

With the Government of Montserrat's Solar PV farm now producing 1MW of power, could harnessing the sun be the way forward for a 100% renewable energy-powered nation? The EDF11-funded solar farm is split between a 750kWh plant in Lookout and a 250kWh system atop the government buildings in Shinlands.

The island of Montserrat in the Lesser Antilles has some of the highest electricity rates in the world. Half of the cost of the electricity rate is due to the importation of fossil fuels. However, the island has abundant renewable resources and a goal to have 100 percent renewable electricity generation by 2030.

rooftop solar PV system in the capital and a 750 kW ground-mounted solar PV system paired with a 1.1 megawatt-hour (MWh) battery energy storage system (BESS) located approximately 10 minutes from Brades. These initiatives have already reduced the island's diesel-based electricity generation by 14% yearly. Adding more

overview of the energy sector performance in Montserrat. The ERC also includes energy efficiency, technical assistance, workforce, training, and capacity building information, subject to the

Montserrat would have to receive approval from the British Government to access debt financing investing in renewable energy locally with interest rates as low as 4.5%.

Currently, Montserrat only needs 2.2 MW in its peak seasons. Average daily usage is on average up to 1.5 MW. The solar project is to be funded through the European Union's 10th EDF programme to the tune of EC\$3 million.

Montserrat's utility rates start at \$0.53 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for residential customers, which is above the Caribbean regional average of \$0.33/kWh. Like many island nations, Montserrat is almost entirely dependent on imported fossil fuels, leaving it vulnerable to global oil price fluctuations that directly impact the cost of electricity.

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As at 2021, Montserrat relies on diesel for 96.7% of its electricity generation needs, with 3.3 % generated by



## Solar system cost Montserrat

the 250kW solar system installed on the rooftops of the Montobacco Building, PWD Workshop and the Brade power stations.

While the Energy Task Force Report offers options of solar, wind and geothermal energy as possible sources for the island, geothermal has emerged as the optimised choice which can produce the island's power needs most cost effectively.

The use of Solar Panels meets one of the Governments priority needs which is to improve energy security by slowly transitioning to renewable energy. The incorporation of Solar into the Grid on Montserrat, resulted in a 13% renewable energy input on the grid, which is 3% above the European Union's key performance indicator (KPI) of 10% [1] .

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