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Solar Weekly Highlights

Welcome to the April 6th, 2011 edition of Solar Server's Weekly Highlights.

This week we focus on policy changes in China, Japan and the U.S. as well as on some major funding announcements.

Furthermore we present a new solar report and an additional interview on microinverters and PV power harvesting systems.

And last but not least, we present our new collection of charts and global market research figures on PV and solar power markets, including installations, producers & production shares, components and materials.

Policy changes: China and Japan get more serious about PV, as the Obama Administration clings to nuclear power



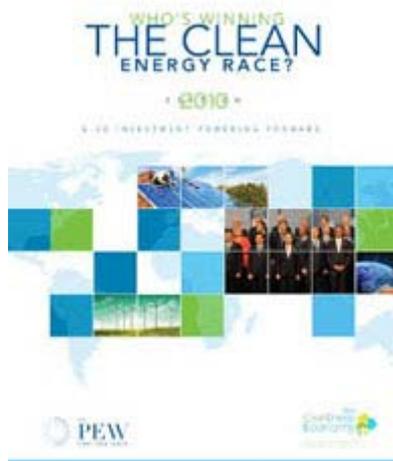
U.S. President Barack Obama defends his energy plan at Georgetown University

Citing the ongoing disaster at Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant, China has announced that it is considering doubling its PV targets for 2015, as well as decreasing its nuclear ambitions. [More](#)

Meanwhile, Japan announced increases in its FIT rates for non-residential PV to USD 0.48/kWh. [More](#)

Whereas in the United States, the Obama Administration released a "blueprint" for the nation's energy future, which stresses nuclear power with an unclear role for renewable energy. [More](#)

Increasing investments and major funding announcements in the solar industry



Private investment in the solar industry continues to grow, expanding by 53% in 2010, as noted this week in a report by Pew Charitable Trusts. [More](#)

This week also saw some very large funding announcements:

BrightSource Energy announced that it has reached USD 200 million in its latest round of equity funding. [More](#)

Inverter maker Power-One secured USD 150 million in financing for international expansion. [More](#)

New Solar Report: Microinverters and power optimizers – perspectives of distributed PV system architecture in the residential market

Among the exciting developments in today's PV industry is the growth of microinverters and power harvesting systems, and their potential to act as disruptive technologies.



However, there are a number of questions that remain regarding these technologies, including: What are their concrete benefits? Are they worth the extra cost? And eventually, which market share will microinverters and power optimizers gain?

[Complete report](#)

Lux Research Research Associate Matt Feinstein on claims, potentials, cost and perspectives of microinverters and power harvesting optimizers



Mr. Feinstein is the lead author of the Lux Research report "Shorting Out the Myths of Power Electronics, What Fits and What Fails", which was published in February 2011 and examines the claims made by the makers of microinverters and power optimizers.

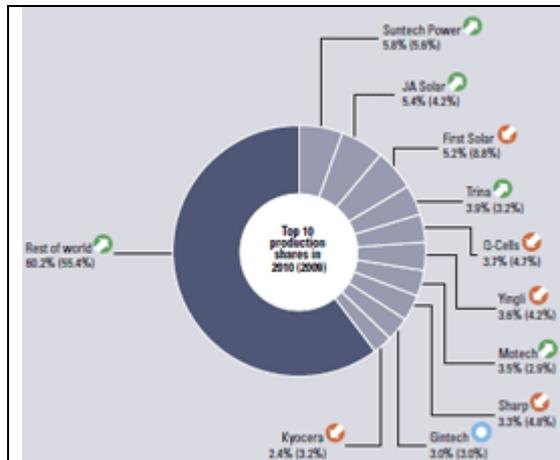
First off, can you talk about Lux Research's leveled cost of energy model, and how you used this as a tool to evaluate the claims being made?

Matt Feinstein: It is a proprietary model that we developed, along with a major industry player, that I can't disclose. But what it does is that it takes into account system performance including losses, anywhere across the system, for each configuration that we use in the report, as well as other balance of system components and how those might change by configuration. And then it takes into account costs, operating costs as well as any taxes and tax exemptions and things of that sort before calculating a cost per kilowatt-hour for generation.

So it's really a way of measuring the cost of the energy you buy on the system level. Which is also how things like power purchase agreements work. So the same sort of concept, but something that often gets overlooked when you talk about up-front costs.

[Full interview](#)

New Service: Charts and global market research figures on PV and solar power markets on Solar Server



Global market share of the leading PV producers

Solar Industry at a glance

Solar Servers new service provides:

- up-to-date charts
- market research data
- top producers
- cell and module production
- production capacities
- global installations
- largest PV plants

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

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Best Regards; Rolf Hug, Editor in Chief

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