

Press **release****GDF SUEZ inaugurates a powerful photovoltaic facility and reaches a capacity of over 100 peak MW in France**

- **This project resulting from close collaboration with local authorities features 13.9 peak MW of power and 50,000 photovoltaic panels made in France**
- **The goal of having 200 peak MW of photovoltaic energy in France by 2016 has been confirmed**

25 June 2014

The facility in the town of Besse-sur-Issole (Var department) is among the most powerful photovoltaic facilities in France. It will produce more than 20 million kilowatt-hours per year, an amount equivalent to the power consumption of 11,000 people - 4 times the population of the town.

This facility features remarkable energy density (1.2 hectare/peak MW installed, almost two times better than the average for the sector), which means it uses a relatively small surface area. The power plant is at the foot of a hill at the centre of the Var department. GDF SUEZ paid particular attention to its integration into the surroundings so that the layout would be perfectly adapted to the site. To this effect, it built a facility with a surface area of 17 hectares instead of the 30 hectares that were originally planned. This accomplishment was made possible by using innovative software developed by the company to optimize the placement of the panels on complex terrain.

In order to build the power plant, GDF SUEZ called on local and regional businesses for tasks relating to civil engineering, road work, and electrical wiring. On average, 50 jobs lasting 8 months were created for the site.

With the Besse-sur-Issole solar power plant, GDF SUEZ now has a total solar energy capacity of 105 peak MW in France. This year, with its subsidiaries Compagnie du Vent and Compagnie Nationale du Rhône, GDF SUEZ was awarded ten new projects during the last national call for bids, representing a total capacity of 53.35 peak MW. These new projects move GDF SUEZ forward in its goal to reach a capacity of 200 peak MW in France by 2016.

During the inauguration, Jean-François Cirelli, Vice-Chairman and President of GDF SUEZ, stated: *"This solar power plant illustrates our ambitious development strategy which favours collaborative projects that participate in the energy transition of France. Our company has been fully committed to meeting this major challenge for our country. We have a strong ambition: to become leader in energy transition in Europe by relying on the development of renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart energy."*

GDF SUEZ already has a capacity of 7,000 MW in renewable energy from facilities installed all over Europe and plans on investing 1 billion Euros by 2016, prioritizing solar and onshore wind energy. In addition, GDF SUEZ is involved in the development of renewable marine energy sources such as wave power and offshore wind energy. In fact, our company has just been hired by the French government to build and manage offshore wind farms off the coast of the town of Le Tréport (500 MW) and of two islands, Ile d'Yeu and Noirmoutier (500 MW).

### **About GDF SUEZ**

*GDF SUEZ develops its businesses (power, natural gas, energy services) around a model based on responsible growth to take up today's major energy and environmental challenges: meeting energy needs, ensuring the security of supply, fighting against climate change and maximizing the use of resources. The Group provides highly efficient and innovative solutions to individuals, cities and businesses by relying on diversified gas-supply sources, flexible and low-emission power generation as well as unique expertise in four key sectors: independent power production, liquefied natural gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency services. GDF SUEZ employs 147,200 people worldwide and achieved revenues of €81,3 billion in 2013. The Group is listed on the Paris, Brussels and Luxembourg stock exchanges and is represented in the main international indices: CAC 40, BEL 20, DJ Euro Stoxx 50, Euronext 100, FTSE Eurotop 100, MSCI Europe and Euronext Vigeo (World 120, Eurozone 120, Europe 120 and France 20).*

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