

Aerial photography of solar power plants in the United States

Where are solar power production sites located?

Among the locations featured in The Solar Power Series are Ivanpah (California), Crescent Dune (Nevada), Les Mées (France), Planta Solar (near Seville, Spain), and Gemasolar (also near Seville). Most of these solar power production sites are kind of pilot projects and first of their kind constructed within the past 15 years.

What is a solar thermal power plant?

The neatly-arranged circular facilities seen in Hegen's images are solar thermal power plants, which focus sunlight from thousands of moving mirrors called heliostats onto a central collector tower.

Where are Hegen's solar projects located?

The locations seen in Hegen's project include the Ivanpah Solar Power Facility in California's Mojave Desert, the Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project in Nevada, the Les Mées Solar Farm in France, the PS10 Solar Power Plant near Seville in Spain, and the Gemasolar Thermosolar Plant that's also near Seville, Spain.

What is a non-circular solar plant?

Non-circular solar plants are photovoltaic power stations (or solar farms), which use the same technology found on residential roofs. Photovoltaic modules are used to convert light directly into electricity. "Aerial photography, to me, is like data visualization for scientists," Hegen says in a 2022 interview with Fortune.

What is the solar power series?

The project is titled The Solar Power Series. Hegen is a German photographer who has focused his career on capturing aerial photos that offer insights into the traces humans are leaving on Earth's surface. Hegen "provides an overview of places where we extract, refine and consume resources," his website reads.

Why is aerial photography important?

The photographer tells Fortune that he often sees unintentional artistic beauty in the way humans interact with the planet in large-scale ways. " [Aerial photography] shows dimensions and reveals insights we wouldn't be able to see from the ground," the photographer says.

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Tom traveled across the United States, France, and Spain photographing solar power plants. In the US, he was shooting from a helicopter thanks to the skillful pilot and his fellow partner Lars Gange. As for the plants, ...

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"It could be because of the graphic shapes and structures, as in the Solar Power Plants series, but the colours

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and the environment should also be interesting," he points out ...

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