towards cleaner and sustainable sources. According to the Directorate General of Energy, Hydrocarbons, and Mines (DGEHM), during 2023, El Salvador’s photovoltaic plants generated approximately 539,067.71 MWh, constituting an impressive 7.13% of the country’s energy matrix.

The energy sector in El Salvador has witnessed remarkable growth, positioning the nation as a regional leader in the transition towards renewable and cleaner energy sources. Statistics from the Latin American Energy Organization (Olade) reveal a 160-fold increase in solar energy generation capacity from 2015 to the past year, showcasing a significant transformation towards energy self-sufficiency.

This data aligns with information presented by the DGEHM, highlighting that solar plants contributed 7.13% to El Salvador’s energy mix in 2023, trailing only behind natural gas, geothermal, and hydroelectric

sources.

The dynamism of the sector is underscored by the multitude of projects executed in recent years. In the last year alone, over 35 photovoltaic projects, both private and public, were registered, catering to the energy demand of approximately 500,000 Salvadoran households over a year.

The institution estimates that a substantial investment in a solar plant could result in up to a 50% reduction in energy bills, with a recovery period of around five years. The average lifespan of a solar panel is approximately 20 years, further emphasizing the long-term sustainability of such projects.

Renewable energy promotion has attracted significant foreign investment, fostering economic growth. Over the years, the push for renewable energy has been instrumental in bringing new foreign investment projects into the country.

Daniel ?lvarez, President of the Executive Hydroelectric Commission of the Lempa River (CEL), recently announced the continuation of state-led renewable projects. This includes the construction of the second state-owned photovoltaic plant, situated in the 15 de Septiembre Hydroelectric Power Plant.

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Web: https://kary.com.pl/contact-us/
Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com
WhatsApp: 8613816583346