

Mara Serena Safari Lodge launches its solar power plant

20 December 2019, Masai Mara Game Reserve, Kenya - Serena Hotels in partnership with Mettle Solar OFGEN have transformed a third property, Mara Serena Safari Lodge in Kenya, into a fully solar powered property. The inauguration of the Mara Serena solar power plant demonstrates Serena Hotels commitment to be the 'Full Scale Solar Pioneers' in the East African hospitality sector.

The solar power plant constructed by Mettle Solar OFGEN has an output of 640kWp with 1400kWh of storage utilising TESLA Lithium-ion batteries. This provides capacity to supply Mara Serena Safari Lodge's total energy requirements.

Mr. Mahmud Jan Mohamed, Managing Director, Serena Hotels says, "This is an exciting and sustainable approach to addressing our energy needs, aligning our established dedication in environmental stewardship that has been in existence for over four decades."

Mettle Solar OFGEN has implemented similar off-grid solar systems in other Serena properties including Kilaguni Serena Safari Lodge (2017) and Amboseli Serena Safari Lodge (2018). Additionally, the firm commissioned two grid-tied hybrid solar systems in early 2018 at Lake Elmenteita Serena Camp and Sweetwaters Serena Camp. The approximate cumulative environmental impact of these initiatives is as follows:

- Total installed capacity: 1,760kWp with 3,900kWh of storage.
- Total green energy produced to date: 2,771 MWh.
- CO₂ avoided: 1,949 tons.
- Trees that would need to be planted to extract the said CO₂ within 10 years: 155,950 trees.

Kilaguni Serena, Amboseli Serena and now Mara Serena, all built in the 1970s within National Parks/Game Reserves are not only a 'one-of-a-kind getaways', but a leading-edge example of how clean, renewable energy independence can be successfully achieved through the installation of off-grid Solar PV systems, even in such challenging safari locations.

Mr. Francois Van Themaat, Managing Director, Mettle Solar OFGEN says, "We are proud to be part of this transformational sustainability project in the East African hospitality industry, particularly with Serena Hotels playing a leading role. The use of natural resources such as a solar is being embraced as it is one of the most sustainable ways to preserve the ecosystem."

All Serena's programs are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) set out by the United Nation Development Program. The Solar Power Plant aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals - SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy; SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; SDG 13: Climate Action; and SDG 15: Life on Land.

The demand from eco-travelers is growing and Serena continues to adapt its business best practices model to meet the ecological travel experiences and expectations of today's guest.

Serena's intention is to continue the implementation of these and other sustainability initiatives. These will be in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement as it continues to be part of transitioning Eastern African economies into low carbon economies.

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About Tourism Promotion Services (TPS), Serena Hotels

Serena Hotels offers quality accommodation in a collection of 24 up-market hotels, safari lodges, camps and resorts within 6 countries in the Eastern Africa region (Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Uganda, Rwanda and Mozambique) and 11 properties in Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan). These properties are strategically located to offer exciting circuits for guests in some of the most exquisite and prime locations in Eastern Africa and Asia. With a focus on product, service standards and guest satisfaction, Serena Hotels continues in its quest to be the hotel of choice for the discerning traveller providing guests with quality accommodation, conference and holiday solutions. Serena takes pride in the level of personal care and warmth of welcome that it extends to its guests. Each Serena property is designed to complement its environment, while nurturing the landscape, culture and community that surrounds it. The Serena Group leads the industry in environmental sustainability.

About Mettle Solar OFGEN

Mettle Solar OFGEN Limited is a Kenyan company that specialises in designing, funding and developing solar power projects in Africa. The company is a collaboration between Mettle Solar (a specialist renewable energy funding) and OFGEN (a solar power plant developer and EPC – Engineering, Procurement and Construction). CDC Group, the UK's development finance institution, has recently become the largest shareholder in Mettle Solar through its newly established Gridworks investment platform.

Mettle Solar OFGEN's business focuses on the design, funding, construction, and maintenance of commercial and industrial solar photovoltaic (PV) systems for private and utility level consumption, ranging in size up to 10MWp.

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Read online: <https://www.akdn.org/press-release/mara-serena-safari-lodge-launches-its-solar-power-plant>