

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 new PV feed-in tariff in Germany, and the discussion on cuts in the U.K. Furthermore Solar Weekly Insight highlights polysilicon industry developments, and features large CIGS plants in Lower Saxony (Germany) and Bessan (France)

FIT cuts in U.K., Germany



Labour Party Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change Caroline Flint stated that the cuts would "strangle at birth" the U.K. solar industry

This week the U.K. Department of Energy and Climate Change, under the leadership of the Conservatives, released a proposal to slash feed-in tariff levels for PV generation by one-half to one-third, depending on size.

The proposal drew immediate condemnation, including from the opposition Labour Party, which claims that the cuts will destroy the U.K. solar industry.

The proposal, which is still subject to consultation, also includes a new requirement for energy efficiency. [More](#)



The German Federal Network Agency last week announced a reduction in feed-in tariff levels, albeit much less drastic and controversial, at 15% starting in 2012. [More](#)

"During the last 12 months an additional new capacity of approximately 5.200 megawatts (MW) has been registered. This figure results in a 15 % lower remuneration compared to the actual FiT for systems connected to the grid beginning January 1st, 2012," said Matthias Kurth, President of the German Federal Network Agency.

Picture left: Matthias Kurth, President of the German Federal Network Agency

Polysilicon industry remains strong

This week saw confirmation that despite the difficulties experienced by PV cell and module manufacturers, polysilicon production remains a profitable and growing sector.



Leading polysilicon news this week, LDK Solar's polysilicon subsidiary broke ground on a 30,000 MTY polysilicon plant in Inner Mongolia, which when combined with other capacity increases could bring the company's total capacity to 55,000 MTY. [More](#)

And GT Solar announced that it will supply technology and equipment to build a polysilicon production facility in Saudi Arabia. [More](#)

Picture left: The order includes GT Advanced Technologies' SDR 400 CVD reactors



Part of the reason for these expansions may be the high margins realized by polysilicon producers.

Wacker Chemie released third quarter 2011 results this week, reporting an 8% increase in revenues and a 47% EBITDA margin from its polysilicon division. [More](#)

Picture left: Wacker Chemie states that a 6% decrease in EBITDA for its Polysilicon Division is largely due to costs from the capacity expansion at its Nünchritz facility

Two new large CIGS plants in Germany, France



This was also a big week for copper indium gallium diselenide (CIGS/CIS) PV technology. On October 28th, Q-Cells, GP Joule and Martin Bucher officially opened the world's largest CIGS PV plant at 20.8 MW in Lower Saxony. [More](#)

Picture left: Ammerland solar photovoltaic plant (20.8 MWp) in Lower Saxony, Germany



A day prior, Solar Frontier and Belectric announced the commissioning of a 4.2 MW PV plant in Bessan, France, the nation's largest PV plant using CIS technology. [More](#)

Picture left: The companies note that the installation of PV modules at a 15% angle allows for better integration into the landscape

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