

Financing a renewable-powered future in the Philippines

Standard Chartered acts as mandated lead arranger, lender and hedge counterparty supporting Vena Group's new Opus Solar Energy Project



The Opus Solar Energy Project will be located in Ilocos Norte, near Vena Group's existing Currimao Solar Project 1

Standard Chartered is one of seven international lenders to have participated in the project financing of Vena Group's Opus Solar Energy Project in the province of Ilocos Norte, a large utility-scale facility expected to add new capacity to the national power grid and widen the Philippines' renewable energy capacity.

The proceeds from the financing will support the development of a 300-megawatt-peak, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic plant in Paoay, a coastal town in northern Luzon. Once built, the facility will supply electricity to the national grid through a 230-kilovolt connection point.

Mike Samson, Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Philippines, says the structure and wider regional value of the Opus Solar Energy Project made it a strong financing opportunity.

"The Opus Solar Energy Project is the first fully non-recourse renewable energy financing in the Philippines executed solely with international banks. Standard Chartered is proud to be part of the project, which demonstrates our leadership in project financing in the region," he explains.

The partnership also stands as the first US dollar (USD)-denominated renewable energy project in the Philippines supported by international banks and linked to a Green

Energy Auction Program offtake. The revenue model relies on a 20-year renewable energy purchase agreement with the National Transmission Corporation, backed by the Green Energy Auction allowance fund.

Standard Chartered played crucial roles in the deal, serving as mandated lead arranger, lender and hedge counterparty. In these roles, the bank was at the centre of structuring the financing package and guiding Opus Solar Energy on approach to managing financial risks linked to the project's long operating life.

The group driving this landmark project, Singapore-based Vena Group, ranks among the largest independent renewable energy producers in the Asia-Pacific region. The company holds a BBB-minus rating from S&P Global Ratings. This is complemented by a proven track record in developing and delivering large-scale energy projects across multiple markets.

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF ILOCOS NORTE AS A RENEWABLE ENERGY HUB

Vena Group selected Ilocos Norte after evaluating solar resources and infrastructure. The province was seen as an ideal choice as it has built a reputation as a renewable energy corridor in Northern Luzon, with wind and solar facilities linked to major transmission lines.

The solar plant is part of the Philippine Government's Department of Energy's Green Energy Auction Program 2, which aims to add 3.4 gigawatts of renewable capacity by 2026. Once fully operational, the Ilocos Norte facility is projected to generate enough electricity to meet the annual consumption of approximately 445,000 households. Vena also estimates that the project could avoid greenhouse gas emissions by about 349,000 metric tons each year.

Beyond energy production, Vena Group has noted that renewable energy investments can contribute to both energy supply and economic activity in host communities.

"The Philippines remains as one of Vena Group's most dynamic growth markets, with vast potential for renewable development.

We are committed to expanding our renewable energy portfolio through projects that deliver tangible value to local communities and the economy. Our full-cycle approach — from engineering to operations — creates jobs, builds infrastructure, and advances national goals for sustainable growth and energy independence," says Simone Grasso, CIO of Vena Group and Global Head of Vena Nexus.



Simone Grasso, CIO of Vena Group and Global Head of Vena Nexus

ESTABLISHING A BLUEPRINT FOR CROSS-BORDER FINANCING

Standard Chartered executed the transaction with Vena Group through coordination between its Singapore team and its Philippine office, which enabled a portion of the loan to be booked onshore. The execution demonstrates how the Bank's integrated network played a role in enabling efficient cross-border capital deployment.

"We are committed to expanding our footprint in the rapidly developing ASEAN renewable energy sector, in particular through non-recourse project financing," Mr. Samson added.

Both Standard Chartered and Vena Group expect the Opus Project to serve as an example for renewable energy deals in the Philippines and across the region.

"The global push towards reducing carbon emissions and combating climate change is driving countries in the Asia-Pacific region to adopt more ambitious renewable energy goals,"

says Mr. Samson. "With ambitious energy targets being set by governments, we are seeing increased demand from private and public offtakers alike. We expect many other foreign developers to replicate the success of the Opus Project and explore diversification of financing sources beyond local financing."

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Mike Samson, CEO, Standard Chartered Philippines