

# US GEOTHERMAL POWER COMPANIES IMPACTING EMERGING ECONOMIES

The Geothermal Energy Association has released a series of figures and forecasts to finish off 2014, and in so doing highlighted the impact US geothermal power companies are having in emerging economies.

In a press release put out through Business Wire, the Geothermal Energy Association (GEA) announced “continued growth” in the global geothermal power sector, with “more countries developing projects, and an increase in on-line capacity of between 4% and 5% for the third year in a row.”

According to the GEA, there were 700 MW of new additions in 2014, pushing the global total upwards of 12.7 GW across 24 different countries. There are also 11.7 GW of capacity additions in development, and another 1.8 GW of power under construction in 80 countries.

More specifically, the GEA highlighted the fact that “emerging economies in East Africa, Central America, and the South Pacific experienced the fastest growth this year.”

As for geothermal’s role in 2015?

“Looking ahead to 2015, the energy market sees continued pressure to address climate change, and there’s a growing recognition of geothermal’s unique grid reliability benefits,” the GEA wrote. “Geothermal companies expect to continue their work domestically and internationally to answer the needs of the marketplace for clean, reliable power with improved performance, flexibility and availability.”

A report published earlier this month by the Canadian Geothermal Energy Association concluded (unsurprisingly, given the source) that geothermal is a cheaper option than hydro — on top of other benefits such as little environmental impact, more jobs, and cheaper to produce energy.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that geothermal is being so readily adopted in emerging economies such as those across East Africa, Central America, and the South Pacific.

In Central America, Costa Rica received a \$550 million loan from Japan for geothermal projects totalling 165 MW, while El Salvador hit a new milestone, acquiring 25% of its electricity generation from geothermal.

Two highlights from East Africa include a new 280 MW addition at the Olkaria field in Kenya, and Ethiopia and the World Bank teaming up to add four million people to the grid in the next five years by using geothermal power.

Construction began in Indonesia, in the South Pacific, on the 330 MW Sarulla project, which will be the largest geothermal power plant ever built. Across the waters in the Philippines, the country's energy department announced plans to increase geothermal generation from to 3.3 GW by 2020.

With so many projects and advances being made across emerging economies, geothermal is shaping up to be one of the most important renewable energy sources in parts of the world which need cheap and efficient energy the most.

Source : <http://cleantechnica.com/2014/12/18/us-geothermal-power-companies-impacting-emerging-economies/>