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Utility-scale solar surges through 30GW while rainbow nation joins the world's top ten

Figures released today by utility solar authority Wiki-Solar.org[1] show that global capacity of utility-scale PV generating capacity is now 30.3GW. This means that 2014, which opened with a capacity of 21.5GW, will be the fifth consecutive record year for the sector.

South Africa has now joined the elite top ten countries for large-scale solar, following the commissioning of the 75MW De Aar 3 project in August.

The installed capacity of utility-scale[2] power plants in the leading countries at the end of September was:

Country	No. of Plants	Capacity MW_{AC}
United States	407	7,083.8
China	245	6,518.3
Germany	281	3,468.0
India	196	2,203.2
United Kingdom	250	1,948.2
Spain	172	1,683.4
Italy	86	901.3
Canada	72	896.8
France	63	819.3
South Africa	20	679.7
Thailand	68	644.9
Ukraine	19	490.2
Japan	24	475.5
Chile	12	460.3
Romania	18	286.1
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The top fifteen markets account for 94% of the world's utility-scale solar

"Grid-feeding solar generation continues to dazzle, with records being broken all over the place", says Wiki-Solar's Philip Wolfe. "Our figures show the USA has become the first country to achieve 7GW of utility-scale PV capacity. Meanwhile the UK will probably be seen to have topped 2GW, when the summer's completed projects are all entered onto the register."

"Japan and Chile continue to climb the table and, with substantial capacity still under development, will be vying for top-ten places before long."

At over 85MW peak, Moncada Energy's De Aar 3 project in the Northern Cape is one of the largest amorphous silicon solar cell installations in the world.

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T E X T E N D S

Notes for editors:

[1] This release on the UK utility-scale solar market is available here: http://wiki-solar.org/library/public/141028_World_capacity_surges_through_30GW_as_rainbow_nation_joins_top_ten.pdf

[2] Following an open consultation, Wiki-Solar defines 'utility-scale solar' as 4 MW_{AC} and above; see: http://wiki-solar.org/data/glossary/utility-scale.html. A capacity rating of 4MW_{AC} equates roughly to the consumption of 1,500 households in Europe.

[3] "Solar Photovoltaic Projects in the mainstream power market" was published in 2012.

[4] Wiki-Solar's database covers over 3,000 utility-scale solar projects, of which about two-thirds are operational, and the remainder are under construction or development.

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