

Record year takes utility-scale solar capacity to 8.5GW

Early entrants retain their lead

Global installed capacity of utility-scale solar power plants topped 8½GW this month, ensuring that 2012 will be a record year with over 3GW of new capacity. Though final annual figures will not be published until the New Year, it is clear from interim data^[1] that this year has comfortably exceeded the 2.3GW of new capacity in 2011. These figures relate only to installations of 10MW and above.

US and European companies still dominate the implementation of large solar plants according to lists published by industry experts Wiki-Solar today.

An impressive seven of the top ten engineering, procurement and construction contractors are from Germany. The top twenty EPC contractors ranked by the capacity of their 10MW+ installations are:

Rank	Chg	EPC contractor	Sites	MWp
1	→	Enerparc	15	607
2	↑	Juwi Solar	16	296
3	↓	First Solar	5	226
4	↓	Sunselex	4	189
5	↓	Q-Cells (now Hanwha Q.Cells)	4	174
6	↓	Saferay	7	160
7	↑	GP Joule	3	131
8	↑	Quanta Power Generation	3	116
9	↓	Belectric	4	112
10	↓	Activ Solar	1	106
11	↓	Gestamp	4	104
12	↑	Conecon	3	99
13	↓	SunEdison	2	95
14	↑	Tozzi Sud	3	95
15	↑	ABC Construction	3	90
16	↓	Elecnor	4	88
17	↑	Sybac Solar	4	85
18	↓	SunRay Renewable (part of SunPower Corp)	1	84
19	↓	Enercons Guset	1	84
20	↑	Cupertino Electric	3	72

“German contractors have maintained a strong position, even as the focus has switched from Germany and other European markets”, says Wiki-Solar’s Philip Wolfe, “many have set up subsidiaries in the USA and other growing markets like India, South Africa and South America.”

“Systems engineering and development are still led by European and US-based companies, while Chinese companies are becoming prominent in the supply of solar modules^[2].”



The top ten listed power off-takers are:

Rank	Chg	power off-taker	Sites	MWp
1	↑	San Diego Gas & Electric	2	295
2	↓	Pacific Gas & Electric	7	189
3	↑	NV Energy	3	100
4	↓	Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand	1	73
5	→	Ontario Power	4	71
6	↓	Sault Sainte Marie P U C	2	60
7	↑	Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam	2	55
8	↑	CPS Energy	3	55
9	↓	envia	1	52
10	↑	Salt River Project	2	50

This shows how independent and regional utilities seem to be the first to embrace solar generation. Philip Wolfe comments: “It is interesting to note that some of the world’s largest utilities are not fully engaged, especially after reports that some German suppliers, which have been sceptical about renewable energy investments, are starting to lose control of their markets.”^[3]

Wiki-Solar has also published a list of the top inverter suppliers to utility-scale projects.

Rank	Chg	inverter supplier	Sites	MWp
1	→	SMA	14	454
2	→	Schneider Electric	9	247
3	↑	PowerOne	5	117
4	↓	Danfoss	3	110
5	↑	Refusol	1	40
6	→	Kaco	2	38
7	↓	Santerno	1	35
8	↓	Xantrex	2	30
9	↑	Siemens	1	15
10	↑	Radius	1	14

The analysis acknowledges that many projects do not record who supplied the inverters, so this ranking is based on sparser information.

E N D S

Notes for editors:

The statistics for utility-scale solar projects of 10MW and over are collated by wiki-solar.org and published on its website at: <http://www.wiki-solar.org/company.html>. At present there are over 300 projects of this size worldwide. Wiki-Solar also maps these projects at: <http://www.wiki-solar.org/map.html>. Projects of 10MW are typically capable of providing an annual output equivalent to the consumption of 3,000 households.

^[1] See international figures at: <http://www.wiki-solar.org/country.html>

The [EPC contractors](#)’, [power off-takers](#)’ and [inverter suppliers](#)’ figures in the ranking list are derived from all projects in the database against which an owner is listed. The data may not be fully complete, and the latter two are based on relatively sparse data – Wiki-Solar



encourages all listed companies to validate project information. Where several companies are listed against a project, the capacity is divided between them equally irrespective of the individual contributions.

The database includes a total of over 320 operational solar generating stations of 10MW and above, with a further 260 sites under development (but not included in the figures, until they become operational).

Projects are now being developed at capacities up to ½ GW. The largest plant currently operating – and still under construction – is Agua Caliente in the South West corner of Arizona, which topped 250MW in September and will eventually total over 300MW.

The book “Solar Photovoltaic Projects in the mainstream power market was published by [Routledge](#) in October.

[2] See separate release about solar module suppliers

[3] See [this Reuters article](#), for example.

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