

Press Release, 5 June 2008

Solar Sector coming at the rescue of the French market

On the verge of talks on the proposal of the « Grenelle law », the European Photovoltaic Industry Association and the actors of the French market, are organising a national photovoltaic symposium entitled « Towards a sustainable development of the photovoltaic sector in France », on 27 June in Aix les Bains, France. On this occasion over 900 participants from France and Europe are awaited to discuss possible ways to diminish the gap the French PV market is experiencing in relation to some of its European neighbours such as Germany or Spain.

Attractive tariffs but heavy administrative procedures

Since June 2006, France has put in place attractive feed-in tariffs for photovoltaic systems in particular for building integrated installations. However these have not yet been proven to be effective. France is particularly well known for its lengthy connection procedures: one can wait several months to get connected to the grid. In Germany only a few weeks are required as the coordination of procedures is ensured through a one-stop-shop.

Temporary yet necessary measures

The solar photovoltaic market is developing rapidly on a global scale (+ 40% per year over the last 5 years), this is particularly true where support measures are combined with simplified administrative procedures. These temporary measures are necessary in order to support market development and the consequent growth in production volumes. This will in turn enable reductions in the cost of photovoltaic cells and hence allow solar electricity to compete with conventional energy sources.

The National Photovoltaic Symposium is organised by EPIA in partnership with ADEME (French Energy Agency), l'Institut National de l'Energie Solaire (INES), the Syndicat des Energies Renouvelables, ENERPLAN, HESPUL, with support of the Conseil Général de Savoie, the Rhône Alpes Region, Savoie Economic Agency, Aix les Bains city. It will kick-off the Solar Event, organised for the general public, which will start on 27 and last until 29 June at Savoie Technolac in France.

To find out more : <http://www.epia.org/index.php?id=202>

About the European Photovoltaic Industry Association:

With over 150 Members drawn from across the entire solar electricity sector, the European Photovoltaic Industry Association represents over 95% of the European photovoltaic industry. EPIA members are present throughout the whole value-chain of the photovoltaic industry: from silicon, cells and module production to systems development. EPIA's mission is to deliver a distinct and valuable service driven from the strength of a single European photovoltaic voice.

Press contacts:

Europe: Marie Latour, EPIA: +32 (0)2 400 10 13 ou m.latour@epia.org

France: Christel Leca: 04 78 45 75 49 ou christel@leca.fr