

Oserian enhances carbon-free footprint, launches new solar power plant in Kenya

Flower exporter, Oserian Development Company has launched its solar energy power plant with a capacity to generate 1mw. Integrated with the existing geothermal power, the firm will now produce sufficient renewable energy for consumption by tenants and residents of the Two Lakes Industrial Park. Speaking during the launch in Naivasha, managing director Neil Heilings said renewable energy was the way to go to reduce the cost of power, a big hurdle to Kenya's development. "The initiative supports Kenya's Agenda 4 - providing cheaper renewable energy for industrial take-off."



Image(s) Supplied.

The power plant has been developed in partnership with Premier Solar, Solarise, Ololdien Engineering & Estate, and Dubai Carbon.

The event was presided over by Nakuru County Governor, Lee Kinyanjui. Kinyanjui said his government will support the private sector to steer development in the region, expressing pride that Nakuru County was home to the largest geothermal plant in Africa, and fourth in the world.

The solar plant comes a month after the firm was named the 2019 Renewable Energy Champion in the Kenya Association of Manufacturers Energy awards in March.

Driving environmental stewardship

With the solar plant, Oserian has moved closer to its 2020 Vision of being a carbon-free environment. The firm introduced geothermal powered tugs (trucks) two years ago that transport flowers from greenhouses to the pack house, a development that has saved about 300,000 litres of diesel leading to massive savings and a cleaner environment. This essentially makes Oserian flowers more acceptable in the markets that are demanding proof of environmental stewardship in the production of the goods they purchase.

Further, with geothermal heating, Oserian has reduced use of synthetic pesticides to control pests and diseases by regulating humidity in the greenhouses. "By reducing chemicals we have healthier plants, a cleaner environment and a safer workforce", added Mary Kinyua, director of administration.



Premier Solar managing director, Rupesh Hidocha said Kenya has a naturally rich solar and wind resource which should be harnessed for renewable energy generation.

The Dubai-based solar specialist business opened a Kenya subsidiary two years ago, has laid 3,000 solar panels at Oserian, designed in such a way that at no one time will the panels be covered by shadow to maintain maximum exposure to sunlight throughout the day.

Patrick Huber, managing director, Solarise that financed the project said solar plants are a long-term investment with a 25-year lifespan. He urged businesses keen on going solar to consult so as to get the basics right on the suitable technology to choose for their respective regions.

Dubai Carbon's Thomas Bosse said Oserian has embraced Green Growth, a pursuit of the United Nations Environment Programme that was offering advice to businesses to take advantage of nature to develop tools and mechanisms through which they can operate in a sustainable world.

In his closing remarks, Heilings said Oserian was willing to share its experience in this journey to enable partners in developing renewable energy put their brains together for the benefit of all.

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