

French Corsica to get dozens of solar EV canopies

Written by Albert Graham, SCD.Com Guest Columnist
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guest columnist

Visitors to the island of Corsica, will soon be able to soak up the sun on the beaches of this beautiful island while their electric vehicles (EVs) soak up the same sunshine that will later be used to power those EVs around the island.

Those are the plans of a young and dynamic upstart company called [CorsicaSole](#) based out of Paris and in Corsica. CorsicaSole has created a project called

[DrivEC](#)

in partnership with Europcar, the large European rental car company, to make available up to 1,000 pure EV rental vehicles on the island of Corsica.

These EVs will be recharged by several solar EV charging stations designed, managed and deployed by CorsicaSole at strategic locations around the island.

Practical, CO2 free transportation

"It's all about providing practical transportation while addressing the CO2 emission reduction challenge that the island of Corsica currently faces," explains CorsicaSole's Managing Director

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Michael Coudyser, a graduate of the well-known Polytechnique Science and Engineering school in Paris who has been leading the project since its inception in 2009.



Corsica lies off the southeast coast of France but it is not tied into the mainland's energy grid. Consequently, it does not benefit from the nuclear and other low CO2 emitting energy which the mainland sends to users around the country.

Corsica relies instead on its own electric generation stations. These use high CO2 emitting fossil fuels to generate their energy. Consequently, Corsica's carbon footprint weighs heavily on France's and the European mandate for reduction of CO2 emissions within the upcoming years.

“This situation need not be like this,” Coudyser notes.

Corsica's unique situation

By studying transportation trends and energy demands on the island, project DrivECO has identified some unique trends about this location:

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- The largest demand for transportation and energy on the island comes from tourists. Almost three million tourists visit the island each year, which is about ten times Corsica's population.
- The strongest demand for transportation thus occurs during the high tourist season, which happens to coincide with the periods of most sunshine on the island.



When these two observations are dovetailed, the CorsicaSole team's proposition of making available an EV + PV product aimed at the large tourist market emerges as a clear winner.

Project DrivECO consists of placing solar EV canopy stations at about 50 key locations throughout the island frequented by tourists (beaches, near hotels, airport, ferry stations etc.). At these locations, EVs (and especially those rented from EuropCar) will be able to charge on sunshine for a small fee.

Based on the topography of the island and the points of highest tourist concentration, project DrivECO envisions placing recharging stations around the island approximately every 50 kilometers.

25 kW each

The solar EV charging stations will have the following attributes:

- Surface area of about 100 square meters each;
- Capacity of 25kW;
- Able to charge up to four vehicles at a time;
- In general, there will be four solar EV canopies at each of the 50 parking areas/lots where DrivECO wants to provide EV + PV charging;

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