

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 political developments concerning incentive programs in Germany and the UK. We also inform you about the construction of the largest PV plant in South America. Additionally, two companies announced progress on high efficiency back-contact PV cells.

German government says renewable energy will continue, deal reached on PV FiT cuts; 2011 capacity confirmed at 7.5 GW



Germany Trade and Invest states that the nation's progress on renewable energy will continue, a day after Reuters reported that the Merkel government has reached a compromise with opponents in the Bundesrat which will reduce the severity of feed-in tariff cuts. [More](#)

This week German Federal Network Agency also confirmed that the nation has installed a record 7.5 GW of PV plants in 2011. [More](#)

Picture left: A deal was reached modifying the feed-in tariff cuts after Germany's upper house threatened to block the cuts

San José Group begins construction on largest PV plant in South America



On March 23rd, 2012 the San José Group announced that it has begun construction on a 22 MW PV plant in the Tacna Region of Southern Peru. [More](#)

Picture left: The Tacna region offers very strong natural solar radiation

U.K. DECC denied Supreme Court appeal over FIT CUTS



Late last week, the U.K. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal from the nation's Department of Energy and Climate Change to lower court rulings finding that the timing of its cuts to feed-in tariffs for PV generation was illegal, ending months of uncertainty for PV customers. [More](#)

Three days later, the DECC announced that it will launch a second, expanded phase of the Renewable Heat Premium Payment (RHPP), as well as beginning budget consultations on the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). [More](#)

As a result of this series of court rulings, PV plants installed in the U.K. between December 12th, 2011 and March 3rd, 2012 will be eligible for earlier, higher feed-in tariffs

High-efficiency PV: SunPower, Silfab/ISC Konstanz, announce progress on high-efficiency back-contact PV cells



SunPower's E20 PV modules feature its Maxeon PV cells. The company states that it has integrated the new generation of Maxeon cells into module production

On March 27th, 2012 SunPower announced that it has begun volume production of the latest generation of its Maxeon back-contact PV cells, which offer conversion efficiencies up to 24%. These PV cells will be incorporated into modules, which will be available before the end of 2012. [More](#)

And on March 26th, 2012 Silfab and ISC/Konstanz announced that they have reached 21% conversion efficiencies on large-area monocrystalline silicon back-contact PV cells, with a potential to exceed 24%. [More](#)

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