BMW i South Africa
Corporate Communications



Media information

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BMW South Africa starts rolling out solar carport charging for electric and plug-in hybrid models.

* BMW South Africa the first market to implement solar carport charging within the global BMW network.
* Solar carport to be rolled out locally from July 2016.
* Smart solution to bring further reduction of charging costs and integrate home solar generating systems with the household and office electricity system.

**Midrand, South Africa** – As part of the expansion of its 360° ELECTRIC portfolio for BMW i Home and Public Charging Services, BMW South Africa today unveiled its first solar carport that will be rolled out locally from July 2016. The BMW i solar carport supplies an average of 3,6kW of solar power (at peak times on a clear sunny day) straight to the BMW i Wallbox, which is used to show a live readout of how much power is being generated by the sun and charge electric and plug-in hybrid BMW models.

The BMW i solar carport concept was first shown at the BMW i8 international media launch in Los Angeles in April 2014 as well as the Consumer Electronic Show (CES) in January 2015.

“With the rollout of the BMW i solar carport, the BMW Group is demonstrating its commitment of shaping the future of individual mobility – not only with ground-breaking products and services, but also with the global as well as local involvement in the expansion of home and publicly accessible charging infrastructure for electrically powered vehicles. With innovative services like the solar carport, BMW is the first vehicle manufacturer to offer such a broad-based EV smart charging product to reduce costs for customers,” says Mr Tim Abbott, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of BMW Group South Africa and Sub-Sahara.

In the coming months, BMW Group South Africa will expand the installation of the solar carport in major city centres such as Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban for public charging. Customers and fleet companies will also be able to order the solar carport for home and office charging. Produced by Sunworks – designer and installer of photovoltaic solar systems – the BMW solar carport is made of high end bamboo and stainless steel housing for the glass solar modules, the solar carport is in line with the BMW i design and production philosophy, which prioritises a zero carbon footprint.

Bamboo is considered a particularly sustainable and high strength-to-weight ratio natural composite material useful for structures. “We have always emphasised that in order for electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to be successful, we need to firstly increase consumer confidence in the viability of electric vehicles and secondly make public charging easily accessible for customers who purchase these cars. The rollout of the solar carport is also an emphasis on this philosophy,” Abbott adds.

**Holistic approach to electro-mobility**

BMW’s holistic approach to electro-mobility is typified by 360° ELECTRIC product and service packages. This includes;

* Home charging with the BMW i Wallbox,
* Charging on the go at public charging stations with ChargeNow – a charging card used for access and payment at a number of charging stations offered in South Africa, and
* Assistance Services designed specifically for electro-mobility. For example, BMW i ConnectedDrive navigation services not only include the charging status of the high-voltage in route planning, but also recommend the most efficient route.

In this way, 360 ELECTRIC is already making electro-mobility a practical alternative for many people today.

**Charging at home with intelligent charging solutions from BMW i 360° ELECTRIC:  Wallbox, installation service and BMW i Green Energy.**

The customer performs around 80% of the charging processes either at home or at the workplace. With the recent announcement of the BMW i3 (94 Ah) – a revised BMW i3 model with a more powerful battery and increased range – BMW i will be offering a new BMW i Wallbox worldwide for comfortable and fast home garage charging. This Wallbox has been adapted to the new charging technology and in addition to single-phase operation now also offers a charging capacity of up to 22 kW in three-phase operation. Available in two versions (the BMW i Wallbox Plus and BMW i Wallbox Connect), the BMW i Wallbox is the perfect solution for convenient, safe and fast charging at home. Almost every third driver of a BMW i3 now opts for this exceptionally sophisticated charging station. In cooperation with specialised partners, BMW i also offers its customers a personal installation service.

The environmental balance of an electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle is further optimised if its high-voltage battery is charged with renewable energy. Within the framework of BMW i Green Energy, customers in 15 countries now receive assistance in the use of electricity gained from regenerative sources they either acquire from energy providers or produce themselves. The partners with whom the BMW Group cooperates in this field include ten providers of green electricity as well as four manufacturers of solar power installations for carports as well as house and garage roofs.

With its comprehensive portfolio of products, services and piloting innovation projects, BMW i demonstrates how e-mobility today already is an alternative for an increasing number of people when it comes to every day usability and advanced sustainability standards.

The fact that the solar carport charging system can be integrated with home energy management systems also makes it possible to achieve the best possible balance between household electricity consumption and power used for charging the electric vehicle, thereby helping customers to achieve further cost savings and to make even more efficient use of solar energy. Smart use of this power will provide BMW i customers with a fully self-sufficient charging solution for their vehicle.

