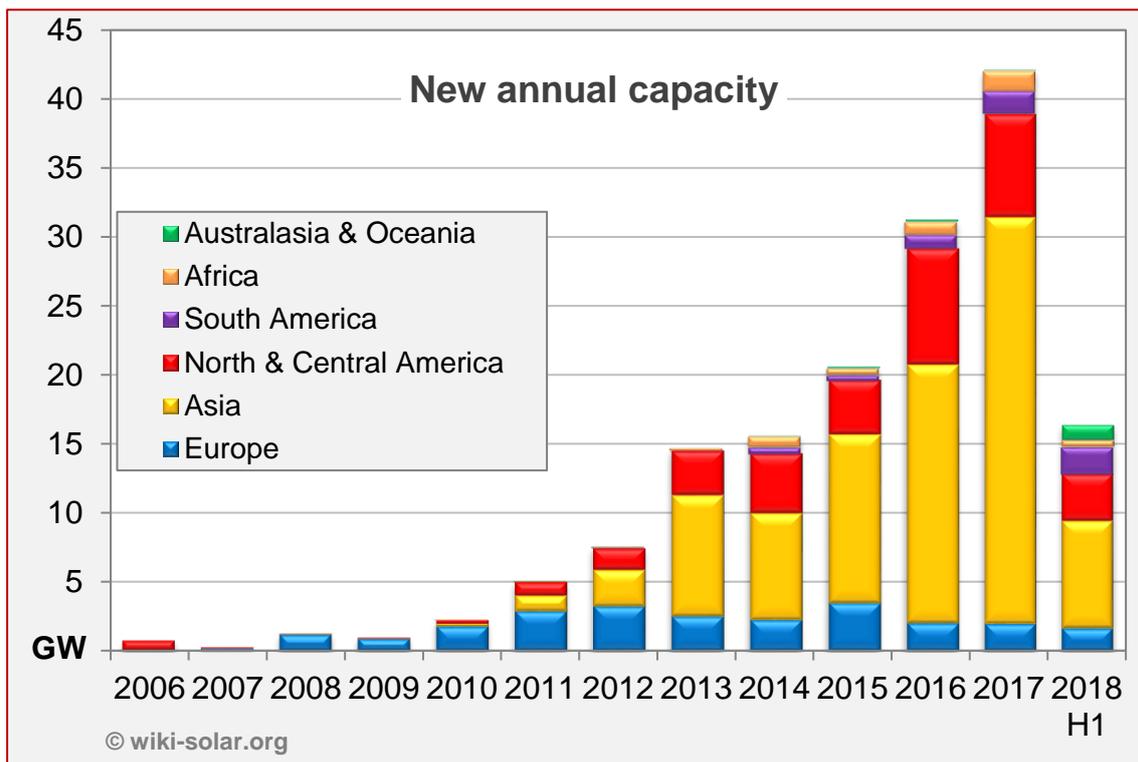


Utility-scale solar faces energy market realities

Half-year figures, published today by Wiki-Solar, show that deployment of utility-scale PV capacity has slowed after eight consecutive years of record growth. New plant commissioned in the first half of 2018 totalled some 16 GW, bringing the cumulative capacity to about 160 GW.



Annual utility-scale solar installations by continent

This represents a decline from the 20 GW installed in the first half of last year, and suggests that 2018 may be the first year this decade to fail to set a new record.

The most obvious slow-down has been in countries where solar has previously enjoyed active support. “China in particular has cut back its solar programme with new utility-scale capacity down about 30% in the first half of 2017”, says Wiki-Solar’s Philip Wolfe. This is partly offset in countries where solar is at – or close to – grid parity, and is competing in the commercial energy market.

“New capacity in North America continues to grow, with projects proving cost-competitive”, says Wolfe. “India is pressing ahead with competitive tendering for solar capacity at economical grid prices. Meanwhile other markets where solar is a low cost alternative, such as Chile, Australia and Brazil are increasing their contribution.”

These countries can be seen rising up the national league table (see overleaf). Japan, France, the Philippines and Thailand are holding their position by steadily increasing capacity. “Although the UK and



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Germany are ‘treading water’, and will tend to slip down the list”, says Wolfe; “Spain has started installing new unsubsidised projects and may soon overtake them again.”

Cumulative utility-scale solar capacity in countries with over ½ GW

	Country	Plants	MW_{AC}
1	China	1,196	56,872
2	United States	1,368	31,045
3	India	746	21,308
4	United Kingdom	896	6,781
5	Germany	527	5,041
6	Spain	220	4,405
7	Japan	224	3,990
8	Chile	52	3,374
9	France	313	3,040
10	South Africa	42	2,127
11	Canada	131	1,702
12	Brazil	22	1,630
13	Australia	40	1,391
14	Italy	149	1,363
15	Philippines	49	1,260
16	Thailand	108	1,227
17	Turkey	96	911
18	Pakistan	7	777
19	Mexico	13	608
20	Israel	36	604
21	United Arab Emirates	5	603
22	Ukraine	20	536

Wiki-Solar reminds readers that the publication of data often lags installations by several months and these figures are therefore subject to revision.

TEXT ENDS

Notes for editors:

- [1] This release on the UK utility-scale solar market is available here: http://wiki-solar.org/library/public/180821_Utility-solar_half-year_figures.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 4 MW_{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 some 10,000 utility-scale solar projects, of which about 2/3 are operational, with the remainder under construction or development. The above figures are based solely on operational capacity; projects under development are excluded until commissioned.

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