

Welcome to Solar Weekly Insight, 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 status quo and further development of the global PV industry as well as on important political decisions in the U.S.. Several market research companies reported on troubles in the industry whereas Solarbuzz expects the supply-demand balance to return soon. The legislative of New Jersey passed a bill to accelerate the state's solar requirements and the U.S. Department of the Interior approved a 350 MW PV plant on Native American lands.

DOC approves 350 MW PV plant on Native American lands



This week, The U.S. Department of the Interior announced the approval of a 350 MW PV plant to be built on tribal lands controlled by the Paiute Indian tribe in the U.S. state of Nevada, as the first utility-scale solar project to be approved for tribal lands in the U.S. [More](#)

Picture left: Artist's rendering of the K Road Moapa Solar Project

BrightSource acquires 500 MW Palen CSP project



Late last week BrightSource emerged as the winning bidder for the 500 MW Palen CSP project at Solar Trust of America's bankruptcy auction, and this week a Delaware Court approved BrightSource's acquisition of the project. The company plans to build two 250 MW solar power tower CSP plants at the site in Southern California. [More](#)

Picture left: BrightSource will convert the Palen project to use its Solar Power Tower technology

LDK Solar: Continued losses in 1Q 2012



This week LDK Solar released its first quarter 2012 financial results, reporting a decline in revenues, an operating margin of -68% and a heavy net loss, largely due to a collapse in wafer prices and the high internal costs of its polysilicon production. [More](#)

Picture left: LDK Solar reports making polysilicon at roughly USD 41 per kilogram, roughly double current spot prices

REC initiates financial restructuring, announces heavy expenses



The board of directors of REC ASA have approved a financial restructuring of the company including a series of bond measures, as well as private placement of 867 million new shares. The company also announced USD 705 million in expenses due in the second quarter of 2012, mostly from impairment charges related to its Singapore operations. [More](#)

Picture left: REC announced the closure of its last wafer plant in Norway on April 24th, 2012

IMS Research, GTM Research, SEMI reports on PV industry troubles, Solarbuzz says supply-demand balance returning

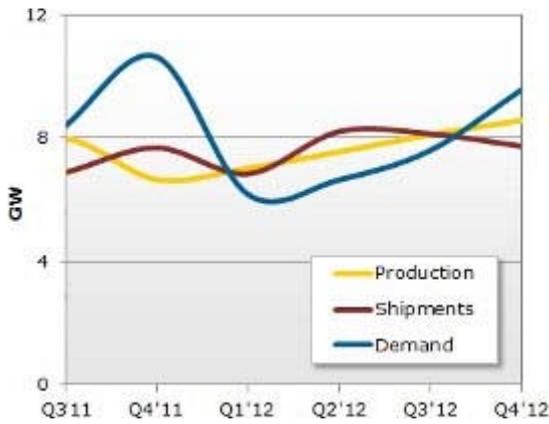


LDK and REC are far from the only companies in the industry suffering from declining profitability, an issue that was explored in reports this week. IMS Research has released a report stating that c-Si PV module gross profits have fallen to USD 0.09 per watt in the 1Q 2012. [More](#)

GTM Research also released a report which states that overcapacities in the PV industry will continue for several years, and that 60 MW of wafer, PV cell and module capacity will be taken off line by 2015. [More](#)

IMS Research states that this decline in margins is the result of a near 50% decline in average c-Si module selling prices over the last 12 months

Such overcapacities are taking their toll on equipment makers. This week, SEMI released a report which shows a slight recovery in both bookings and book-to-bill ratios in the PV equipment manufacturing, but predicting a difficult 2012. [More](#)



A bright spot in these gloomy reports was a report late last week from Solarbuzz, which states that it expects the supply/demand balance to return to the PV module industry, even as module prices continue to fall faster than cost reductions. [More](#)

Picture left: Solarbuzz expects the balance between solar photovoltaic module supply and demand to be restored in the second half of 2012

Advertisement

Multi-Contact's PV connector MC4 and the crystalline junction box Westlake passed ammonia resistance test

In order to prevent damage, Multi-Contact voluntarily subjected their products to ammonia resistance tests. In a first step, the PV connector MC4 as well as the Westlake junction box for crystalline modules passed these tests successfully.

The test is performed by the DLG (German Agricultural Society), and confirmed with a certificate. The lab test determines whether the tested object will resist the impact of the air in the stables over a time period of at least 20 years.

[More](#)



New Jersey passes bill to accelerate RPS targets



This week the New Jersey legislature passed a bill to both accelerate and change the calculation of the state's solar requirements under its renewable portfolio standard (RPS) policy. [More](#)

Picture left: New Jersey Governor Chris Christie is expected to sign the legislation

LA County to allow First Solar to install PV modules at Antelope Valley Solar Ranch One



Finally, late last week First Solar announced that it will resume installation of PV modules at the 230 MW Antelope Valley Solar One project in Southern California, following resolution of a permit issue with Los Angeles County. [More](#)

Picture left: The AVSR1 PV plant is the first PV plant of its scale to use both thin-film PV and tracking systems

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

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Heindl Server GmbH
Kaiserstraße 137
D - 72764 Reutlingen

Tel.: +49 (0)7121-69681-30
Fax: +49 (0)7121-69681-38

Register of corporations-Nr:
HRB 382398 Handelsregister des Amtsgerichts
Stuttgart

CEO / Editor in Chief: Rolf Hug;
rolf.hug@solarserver.de

Solarserver North America Representation
One Embarcadero Center, Suite 1060
San Francisco, CA 94111

Toll-Free: + 1 877 SUN 7077
or +1 877 786 7077
Fax: +1 415 627 9169

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