South Africa's first CPV Solar Plant Powers UN Conference

Soitec (Euronext), a world leader in generating and manufacturing revolutionary semiconductor materials for the electronics and energy industries, has built a concentrator photovoltaic (CPV) power plant next to Durban, South Africa, as the flagship project for the 17th annual Conference of the Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), being held November 28 to December 9. The 500 kW solar-energy facility, which will power the COP17 global gathering, will be officially inaugurated by South African President Dr. Jacob. G. Zuma on December 4.

Soitec worked closely with the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs (DEA) of South Africa and the local eThekwini Municipality to build the CPV solar plant, which feeds into the area's power-supply grid. The CPV plant was constructed in just one month using the combination of Soitec's international expertise and the local work force. Group Five, an integrated construction services, materials and infrastructure investment group operating in Africa, was the local construction partner for the project.

"CPV offers South Africa huge potential for its natural resource and climate protection," said André-Jacques Auberton-Hervé, president and CEO of Soitec. "After proving our Concentrix™ technology's performance in the region with last year's installation of a 60 kW power plant at the Aquila Private Game Reserve in Touwsrivier, we are proud to continue supporting the country's young but growing renewable-energy sector. Sustainable energy, as we all know, is a prerequisite for a sustainable future."

At the entrance to COP17's Climate Change Response Expo, located adjacent to the ICC, Soitec will display a full-size, 10-meter-high solar panel tracker to give visitors a close-up look at CPV technology. It will be used to charge electric vehicles. Within the exposition, more information will be available at Soitec's stand #101-B and guided tours of the fully functional solar plant will also be offered twice daily from December 5 through December 9 at the installation site in nearby Hazelmere, about 25 kilometers north of Durban.

With installations around the world, CPV technology has proven to be the most efficient and most environmentally friendly solar power technology. It demonstrates unique cost competitiveness compared to other solar technologies, largely due to its higher production yields at peak times and lower construction and maintenance costs. In addition, CPV technology's abilities to operate without cooling water, to withstand hot ambient temperatures and to accommodate the dual use of land with minimal environmental impact make it perfectly suited for use throughout South Africa.

For more information, visit: www.soitec.com **[1]**

Source URL (retrieved on *10/26/2014 - 4:47am*):
http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2011/11/south-africas-first-cpv-solar-plant-powers-un-conference?qt-video_of_the_day=0

Links:
[1] http://www.soitec.com/