

LUSAKA TIMES

Zambia's 600 MW Coal-Fired Plant Reaches 80% Equipment Procurement in Sinazongwe

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The Wonderful Group of Companies has announced that equipment procurement for a 600 megawatt thermal power plant in Sinazongwe District, Zambia, has reached 80 percent completion. The project is being developed in partnership with ZCCM-IH, the Zambian state mining investment vehicle, signalling a significant public-private collaboration in the country's energy sector.

The development integrates coal mining with power generation, reflecting a dual-resource approach aimed at addressing Zambia's chronic electricity deficit while stimulating economic activity in the Southern Province. Sinazongwe District sits within a known coal-bearing region, making co-location of extraction and generation a logistically coherent strategy. The scale of the facility — 600 MW — would represent a material addition to Zambia's installed generation capacity, which has been severely strained by drought-related underperformance at hydropower stations in recent years.

ZCCM-IH's involvement lends the project institutional credibility and signals government alignment, which is typically a prerequisite for large-scale energy infrastructure financing in Sub-Saharan Africa. The partnership structure also suggests that offtake arrangements and grid connectivity discussions are likely already in progress with ZESCO, Zambia's national utility, though no details on power purchase agreements or commissioning timelines were disclosed in the announcement.

For the broader region, a new baseload thermal facility of this size could have implications for the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), where Zambia has historically been a net importer during drought periods. Bringing reliable coal-fired capacity online would reduce pressure on cross-border power trading and potentially reposition Zambia as a more stable contributor to regional grid stability.

At 80 percent procurement, the project is transitioning from a supply-chain phase into an execution phase. This window — between equipment arrival and full commissioning — is typically when specialist engineering, construction, and technical service contracts are awarded. The thermal power and coal mining combination also implies parallel infrastructure requirements: materials handling, water systems, ash management, transmission interconnects, and potentially a dedicated rail or road spur for coal logistics. No contractor appointments or EPC details were referenced in the available information.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

The project is entering its execution phase with equipment procurement near complete, making this a near-term window for Norwegian service companies with thermal plant construction, industrial electrical systems, or mining-linked infrastructure expertise to explore subcontracting or technical advisory roles. Partners should monitor ZCCM-IH and Wonderful Group procurement channels for EPC and specialist service tenders. Given ZCCM-IH's institutional role, engagement through formal channels or in-country representation is advisable.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Service:** Industrial instrumentation and control system specialists should track upcoming EPC subcontracts as the plant moves from procurement into construction and commissioning phases.
- **Pipeline:** Water supply, slurry handling, and ash disposal pipeline infrastructure associated with a coal-fired thermal facility may require specialist design and installation contractors.

- **Drilling:** The integrated coal mining component will require ongoing drilling and extraction services, presenting a steady workstream for companies with surface mining or coal seam drilling capabilities.
- **LNG:** If project developers consider hybrid or backup generation options to complement coal supply variability, LNG-to-power solutions could be positioned as a complementary technology — worth monitoring but not yet signalled.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** No direct subsea or FPSO relevance; Norwegian companies in this segment should monitor but not prioritise this project at current stage.

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