**Global footprint of fast charging infrastructure projects**

Globally, BMW i is also supporting a wide range of fast charging infrastructure projects. For example, there is currently a focus on North America, Europe, South Africa, China and Japan. In total, more than 30 projects in more than 25 countries and in cooperation with more than 50 partners for more than 3,000 DC and more than 1,300 AC charging points have been initiated. Within the automotive industry, BMW i clearly leads by the multitude of pilot projects being involved. Furthermore, strategic investments by BMW i Ventures in leading brands within the charging infrastructure area, e.g. ChargePoint (USA) and Chargemaster (UK) underline the momentum of the brand for successful electro mobility.

On the European level, the participation in various TEN-T (Trans European Network - Transport) projects with planned 429 rapid charging points in 10 European countries are part of the BMW i engagement. In Germany, BMW i is one of the initiators and managers of the SLAM (fast charging network for axles and metropolitan areas) initiative, which envisages the construction of 600 quick charging stations. The charging stations from the former research project with BMW i participation from the year 2012, "Fast charging of electric vehicles on the A9 motorway" between Munich and Berlin have meanwhile transferred into commercial operation.

**ChargeNow by BMW i – The world’s most comprehensive charging service: Finding-using-roaming-paying at more than 40,000 charging points in 25 countries with a single customer card.**

With more than 40,000 charging points run by different operators in currently 25 countries, ChargeNow by BMW i offers the largest network of publicly accessible charging points for electric and plug-in-hybrid vehicles worldwide. The ChargeNow card and the app of the same name give the customer comfortable access to all operators in the international network including cashless payment and billing. The complicated and time-consuming registration process with different providers is thus done away with completely. The driver is supported in finding and selecting one of the charging stations of the ChargeNow network by the service integrated into the navigation system as well as the related apps.

**BMW i3 and BMW i8: Most successful electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles in their segments worldwide.**

The BMW Group took on a pioneering role when it founded the BMW i brand and decided to develop an independent vehicle structure and passenger cells made of carbon fibre reinforced plastic (CFRP) as well as BMW eDrive technology for purely electric drive. The BMW i3, which was designed for local emissions-free urban mobility, as well as the trail-blazing BMW i8 Plug-in-Hybrid sports car both deliver sheer driving pleasure combined with sustainability-oriented premium character. Within two years after its launch in November 2013, the BMW i3 has already established itself at the top of its segment. In Germany and South Africa, it is the best-selling electric vehicle on the market and in Norway it is the BMW model with the most new registrations (source: Polk/IHS 2014- 3/2016). The most important single market for the purely electric five door BMW i3 is the U.S. More than 80 per cent of buyers deciding on a BMW i3 worldwide are new customers for the BMW Group. The BMW i3 and the BMW i8 received a large number of awards for innovations in the areas of light-weight construction, drive, sustainability, driving performance and design. This makes BMW i the brand to win the most awards in the world during its market launch phase.

Since 2013, more than 45,000 BMW i3s have been sold worldwide. The BMW i3 was launched in South Africa in March 2015 and since then a total of 124 vehicles have been delivered to local customers, making it the leading electric vehicle in the country. In terms of the BMW i8, a total of 7,197 units have been delivered to customers globally since market launch in 2014 and out of that a total of 142 units have been delivered to local customers to date.

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**About BMW i**

BMW i is a BMW Group brand and stands for visionary vehicle concepts and technologies, connected mobility services as well as a new understanding of premium strongly defined by sustainability. BMW i is represented in 50 countries with the vehicles BMW i3 (electric car for metropolitan regions) and the BMW i8 (Plug-in-Hybrid sports car). BMW i also incorporates BMW iPerformance automobiles (all BMW Plug-in Hybrid vehicles) and the associated mobility services DriveNow (CarSharing), ReachNow (CarSharing 2.0), ChargeNow (easy access to the biggest charging point network worldwide), ParkNow (easy search, reservation and payment of parking spaces), BMW i Ventures (investment in young companies with the focus on urban mobility) and the BMW i Urban Mobility Competence Centre (for consulting cities, towns and municipalities).

**About BMW i Ventures**BMW i Ventures is a venture capital company founded by the BMW Group. The company invests in cutting-edge solutions focusing on the mobility needs of the urban population. We support high-potential start-ups and high-growth companies dedicated to shape the future of global mobility.
[www.bmw-iventures.com](http://www.bmw-iventures.com)

**The BMW Group:**

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world’s leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 31 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2015, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.247 million cars and nearly 137,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2015 was approximately € 9.22 billion on revenues amounting to € 92.18 billion. As of 31 December 2015, the BMW Group had a workforce of 122,244 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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