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JASPER SOLAR FARM

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ABOUT JASPER SOLAR FARM

When it came online in late 2014 the Jasper solar farm, near Kimberley, was considered the largest solar project in operation on the continent of Africa.

Did you know? Jasper was developed and funded by a consortium of players that included SolarReserve and Intikon Energy.

It was also the first renewable energy investment in Africa by search engine giant Google, who are said to have invested US\$12 million (around R103 million) in the project.

Other investors included Rand Merchant Bank, the Public Investment Corporation, the Development Bank of Southern Africa and the Peace Humansrus Trust.

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The 96 megawatt plant, with 325 000 solar panels, produces about 180 000 Mwh of clean energy every year for the country and, as with all the other REIPPPP (Renewable Energy IPP Procurement Programme) ventures, a portion (1.6%) of the revenue goes towards rural development and education programmes for local communities.

The project employed hundreds of people during construction and 50 permanent employees now maintain the plant.

Jasper is huge. The solar park, developed by the company Solar Reserve, in which it is located, also includes the 75 MW Lesedi solar power project, and the Redstone Solar Thermal Power Project, the first of its kind in South Africa.

When compared with the Medupi project, which was four years behind schedule when Jasper came online, solar energy is a lot more competitive, particularly in places like Brazil, China, Chile and now South Africa.