

The advancement of new solar projects comes on the heels of an announcement last November that Greece hoped to generate about \$49 billion over the next 10 years to invest in projects that lower the country's dependence on fossil fuels. Reuters reported at the time that oil and gas imports accounted for more than 65% of Greece's total energy consumption. Greece's Environment and Energy Minister Kostis Hatzidakis announced plans to invest in two enormous solar facilities on former mining sites. A plant on the Peloponnese Peninsula in southern Greece would be 1 gigawatt, and another for Ptolemaida in the north would be 2 GW.

At a meeting with stakeholders in Ptolemaida, Hatzidakis said that Greece's Public Power Corporation (PPC) would move quickly to install the 2-GW plant in the lignite mining region, Ilias Tsagas reported. PPC also wants to build a 1-GW plant in Megalopoli, which has mining sites and a coal-fired power plant, Tsagas added.

Last year Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis put forth a plan to shut down Greece's lignite-fired power fleet by 2028 and expand the country's mix of renewables to 35% by 2030, according to PV Magazine.

"With utility PPC struggling under a debt mountain, in part thanks to its refusal to deploy clean energy, new CEO George Stassis has turned to renewables to help stave off bankruptcy for the state-owned energy company," Tsagas wrote in September.

Citing a study from the European Union's Joint Research Center, L. Michael Buchsbaum wrote on the site Energy Transition that if solar PV systems were built on post-mined land, the energy from them would roughly equal the coal and lignite-fired generation capacity of all power plants operating in the EU.

In sunny Greece, he wrote, "research shows solar could actually produce far more than the entire fleet of filthy lignite plants that supplies roughly half of Hellenic electricity."

Source: [environmentalleader.com](http://environmentalleader.com)