



China approves 2 GW Lawa scheme on the Sichuan-Tibet border

China's state planning agency, the National Development and Reform Commission, announced on 15 January that it had approved the development of the 2000 MW Lawa hydropower project on the upper reaches of the river Jinsha on the border between the southwestern province of Sichuan and the Tibet autonomous region. The project, which will require a total investment outlay of Yuan 30.97 billion (US\$ 4.59 billion), will be developed by Huadian Group Corporation, which will hold a 48 per cent stake in the project, with minority stakes held by provincial firms, according to a

statement published on its website. The project will feature a 239 m-high dam on the Jinsha, a tributary of the Yangtze, China's longest river, and will impound a reservoir, which will submerge about 31 km² of land, it added. The Lawa plant, which will be equipped with four turbine-generator units, is expected to generate average annual output of about 8.36 TWh, the planning agency added.

The planned total investment includes a budget of Yuan 2.19 billion to cover the costs of relocating and compensating people displaced by the project. "Great importance must be attached to environmental

protection and migrant resettlement work during the construction," the State planner said in its statement, reflecting China's more cautious approach to major new domestic projects amid growing concerns over the environmental and social costs of large hydropower dams.

In its statement, the NDRC also said it would look at ways of using the new project to boost local income. Many new facilities are located in remote regions of Tibet, and the southwestern provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan, where relocation and social and environmental costs can be minimized.

Project commissioned in Nghe An, Vietnam

General view of the Xoong Con powerplant in Vietnam.



Flovel of India announced on 14 January that it had successfully commissioned the 17 MW Xoong Con hydropower plant in Vietnam's north

central province of Nghe An. The run-of-river project in the Tuong Duong District was synchronized to the grid on 18 December, according to the company. Under a contract awarded by MCK Investment and Construction JSC, the local owner-operator, Flovel, designed, manufactured and supplied the complete electro-mechanical equipment including two 8.5 MW horizontal Francis turbines, generators, an oil pressure unit, transformers, all electrical and electrical balance of plant and a 110 kV switchyard, as well as

supervising the installation, testing and commissioning of all equipment.

Civil works were undertaken by the owner-operator, whose primary business is the construction of roads and bridges. The project is the first to be equipped and commissioned by Flovel in Nghe An, Vietnam's largest province. The project will generate 50 GWh under a rated net head of 129.35 m.

Flovel has to date supplied and installed equipment for 23 hydropower projects in Vietnam.

Government support for the Taltson expansion project

The Governments of Canada and Northwest Territories are to invest jointly more than C\$ 1.2 million in the expansion of the Taltson hydro plant to promote cleaner, more reliable energy supply in remote communities, reduce pollution and create new opportunities for social and economic development in northern Canada.

The investment, announced on 23 January by Canada's Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade Dominic LeBlanc, Northwest Territories Premier Bob McLeod and Minister of Infrastructure and Industry, Tourism and Investment Wally Schumann, will

support partnerships with indigenous governments and fund initial engineering work, including reviewing and updating past feasibility studies. The Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor) is contributing C\$ 480 000 to the project, to support feasibility and engineering study work and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is also investing C\$ 120 000 for this work. Natural Resources Canada and Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada are providing C\$ 619 950 to support Indigenous engagement.

The proposed initial expansion of the 18 MW run-of-river project will increase capacity by 60 MW and link it to the Snare hydroelectric system near Yellowknife, the capital of the Northwest Territories, through an HVDC submarine cable across Great Slave Lake. The Snare hydropower system, which is on the river Snare about 140 km northwest of Yellowknife, comprises four separate plants totalling 30 MW, 8.5 MW Snare Rapids, 7.4 MW Snare Falls, 4.3 MW Snare Cascades (leased from the

Dogrib Power Corporation), and 10 MW Snare Forks.

The project will save up to 240 000 tonne of emissions each year, equivalent to about 48 000 cars, as well as stimulate the local economy, and provide employment for local people. Increased generation would also help stabilize tariffs for residents and businesses.

Further expansion of the Taltson river system, which has an estimated generation potential of 200 MW, will see the Taltson hydroelectric system connected with provincial electricity networks, creating a more integrated power system that will allow for increased north-south energy trade. The project is part of a full infrastructure corridor concept covering energy, transportation and communications, which would provide clean energy to the mineral-rich Slave Geological Province.

The Taltson plant, which is about 64 km north of Fort Smith on the river Taltson, currently supplies consumers in Fort Smith, Hay River, Hay River Reserve and Fort Resolution and Enterprise.

Aerial view of the Taltson hydro site in the Northwest Territories, Canada

