# SolarAfrica Energy Commences Construction of SunCentral Solar Park in South Africa



**SolarAfrica Energy Begins Building SunCentral Solar Park in South Africa**

SolarAfrica Energy has initiated construction on the first phase of the SunCentral solar park in South Africa's Northern Cape province. This marks SolarAfrica's first large-scale solar plant, which is planned to have a total capacity of 1 GW, built over three phases. The initial phase is expected to have a capacity of approximately 342 MW and entails an investment of about ZAR5 billion (US$272 million). An additional ZAR1 billion (US$54.5 million) will be allocated for the construction of the main transmission substation.

This project results from a public-private partnership between SolarAfrica and the South African utility Eskom. It forms part of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), a government initiative to enhance the country's clean energy output and diversify its electricity sources.

As of the end of 2023, South Africa's installed capacity stood at 65 GW, with 77% from thermal sources, primarily coal, and 9.5% from solar. South Africa aims to achieve a net zero energy system by 2050 amid current challenges of widespread power outages.

**Aramco Awards $25 Billion in Contracts for Jafurah Gas Project**

Saudi Aramco announced on June 30 the awarding of contracts exceeding $25 billion to advance phase two development of the Jafurah unconventional gas field, expand the master gas system, add new gas rigs, and maintain ongoing capacity. Key allocations include $12.4 billion for the Jafurah project, $8.8 billion for the master gas system expansion, and $2.4 billion for new gas rigs.

The Jafurah project involves constructing gas compression facilities, pipelines, and expanding the Jafurah gas plant. It will also see the development of the Riyas natural gas liquids (NGL) fractionation facilities in Jubail to process NGL from Jafurah.

The master gas system's expansion will increase the network size and add 3.15 billion cubic feet per day of capacity by 2028, featuring the installation of around 4,000 km of pipelines and 17 new gas compression trains. Additionally, 23 gas rig contracts worth $2.4 billion and two directional drilling contracts worth $612 million have been awarded, along with 13 well tie-in contracts valued at $1.63 billion.

The Jafurah field contains an estimated 229 trillion cubic feet of raw gas, with initial start-up anticipated in the third quarter of 2025. Aramco expects total investments at Jafurah to exceed $100 billion, aiming for a sustainable sales gas rate of 2 billion cubic feet per day by 2030, along with significant ethane, NGL, and condensate volumes.

Recently, Aramco secured long-term LNG contracts with US companies NextDecade and Sempra and bought a minority stake in MidOcean Energy in September 2022.