



De Aar solar photovoltaic (PV)

# On course

The country's drive towards renewable energy is certainly reaching traction, with the 50 MW De Aar solar photovoltaic (PV) at an advanced stage.



In the atmosphere of the uncertainty about the energy crunch the country is facing, there is good news: progress on the 50 MW De Aar solar photovoltaic (PV) project is concrete evidence that the country is turning its renewable energy potential into reality.

### A consortium

De Aar is the first amongst the 18 solar PV projects that are part of the South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), which collectively represent 632 MW of capacity. It is being constructed by De Aar Solar Power, a consortium comprising Globelec, Mainstream Renewable Power, Thebe Investment Corporation, the Rebuna Litsatsi Trust, Enzani Technologies and Usizo Engineering. Siemens South Africa has been engaged as the engineering, procurement and construction contractor.

### Progress

The Consortium is optimistic that the project is on track to meet all critical milestones ahead of its official commercial operation date of April 2014.

The Eco-Builder learns that the project is at an nearing completion, with about 487 individuals currently on site installing panels, as well as the associated infrastructure and systems.

So far, the following are notable milestones:

- Installation of tables that will eventually hold some 167 580, 290 W-295 W-rated solar panels
- Installation of inverter transformers, inverters and ring main units on site together with all the relevant cabling.
- Installation of a 50 MVA transformer

The final step will be field tests and plant commissioning.

### Local expertise

As practical as possible, the project has engaged manpower drawn from a data base established together with the Emthanjeni municipality, which also owns the 100 ha property on which the project is located.

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