

France launches vast solar panel array

October 13 2011



Solar panels are seen in in Les Mees, southern France. France has launched its largest-ever solar energy farm, with an array of panels spread over about 200 hectares (500 acres) in the mountainous southern Alpes-de-Haute-Provence region.

France on Thursday launched its largest-ever solar energy farm, with an array of panels spread over about 200 hectares (500 acres) in the mountainous southern Alpes-de-Haute-Provence region.

With a production capacity of 90 megawatts, the vast photovoltaic park features nearly 113,000 solar panels and was built at a cost of 110 million euros (\$137 million).

It has roughly the same surface area as the nearby principality of Monaco, an independent state.

"It is the largest solar site currently in service in France," Stephane Behr,

the head of the project at French energy firm Eco Delta, said at the array's inauguration ceremony.

The launch comes as Europe increasingly seeks [alternative energy sources](#) amid rising [global carbon emissions](#) from fossil fuels and concerns over atomic energy in the wake of Japan's [nuclear disaster](#).

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Citation: France launches vast solar panel array (2011, October 13) retrieved 4 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-10-france-vast-solar-panel-array.html>

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