

## Showa Shell to Quadruple Photovoltaic Module Production

Showa Shell Sekiyu K.K., a major Japanese oil company, announced August 15, 2007, that it is starting construction of its second CIS photovoltaic module plant, managed by its subsidiary, Showa Shell Solar K.K. (CIS refers to the ingredients copper, indium, and selenium). With an annual production of 60 megawatts (MW), it will be the world's largest CIS photovoltaic module plant. Construction in Miyazaki begins in fiscal 2007, and manufacturing is scheduled to start in the first half of fiscal 2009.

The company launched commercial production at its first plant, also in Miyazaki and in operation since October 2006, which has a production capacity of 20 MW (see the related JFS article below). With the new plant, the company will increase current production by four times. The products manufactured will be sold mainly in the domestic market through Showa Shell Sekiyu's agent network.

The CIS photovoltaic module, marketed under the "Solacis" product name, is a thin-film compound solar module, mainly consisting of copper, indium, and selenium. Compared to conventional crystalline silicon-based solar modules, the CIS module requires no silicon (which is in short supply), so there are seldom shortages of raw materials, and less energy is required in the production process. Solacis won the Good Design Award (Ecology Design Award) for fiscal 2007, sponsored by the Japan Industrial Design Promotion Organization.