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<http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/concentrating-solar-to-reach-18-gigawatts-by-2020-745.html>

Concentrating Solar to Reach 18 Gigawatts by 2020

A report by the Prometheus Institute and Greentech Media forecasts that concentrating solar-thermal and concentrating PV will make up 12 and 6 gigawatts of installed capacity, respectively, while standard flat-plate PV will make up the rest of a predicted 288-gigawatt market.

by: [Jennifer Kho](#)

Companies will spend between \$80 billion and \$200 billion on concentrating-solar installations in the next 12 years, according to a report released Wednesday by the Prometheus Institute and Greentech Media.

That includes more than \$30 billion worth of plants that companies have announced in just the last six months, according to the report.

"While the conventional sources of energy will have increasing difficulty in simply maintaining prices and production volumes in the face of fuel stock pressure and grid maintenance requirements, [concentrating solar power] technologies will get cheaper and better understood for a long time to come," the report states. "The dawn of large-scale concentrating solar power is here, and the forecasts shows very few clouds in the sky."

Still, the report forecasts that all those projects -- including about 12 gigawatts of concentrating solar-thermal capacity and about 6 gigawatts of concentrating photovoltaics -- will make up only about 6.2 percent of a 288-gigawatt solar market in 2020.

The report predicts that concentrating photovoltaics will have the smallest market in 12 years, becoming a "niche technology" that will do well in applications that need high efficiency in a limited space, for example.

For utility-scale applications, it will have trouble competing with solar-thermal, which has the advantage of thermal storage, while in commercial applications, standard PV will have lower costs, according to the report. However, concentrating PV will pick up some business in the 100-kilowatt to 100-megawatt markets, the report predicts.

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And Robert Wilder, CEO of WilderShares, which manages several clean-energy indices, said the industry still has high hopes for concentrating PV.

"In the quiver of solar technologies, concentrating is an arrow that people are increasingly looking to," he said.

Nonetheless, he added, concentrating PV technologies today are prototypes, not commercial products. "They don't seem to be getting there as quickly as I would like," he said.