

70MW: Kyocera and partners to build largest photovoltaic power plant in Japan

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(Phys.org) -- Electronics giant Kyocera, along with partners IHI Corp. and Mizuho Corporate Bank Ltd have jointly announced plans to build a photovoltaic power plant in the southern Japanese city of Kagoshima, in Kagoshima Prefecture on the island of Kyushu, which is just across the Kanmon Strait from the big island of Honshu. The move is in response to the devastating Tohoku earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant

disaster the country experienced last year that has left the country in near crises mode in developing new infrastructure to support the electrical needs of the nation; since the earthquake, all but one of Japan's nuclear plants have been shut down. In response, the government has set up a feed-in tariff program designed to spur renewable energy growth. The new plant in Kagoshima will benefit from that program.

Kyocera, started in 1959 as a ceramics company, has been in the solar panel business for thirty five years and will provide the 290,000 panels needed for the project and will serve as the primary shareholder in the new company that will be created to run the plant which will be situated on land owned by IHI, a development corporation. Mizuho will handle the financing.

The new plant, which will be called the Kagoshima Nanatsujima Mega-Solar Power Plant, is expected to take up approximately 314 acres, though drawings show most of that space will be over water, either by constructing a floating barge or building up the seabed below. Once completed, the plant is expected to produce 70MW of electricity (enough to power 22,000 homes) which would make it Japan's largest such facility, and perhaps more tellingly, would amount to 40% of Japan's total current solar electrical output.



The feed-in tariff program, which will take effect July 1st, is expected to spur investment in alternative energy sources by offering long-term low tariff contracts to companies that build facilities such as the new one in Kagoshima. Numerous projects have thus far been announced and likely many more will follow as Japan seeks to build new facilities to make up for those that have been lost.

Thus far Kyocera and partners have garnered the support of local officials in Kagoshima, and believe other partners will soon be joining the group to help pay for building the plant which is expected to run about 25 billion yen, or close to \$309 million. Tentative plans call for construction to begin as early as July, right after the feed-in tariff program kicks in.

More information: [Press release](#)

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