

# Kuwait invites bids for first solar energy project

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File picture shows a large solar panel in Hami, northwest China on May 8, 2013. Kuwait invited bids on Wednesday to build a solar farm to produce 70 megawatts of electricity by 2016, the first phase of a plan to generate 2,000 megawatts from renewables in 2030, the project supervisor said.

Kuwait invited bids on Wednesday to build a solar farm to produce 70 megawatts of electricity by 2016, the first phase of a plan to generate 2,000 megawatts from renewables in 2030, the project supervisor said.

Thirty-seven consortia out of 107 pre-qualified to bid, said Salem al-Hajraf, head of energy research at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research.

The second and third phases will produce 930 MW and 1,000 MW, respectively, when the project is completed in 2030, he said.

Fifty [megawatts](#) will be produced from solar thermal sources and 10 each from [photovoltaic](#) and wind sources.

The pioneer project will be built on a 100-square-kilometre (39-square-mile) area in Shagaya, a desert zone 100 km (62 miles) west of Kuwait City, near the borders with Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Hajraf said the target is for [renewable energy sources](#) to contribute up to 15 percent of Kuwait's total power production by 2030.

At present, the OPEC member pumps 3.0 million barrels of crude oil daily. It uses 126 million barrels of oil equivalent for [electricity production](#), which currently stands at around 14,000 MW, with summer consumption approaching the total at peak hours, Hajraf said.

The official gave no details on the cost of the project but said the first phase will be financed by the government. The second and third phases will be offered to investors on Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) basis for 25 years, during which the government pledges to buy all output.

When complete, the project will be enough to supply electricity to 100,000 homes and save about 12.5 million barrels of oil equivalent per year, Hajraf said.

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