

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy said it would launch the first wind power auction in Albania by the end of March to diversify energy production. The country depends almost entirely on hydropower and the hydrological situation has recently deteriorated. Companies will be able to apply with projects between 30 MW and 75 MW. The government revealed it would approve a maximum of 130 MW. According to the ministry, the preliminary notice was issued to let investors identify potential locations in time before the deadline for the submission of bids. It published a study on the availability of land for such projects.

More renewables auctions in pipeline for 2021

Furthermore, Minister Belinda Balluku revealed that next year Albania would hold another photovoltaic power auction for 100 MW after the one for the Spitalle solar power plant, and a so-called hybrid auction for renewables. Namely, the government will only declare the total size of wind and solar power facilities that would get contracts for the sale of electricity, and investors can choose locations and the technology for their bids. The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) funded the said wind power study, with support from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The EBRD has provided technical assistance to the government in Tirana for the introduction of renewable energy auctions and financed production projects. The bank recently said it would decide on the proposed loan for a floating solar power plant at Vau i Dejës by January 27.

Wind power projects in Albania on hold

No wind power plants have been commissioned yet in Albania, even though projects with more than 2.6 GW in capacity are under development. As for solar power, there are only eight such facilities online, with a capacity of up to 2 MW each.

The project from the first renewables auction, a 100 MW solar power project in Akërni salt flats, has been canceled

After the previous renewables auction, the government awarded French company Volitalia with a 15-year fixed rate deal for half of the output in the future 140 MW photovoltaic plant in Karavasta. The procedure for a 100 MW photovoltaic park in Spitalle is ongoing.

The first solar power auction was held two years ago, for a 100 MW project in Akërni salt flats. A consortium led by India Power offered the lowest price, EUR 59.9 per MWh, for half of the facility, while the other half of production was supposed to be sold on the market.

However, the ministry recently acknowledged that the deal has been canceled, SCAN reported. According to media reports, the investors may seek arbitration. For comparison, the guaranteed price for Volitalia's Karavasta is EUR 24.89 per MWh.

Application received for 50 MW solar power plant without state support

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy received an application last month for the construction of a 50 MW solar power plant in the Sheq Marinas in Fier in the country's southwest. Blessed Investment and Matrix Konstruksion are developing the project, which doesn't count on any state support measures. Balluku noted the power market for consumers connected to the 35 kV network was liberated on March 18 and that the same would be done as soon as possible for customers on the 20 kV system.

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