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Ja should have more renewable energy sources – PM

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Christopher Thomas

Prime Minister Andrew Holness (left) participates in a plaque-unveiling ceremony at the Paradise Park Solar Farm in Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland, during an official inauguration ceremony for the facility on Wednesday. Also pictured, from second left: Cheryl Lewis, deputy director general of the Office of Utilities Regulation; Angella Rainford, director of Eight Rivers Energy Company Limited, which operates the facility; and Energy Minister Fayval Williams.

WESTERN BUREAU:

Prime Minister Andrew Holness believes that Jamaica can potentially host more renewable-energy sources to add up to 50 per cent of electricity to the national grid by 2030, which would also give the country more options for cleaner energy.

Holness expressed that view while addressing yesterday's opening ceremony for the Paradise Park Solar Farm in Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland.

The solar farm, which is Jamaica's first solar-power facility and which was built at a cost of US\$65 million (J\$8.6 billion), has 156,000 solar panels and is capable of supplying 37 megawatts of power to the national grid. It was constructed through

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partnerships with various groups to include French renewable energy company NeoEn and the Development Bank of Jamaica.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

“Jamaica should lead by example and have far more renewables and generate far less carbon to the atmosphere. The challenge is that we have to find an economic way to do it because we want our consumers to have access to cheaper energy, but we also want them to have access to cleaner energy,” Holness said in his address.

According to Holness, Jamaica is currently generating 17 per cent of its electricity through renewable energy when the Jamaica National Energy Policy 2009-2030 proposes a target of 20 per cent renewable energy by 2030.

“Jamaica is now generating 17 per cent of its electricity from wind, solar, and hydro. The proposed target of 20 per cent of renewables in the energy mix by 2030, in my opinion, was not ambitious enough, so I’ve raised the target. We should be at least 30 per cent of renewable energy by 2030, and to give a greater challenge, I’ve said ‘let’s work for 50 per cent’,” said Holness.

“There can be more renewable projects brought to market in Jamaica, and you’ve demonstrated that the technology is there, so that shouldn’t be a constraint. We just need to hear from the Jamaica Public Service that we can take on more renewables, and we need to hear from the Office of Utilities Regulation that the price is right,” Holness added.

The prime minister’s declaration comes at a time when calls are being made for more renewable energy and water-adaptation measures to be adopted in order to combat the issues of climate change.

The project is majority-owned by Neoen alongside Rekamniar Frontier Ventures and MPC Caribbean Clean Energy Fund.

Source: <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20191003/ja-should-have-more-renewable-energy-sources-pm>

70 net billing licences issued since January

Thursday, October 03, 2019



Minister of Science, Energy and Technology Fayval Williams

SEVENTY net billing licences have been issued to power suppliers since the start of the year, bringing to 800 the total number of licences that have been approved since the arrangement started in 2012.

Minister of Science, Energy and Technology Fayval Williams made the disclosure during her opening remarks at the MPC Renewable Energy Forum, held on Tuesday at Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston.

Net billing is a facility that allows people to sell the excess power generated from renewable sources in accordance with a net billing licence and a contract with the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS).

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“At the policy level, we will be revising our national energy policy and sub-policies to further develop the energy sector and establish new targets, especially for renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation,” she said.

Williams said the ministry recognises the importance of harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources to secure Jamaica's energy future, and as a result is always seeking new opportunities and partnerships to build the sector.

She lauded MPC Caribbean Clean Energy Limited for its investment in the renewable energy sector and for helping the country to lead the Caribbean in its renewable energy thrust, through the erection of the Paradise Solar Energy Park in Westmoreland, which is the largest in the region with a 51-megawatt solar plant.

“Our recognition of the integral role that energy plays in development makes our commitment to diversifying our energy mix with the inclusion of renewables and cleaner fuels and securing Jamaica's energy future that much stronger,” the minister said.

Meanwhile, chief executive officer of MPC Capital, Ulf Hollander, said that the need for cleaner energy in the island and the Caribbean at large is very obvious, adding that the potential for renewable energy production in the region is enormous.

“It is a widely accepted thesis that the dependence on fossil fuel has to come down; it has to be reduced,” Hollander said.

“This region and this country, in particular, knows what it means to be dependent on commodity prices, and the lasting impact it has on the economy and also on politics,” he said.

Citing Bloomberg, an international financial media, he said wind and solar energy can cover two-thirds of the global energy needs and, luckily for Jamaica, the island has a boundless supply of wind and sun.

Turning to the solar park that MPC has built in the country, which sells power to JPS at US8.5 cents per kilowatt hour, Hollander said the plant demonstrates that renewable energy can provide clean energy that can compete with conventional electricity sources.

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Source: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/70-net-billing-licences-issued-since-january_176230