

## Press Release

# Future of Photovoltaics Industry Lies in Enhanced Efficiency and Cost Reduction

## European manufacturers want to hold their own on the market with innovations and lean cost structures

Berlin, 2012-01-17 – The SEMI PV Group Europe will host the photovoltaics industry's 6th Fab Managers Forum from 25-27 March 2012. The Forum is among the most important events in Europe for suppliers and manufacturers in the solar industry. The focus is placed on the trend-setting topics of the industry, such as e.g. new production materials and processes as well as ideas on how to reduce costs and increase efficiency. No other forum covers the entire value chain and offers such a broad range of technical presentations for the experts of the industry.

The European photovoltaics industry is innovative and has been leading in the use of new materials or the development of new production methods for the past few years. In spite of the deteriorating political environment and continuous competitive pressure above all from Asia, the companies have held their own on the market. At present, leading analysts are noticing significant overcapacities on the market. Henning Wicht, Director and Principal Analyst Photovoltaics at IHS iSuppli, also one of the speakers at the 6th Fab Managers Forum, describes the current situation: "The production capacity is currently twice as high as the demand. This may result in difficulties for some companies. The decisive factor will be whether the companies will manage to optimise their cost structures, fully utilize their plants and consequently reduce the unit cost."

Analysts are expecting a slight decrease in the demand for solar systems in 2012. Henning Wicht: "Throughout Europe, we are expecting between 10 to 13 gigawatts. Growth markets are the USA with roughly 3 gigawatts and China, which will install 3 to 4 gigawatts." The achievement of this quantity will also depend on the European companies' ability to prove themselves in the face of the price war with competitors from Asia and the USA. "However, everyone is subject to this price pressure, also the Asian companies. Meanwhile, capacities are being cut back even in these countries", underlines Wicht." In 2012, solar companies will increasingly tap into new markets to generate further sales for their production capacities. However, these measures will not be reflected in the sales volume before 2013. Therefore, the major demand for modules will remain in the established markets in 2012 as well. The good news is that these markets also feature growth potential - as shown in 2011 by the preliminary figures of 7.5 gigawatts, of these, 3 gigawatts in December for Germany. The module and component prices will remain under pressure. After all, in 2012, PV power will generally still be more expensive than wind energy or fossil/nuclear power generation", emphasises the Director and Principal Analyst Photovoltaics at IHS iSuppli.



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However, it doesn't all come down to falling module prices. The use of innovative materials can lead to positive cost effects and increased efficiency at the same time. New production processes have been created based on thin-film techniques and the use of films and plastics, paving the way for better energy yield. European companies and research institutes are leading in these fields. As a result, the European PV industry currently supplies its customers with premium products.

The 6th Photovoltaik Fab Managers Forum addresses managers and decision makers of the photovoltaics industry as well as scientists and experts from research institutes and universities. It will take place from 25-27 March at the Hotel Kempinski Bristol in Berlin.

Please click on the following link to receive more details about the event or if you want to register: [www.pvgroup.org/pvfmf](http://www.pvgroup.org/pvfmf)

The comprehensive programme includes presentations by renowned experts from the companies Bosch, Schott Solar, Solarworld, Sunways, Q-Cells, iSupply, IMEC, and others. Early bookers will benefit from reduced registration fees until 28 February 2012.

The PV Group is a special stakeholder within the European semiconductor industry association SEMI, which deals with the issues and requirements of the photovoltaics industry. The participating companies supply the worldwide solar industry with production facilities, materials, cells, modules, sub-systems and components. The PV Group has the task of promoting the industry's growth, continuously increasing efficiency and making sure that economic activities are sustainable. This is accomplished by developing international standards, hosting events, providing support in environmental, health and safety-related issues as well as public and political representation of interests and market analyses. You will find more details at: [www.pvgroup.org](http://www.pvgroup.org)

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