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Robben Island adopts a green energy supply

African Utility Week offers unique technical site visits

ROBBEN Island is renowned for being the place where South Africa's first democratically elected president, Nelson Mandela, was jailed for 18 years of his 27-year prison sentence. The UNESCO World Heritage Site has recently adopted a sustainable blueprint for its diverse eco-system. The National Department of Tourism (DoT) commissioned a solar microgrid, awarding Cape Town-based SOLA Future Energy an EPC contract to design and construct a solar energy microgrid to reduce the island's dependency on expensive heavy fuel oil. The project is the first of its kind on an island as part of a grid resolution, among other things, aimed at reducing the carbon footprint. The system consists of a solar photovoltaic (PV) farm, combined with



Photograph provided by ABB

a lithium-ion battery storage facility and smart controllers to ensure a seamless electricity supply, whilst significantly reducing the island's fossil fuel consumption.

Robben Island has an energy usage profile that comprises residential needs, desalination, harbour and offices; in total, the island uses almost 2M kWh of electricity annually. The solar microgrid, which comprises 1,960 Canadi-

an Solar (CS6U-M-340 W) high efficiency modules, will produce almost 1M kWh of electricity annually, significantly reducing the costs of buying diesel and transporting it to the island.

Technology in action at African Utility Week

To see the Robben Island solar microgrid in action, book a site visit to this project at **African Utility Week** which will include other his-

torical highlights on this World Heritage Site. The event returns to the CTICC in Cape Town from 15-17 May. Other technical tours that delegates can book for are the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the only nuclear power station in Africa at Koeberg and another solar installation at Lourensford wine estate. Content provided by www.esi-africa.com and www.african-utility-week.com