

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 decisions concerning photovoltaics as well as on two large PV projects: Chile gave approval for a 220 MW project and the Agua Caliente PV plant in Arizona reached the 200 MW capacity milestone. On the political level, Italy enacted the fifth Conto Energia whereas China has increased its PV installation target from 15 GW to 21 GW by 2015, according to IMS Research. Additionally, ultra-thin silicon PV manufacturing startup Solexel presented its process and product at Intersolar North America.

Agua Caliente PV plant hits 200 MW mark



This Monday, NRG Energy and First Solar announced that their Agua Caliente PV plant has reached 200 MW of operational PV capacity, potentially making the plant the largest operational PV plant in the world. The plant will be 290 MW when complete. [More](#)

Picture left: The Agua Caliente PV plant under construction. The plant will be 290 MW-AC when complete.

Italy to enact fifth Conto Energia



Late last week bad news came for one of the world's largest PV markets. Italy's grid operator announced that the value of annual incentives under the nation's feed-in tariff had reached EUR 6 billion, triggering the enactment of the fifth Conto Energia. The new law includes a registration system for PV plants larger than 12 kW, and a EUR 200 million annual cap on incentives. [More](#)

Picture left: PV plants larger than 12 kW will be required to register under the fifth Conto Energia, which will take effect on August 27th, 2012

China increases 2015 installation target to 21 GW



However, while Italy dials back incentives China is increasing its solar ambitions. According to IMS Research, the Chinese government has increased its PV installation target from 15 GW to 21 GW by 2015. [More](#)

Picture left: Frank Xie, senior PV market analyst at IMS Research: "A more diverse range of system types will emerge in 2012, largely driven by China approving 1.7 GW of projects under the Golden Sun Scheme"

Chile gives approval for 220 MW PV project



Late last week, Chile's Department of Environmental Assessment (SEA) gave approval to AES Gener for its 220 Los Andes PV project. AES plans to begin work on the first 20 MW phase of the project in the nation's Antofagasta region in early 2013. [More](#)

Picture left: Northern Chile offers large areas with very strong natural solar potential

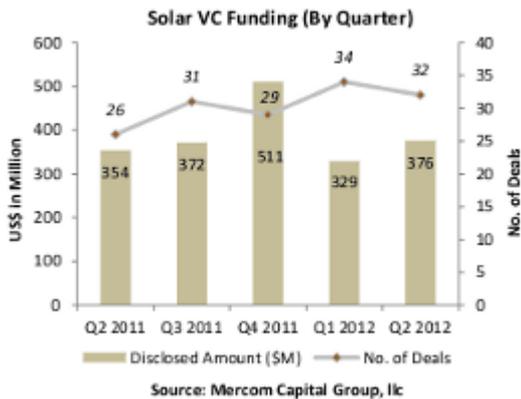
Solexel unstealths at Intersolar North America



Last week the Intersolar North America trade show was held in San Francisco, California. During the show ultra-thin silicon PV manufacturing startup Solexel released details on their process and product, which they say will be able to offer cell efficiencies above 20% with greatly reduced silicon usage and lower manufacturing costs. [More](#)

Picture left: Solexel produces crystalline wafers, PV cells using an epitaxial growth technique on silicon substrates

Solar funding recovers in 2Q 2012



Finally, this week Mercom Capital released its report on funding and merger and acquisition activity in the global solar industry. The report shows a modest recovery in most types of funding, including venture capital funding, over the first quarter of 2012. [More](#)

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

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