

# Laos bolsters support for renewable energy

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INVESTMENT IN renewable energy is fully supported by the government to ensure power sustainability for domestic consumption as well as export to neighbouring countries, according to a nine-month report for 2017 by Laos' Ministry of Energy and Mines.

The government is now focusing on the development of renewable energy including solar power, wind, biogas, and biofuel, it said.

In the area of solar power, the government is working in collaboration with a private operator to conduct and carry out a feasibility study on building a 400MW solar power plant in Savannakhet province.

A 100MW solar power project has been approved by the Ministry of Energy and Mines, while EDL-Generation Public Company has given EDL-GEN Solar Power permission to install solar panels and launched the project last year.

In 2016, the United States approved a sizable grant for a 20MW solar power plant feasibility study in Laos to power 30,000 households.

The project supports both Laos' energy sector

strategy and clean energy development in Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the government in August last year for the development of a solar project in Xekong province with an installed capacity of 300MW to 350MW.

The report also unveiled that recently the government and Impact Energy Asia Limited successfully carried out a feasibility study on wind power development in the provinces of Savannakhet, Khammuan and Xekong.

Combined, these three plants will have an installed capacity of about 600MW, and the project developer is now in negotiation with a Vietnamese buyer.

At the same time, the Renewable Energy Institute under the Ministry of Energy and Mines in collaboration with State Pinggao Group and Electricite du Laos (EDL) will carry out a wind power development project in Champassak province.

This project will have an installed capacity of 50MW targeting four different zones to install the wind turbines with most to be located in Pakxong district.

A senior official at EDL-Generation Public Company has predicted that Laos will be using 144MW of solar energy annually by 2025.