

## World's first game reserve to go green

The Big 5 Aquila Private Game Reserve near Cape Town has concluded a deal which will see its daylight energy requirements provided by solar power. Aquila, established in 1998, offers locals and foreign guests the opportunity to view the Big 5 just two hours from Cape Town and reckons that its new initiative makes it the first game reserve to go green.



Searl Derman with one of the installations.

With the installation of a 60kW facility, the initial step in the development of a 50mW plant, Aquila will be taking its commitment to environmentally friendly tourism to the next level. "With many hours of abundant sunshine in the beautiful Cape Karoo, Aquila is a perfect site for the use of solar energy. I am proud to have initiated what I believe to be the ultimate in responsible land usage and a fantastic platform for sustainable social upliftment, conservation and renewable energy projects in one of South Africa's most impoverished towns - and during a national power crisis," says Aquila owner, Searl Derman.

The 60kW facility is a Concentrator Photovoltaic (CPV) system, with panels that move to track the sun, a first for South Africa, and is now operational. The new solar panel facility is housed at ARC (Aquila Rehabilitation & Conservation Centre) which is situated on a separate piece of land directly opposite the main entrance to the reserve.

The deal has been signed with Concentrix Solar, a leading German supplier of Concentrator Photovoltaic systems which has been active in South Africa since 2008. This is the company's first power facility in the country. Between Aquila and Concentrix, there will also be a skills development programme to train more than 200 local residents of Touws River in security, construction and maintenance of the solar plants. This will add to the ongoing skills development programmes already in place at Aquila in the construction, tourism and game-ranging fields.