

Sunny outlook for home residents at the Cape: Conergy grid parity plant in Cape Town

Conergy expanding its international presence with market entry in South Africa

Hamburg / Cape Town, 30 April 2013 – Conergy is expanding its international presence with its entry into the South African market. In Cape Town, in the suburb of Milnerton, Conergy and its partner Solsquare have realised the country's first plant for a home for disabled people. Solsquare acted as general contractor on this project, collaborating closely with Conergy in the planning and engineering. The 62 kilowatt grid parity plant operates with 100% own consumption and does not have to rely on any help from state-backed feed-in tariffs. The 48 residents of the home and their 12 carers will cover around 70% of their electricity requirement from the plant in the summer and achieve a level of autonomy of 45% in the winter. The rooftop plants also represent one of the first projects with so-called "automated output power management", which prevents solar power being fed into the grid in line with Cape Town city regulations. The majority of the funding for the project came from the "Energy and Environment Partnership" (EEP), a European development programme for South and East African countries.

Over 250 Conergy "P Series" modules on seven roofs of the welfare facility will produce around 97 megawatt hours of clean solar power a year. One of the plants has been installed on a pitched roof using the Conergy SunTop mounting system; the others on flat roofs using SolarFamulus frames, which provide an incline of thirteen degrees. The solar experts thus achieve the best possible insolation while minimising vulnerability to the strong winds prevalent at the Cape, which can reach speeds of up to 125 kilometres an hour. The solar power plants will be preventing the emission of around 93 tonnes of damaging CO₂ per year in the metropolis near Table Mountain, which corresponds roughly to the annual emissions of around 50 cars in the crowded city.

South African market: dynamic growth expected

"South Africa is a very interesting solar market with great potential," said Jörn Carstensen, responsible for international market development at Conergy. "The market is still at its very beginning, but we are expecting strong growth in the future. In addition to the highly complex state subsidy bidding system REIPPP (Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Programme), there is also a grid parity market developing, which will be independent of subsidies. We believe that the future lies in this market, and we are therefore focusing on this segment in collaboration with our strategic partners."

Grid parity: solar power around 16% cheaper for end consumers than energy from the grid

Besides excellent growth prospects, the South African market offers further advantages. For end consumers such as the home in Cape Town, solar energy is already cheaper than electricity from the grid today. One solar kilowatt hour from the plant on their own roof costs the home operators around 0.81 South African rand, while they pay an average 0.94 rand for each kilowatt hour from the grid. They will thus be saving around 13 South African cents or 16% of the cost with each solar kilowatt hour they consume. In addition to the electricity cost savings, the plant benefits from a scheme to encourage energy

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saving run by the state energy supplier Eskom. For each kilowatt hour of electricity saved during peak load time, the end consumer receives a so-called “Eskom rebate” of 1.20 rand for the first three years from the date of installation. As the plant does not feed power into the grid, the volume of electricity saved is calculated from the amount of electricity generated by the solar plant during peak load hours.

Government plans feed-in tariff and “net metering” probably as of summer 2014

“The home is partly funded by the state and also to a large extent from donations,” said Niels von Hase, Managing Director of Solsquare. “Thanks to the solar plant, we shall be able to reduce the operating costs considerably. Although the plant is currently not permitted to feed power into the grid due to legal regulations, there is a large savings potential. In addition, the government has plans to introduce both a feed-in tariff as well as ‘net metering’ probably from the summer of 2014, which means that it will then be possible to offset the amounts of electricity fed into the grid, consumed on site and drawn from the grid against one another. Our plant can be converted accordingly at any time, offering both maximum flexibility and savings potential to the customer. The outlook is good – and that’s why we already have further projects with Conergy on the drawing board.”

About Conergy

Conergy supplies complete solar energy solutions from a single source. As a leading PV Solution and Service Provider, Conergy offers its customers tailor made, worry-free, high-performance packages – be it for private or commercial roofs or for multi-megawatt installations. Along with supplying the “hardware” – all the necessary components for a solar plant – Conergy’s complete solutions also include a full range of related solar services from architectural planning to yield insurance providing total piece of mind.

Conergy sells its system solutions around the world. Being active in over 40 countries across 5 continents, and with subsidiaries in 15 countries, Conergy ensures customers are never far from a Conergy expert. In the mature European solar markets, the PV solution and service provider calls upon an unrivalled network of premium quality installers, integrators, solar specialists and wholesalers to gain access to the rooftops and thus support homeowners, private investors and commercial businesses in their efforts to “go solar”. In the emerging photovoltaic markets, the solar experts are focusing on large-scale solar plants, collaborating with international and local investors. As a result, around three-quarters of the group’s sales came from international markets in 2012, a trend which looks set to continue as Conergy consolidates its leading position in the global market.

For its turnkey solar plants all around the world, Conergy’s exacting standards apply. This is backed by a continuous quality assurance process which far exceeds the usual market standards and whose quality has been certified and confirmed by TÜV Rheinland. In the project’s design and development phase, Conergy’s experts manage the planning and financing; and after the plant has been constructed and commissioned they take care of monitoring, maintenance, operational management of the plant and offer comprehensive warranty services and insurance.

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Conergy is listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange and currently employs around 1,200 staff worldwide. Since its foundation in 1998, the company has produced and sold more than 2.2 gigawatts of clean solar energy and planned and constructed solar power plants with a capacity of more than 420 megawatts. This means that in 2012 Conergy plants generated more electricity than one nuclear plant.

Please contact us with any editorial questions or if you require photographic material.

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