

Kenya: Menengai Geothermal Development Project
African Development Bank
December 14, 2011
U.S. Position

The United States strongly supports the goals of this project and Kenya's efforts to develop its geothermal energy resources in a transparent and sustainable manner, as part of the broader development of the substantial geothermal energy resources in East Africa.

Unlocking this enormous potential will lead to the expansion of low cost, clean energy that can act as base load power for the region. Over the long term, this will translate into greater access to reliable electricity for households and businesses, enhanced prospects for durable economic growth and poverty reduction, and an assured low carbon growth trajectory for Kenya and the East Africa region as a whole.

The Menengai project, which is expected to lead in a second phase to an additional 400MW of clean electricity generation for Kenya, is an important step towards that long term goal. It will clearly help provide a permanent solution to what have primarily been costly, stop-gap solutions to power sector emergencies in Kenya that have held back economic growth.

The United States would have liked to support this project, but is required to abstain on this operation because the posted environmental impact assessment did not discuss the associated and cumulative impacts of the subsequent power plant and other geothermal developments nearby, as required by U.S. law ("the Pelosi Amendment").

The United States looks forward to future geothermal power projects in Kenya and the East Africa region and requests that comprehensive environmental impact assessments be conducted and posted publicly in country and on the bank's website in sufficient time so that our support is possible.