



# CTDC proposes underwater Puerto Rico-Dominican Republic power line

By [Eva Llorens](#) | 25 Mar 2024 | 19:37 BT

Caribbean Transmission Development Company (CTDC) is proposing to build a bidirectional 320 KV, high-voltage direct current (HVDC) subsea transmission line from Puerto Rico to the Dominican Republic.

The proposed USD 1bn underwater cable will operate at 320 KV direct current with a capacity to transport electricity of up to 700 MW in either direction without interrupting the grid's operations. The cable will also permit the black start of the Puerto Rico grid in the event of a complete loss of grid power, according to Rafael Vélez Domínguez, founder of CTDC's parent company investment firm Atabey Capital, and Tirso Selman, the project's director.



The proposed 'Hostos' project, named after Puerto Rican educator and lawyer Eugenio María de Hostos, is under evaluation by the Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office for a presidential permit, a process required of all projects between the United States and a foreign country. Stakeholders have until 15 April to submit comments on the project, after submitting the presidential permit application in September.

Since the 1970s, proposals to build a power line between Puerto Rico and other countries, most recently Colombia and Venezuela, have been made. "Those have remained as ideas, but we wanted to see if it was technically feasible," Vélez Domínguez said.

CTDC hired Italian firm Cesi, a subsidiary of transmission system operator Terna Group, to do feasibility studies for the project. The Italian firm determined that the interconnection of the cable should be between the city of Mayagüez in Puerto Rico and San Pedro de Marcóris in the Dominican Republic. The cable will connect to the existing grid at the electrical substation known as Mayagüez TC. On the Dominican Republic side, the line is currently proposed to make landfall at an area known as El Cabo, south of the Cap Cana resort development and north of the Punta Espada National Park.

Selman, who is in charge of the technical aspects of the project, said he proposed the use of the HVDC technology because it is the one used to connect long distances among countries, allows for bidirectionality, and its power losses are much lower than with other types of transmission lines.

Vélez Domínguez said the project will be financed entirely with private funds, but he also intends to apply for federal grants that are available for these kinds of projects. He said he has already approached local and international banks but declined to reveal their names.

CTDC has not applied for permits in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic yet because they are waiting to get the presidential permit first, a process that will take until the end of the year.

"We want to concentrate on the presidential permit because it is the most complicated," he said. The presidential permit entails the interaction of federal agencies like the State Department and the Department of Defense.

However, the executives said they have "socialized the projects with groups" in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, who regard it positively. However, they declined to provide specific names because the project is still in the early phases.

"We discussed the project with Dominican President Luis Abinader and with Governor Pedro Pierluisi," Vélez Domínguez said.

He said they have also discussed the project with the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA), with Genera, the private operator of PREPA's legacy power plants and with LUMA Energy, the private operator of PREPA's transmission and distribution system.

Vélez Domínguez said LUMA Energy requested technical information to determine if the project should be included in the US territory's Integrated Resource Plan, Puerto Rico's long-term plan for its energy needs. The idea is to obtain a power

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LUMA, Genera and the Puerto Rico Energy Bureau did not answer requests for comment. The executives said Jacobs Engineering is helping them company in the process for the presidential permit. They have also hired the firm Pellerano Nadal Law & Consulting in the Dominican Republic. In Puerto Rico, they said they have hired the law firms DLA Piper and Pientrantoni, Méndez & Alvarez.

Pellerano Nadal Law & Consulting could not be reached for comment while DLA Piper and Pietrantoni did not answer requests for comment.



Sector:

Power

Electricity Transmission

Geography:

Latin America

North America

Dominican Republic

Topic:

Greenfield: Design Build

Greenfield: Project procurement and development

Greenfield: Construction finance

Operational assets: Concessions

Transaction Profile
25 Mar 2024 Preferred Proponent Greenfield
Hostos Puerto Rico to the Dominican Republic HVDC Subsea Transmission Line

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