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Welcome to Solar Weekly Highlights, presenting the most important developments in the global solar industry, ranging from significant industry trends, policies, research, and new technologies to markets and pricing.

This week's edition focuses on the U.S. Treasury Grant Program, a PV efficiency milestone, and Italian and German market developments.

Furthermore we are introducing an interview on PV inverter technology, and a new report on grid parity in North Carolina.

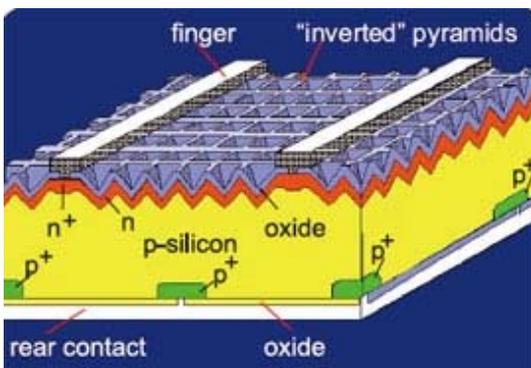
### **Amendment to reinstate TGP fails in U.S. Senate**



On March 13th, 2012 an amendment to reinstate the Section 1603 Treasury Grant Program (TGP) failed to obtain the 60 votes needed to be attached to the U.S. Senate's transportation bill. When active, the TGP was considered the most important federal support for the U.S. solar industry, but expired on December 31st, 2011. [More](#)

*Picture left: The Stabenow amendment was defeated 49-49, short of the 60 votes needed*

### **Suntech reaches 20.3% efficiency with Pluto solar cell technology**



On March 12th, Suntech announced that it has reached 20.3% efficiency on a production PV cell using its Pluto technology, a world record. [More](#)

*Picture left: Schematic of a PERL solar cell developed at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia, which holds the world record for silicon solar cell efficiency of 25%*

## European PV: Italy reaches 3.2% electricity production from PV, FiT cuts to damage Germany PV industry, markets



The Italian grid operator has released preliminary data on electricity generation and use in 2011, reporting that the nation produced 9,258 GWh of electricity from PV generation, for a total of 3.2% of total production.

In Germany, Apricum has released an analysis predicting that pending German feed-in tariff cuts will destroy the market for large-ground mounted PV plants, as well as PV manufacturing in the nation. [More](#)

*Picture left: Production was strongest from the four regions that comprise Southern Italy, which also have some of the strongest solar radiation*

## AET opens manufacturing facility in Ohio



AET has announced that it will open a new manufacturing facility to produce inverters in the U.S. state of Ohio.

The company states that the 10,000 square meter facility will produce all of its current products, reaching an annual output of 150 MW of its Rayport solar mounting systems and 300 MW of its new ground-mount systems at full capacity. [More](#)

*AET will expand its manufacturing capacity by over 250%*

## NCSEA: PV approaching grid parity in North Carolina



The North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association has released a report which states that for some utilities, electricity generation from PV is already cost-competitive with retail electricity rates. [More](#)

*Picture left: North Carolina has reached the 8th highest cumulative installed PV capacity in the United States*

## New PV spot market price index, February 2012

### PVX spot market price index solar PV modules

17 31 29



In cooperation with the international PV trading platform pvXchange, Solarserver presents a monthly index of wholesale prices for thin film and crystalline PV modules.

#### Price trends February 2012

Module type, origin	€/Wp	Trend since 2012.01	Trend since 2011.01
Crystalline Germany	1.03	- 3.7 %	- 39.7 %
Crystalline China	0.77	- 2.5 %	- 47.6 %
Crystalline Japan	1.02	- 2.9 %	- 37.4 %
Thin film CdS/CdTe	0.63	- 7.4 %	- 49.5 %
Thin film a-Si	0.57	- 5.0 %	- 47.0 %
Thin film a-Siμ-Si	0.72	- 5.3 %	- 43.0 %

Despite the upward trend at the end of January, prices continued to decline slightly in February. As a result, the prices of the pvXchange price index are below the previous month's values in each category.

Due to the scarcity of certain module types in Europe, modules of Tier 2 manufacturers were increasingly mediated through our platform in February. Prices for modules from Tier 1 manufacturers remained constant and for some module types were even higher than the January levels. [PV spot market price index](#)

## Solar Interview: ArrayPower CEO Wendy Arienzo



ArrayPower CEO Wendy Arienzo

This week Solar Server brings you a look at an up-and-coming inverter technology that offers superior power quality at a cost competitive with conventional inverters, in an interview with ArrayPower CEO Wendy Arienzo.

Solar Server: Can you explain your Sequenced Inverter for our readers?

Wendy Arienzo: Our flagship product, the Sequenced Inverter, converts direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC). The Sequenced Inverter is located on the back of a solar module - in fact, it's integrated with the solar module. [More](#)

Thanks for your interest in the Solar Weekly Insight. Stay posted for next week's industry highlights.

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