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Chile s new battery energy storage system



Overview

Engie Chile has completed the energization of its 660 MWh Tocopilla Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), while Trina Storage and Atlas Renewable Energy have advanced the 932 MWh Copiapó PV + BESS project – one of the largest grid-forming installations in Latin America. Is Chile ready for a standalone energy storage project?

This project alone nears the capacity (13GWh) the Chilean Ministry of Energy sought in a public land bidding auction for standalone energy storage projects in May of 2024. Chile has been one of the countries at the forefront of the renewable energy transition in Latin America, first with solar PV and now with BESS.

How many energy storage projects are in Chile?

According to a December 2023 publication on the InvestChile website, the country had 23 approved energy storage projects with a total of 3,000 MW of capacity. Chile is exploring a variety of solutions to keep abreast of the changing energy demand landscape ranging from BESS to innovative projects using CO₂.

Where are Chile's battery energy storage facilities located?

Chile's first battery energy storage projects were commissioned in 2009, and all but two of its 16 administrative regions have facilities in operation, under construction or in the planning stage. The greatest installed capacity is found in the northern regions of Antofagasta and Tarapacá, the country's solar powerhouses.

What is the largest battery energy storage system in Latin America?

ENGIE obtained approval from the National Electricity Coordinator (CEN) to start commercial operation of BESS Coya, the largest battery energy storage system in Latin America to date. This system has a storage capacity of 638 MWh, with 139 MW of installed capacity.

Why is energy storage important in Chile?

Image: Greenergy Grid constraints have prevented Chile from maximising the potential of its world-class solar resources. Energy storage has, therefore, become a necessity to ensure the financial viability of PV projects, writes Jonathan Tourino Jacobo.

How much energy storage will Chile have in 2024?

During the Energy Storage Summit Latin America (ESS LatAm) in October 2024, Ana Lía Rojas, executive director at the Chilean renewable energy and energy storage association (ACERA), explained how the current levels of curtailment in Chile, which could end up at approximately 5TWh in 2024, could power up to 3.4GW of 4-hour duration energy storage.

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