

## Sunshine instead of blackouts: Cuba unveils solar plans



Website of the Cuban Evisa portal (source: [Evisa/Mincex](#))

While the [energy crisis](#) continues to have a firm grip on Cuba (the generation deficit was recently back in the critical range of well over 1500 megawatts), the state electricity supplier UNE has [clarified its](#) plans for the planned expansion of solar energy this year. The plans are a core element of the exit strategy from the energy crisis, with which the country wants to reduce its dependence on imported fuels and dilapidated power plants.

Cuba plans to install 55 new solar parks by the end of the year, each with a capacity of 21.8 megawatts, adding up to a total capacity of 1,200 megawatts. This would be equivalent to the capacity of two large thermal power plants. The target for the overall project is to have a total of 92 parks with a capacity of 2,012 megawatts by 2026.

To store the energy, the utility company also wants to build four large battery centers, each with a capacity of 50 megawatts. These are to be built in the city of Bayamo, on the grounds of the Havana University of Technology (CUJAE), in Havana's Cotorro district and in the town of Cueto in Holguín. This means that two of the storage blocks would be located in Havana and two in the east of the country. In total, the storage capacity would be 200 megawatts.

The party newspaper *Granma* [describes in a report](#) the construction of a solar park near Havana's central nursing school: work began there in March last year. In July, the pile-driving work began after 16,380 piles had arrived. In August, 1,638 installation tables were set up, which will later support the solar modules.

After 500-600 tables were assembled, the installation of the first panels began. A total of 42,588 modules with seven inverters will be used in this park, each of which can produce a

peak output of 560 watts. A 34.5 kV high-voltage cable was laid a few days ago, which will connect the park to the grid on February 21, when it is scheduled for completion.

In implementing the project, Cuba is relying on standardization. There will be two types of solar parks, delivered as a complete set by container. Type A consists of 43,903 panels, each with an output of 555 watt-hours, mounted on 15,680 piles. Type B consists of 42,588 panels with an output of 560 watt-hours each, mounted on 16,380 posts. Despite the small technical differences, both types are expected to achieve the same minimum output of 21.8 megawatts.

Regionally, the expansion is to be spread across all provinces (with the exception of the Isle of Youth). The largest solar capacity will be installed in the western province of Mayabeque, where 10 parks with an output of 218 megawatts are to be built. This will be followed by the two central provinces of Ciego de Ávila and Villa Clara, where nine parks each with an output of 196 megawatts are planned. ([Cubaheute](#))