Sustaining Photovoltaics Production in Europe – Becquerel Prize Recipients Appeal to Decision Makers

On the occasion of the 35th EU Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference EU PVSEC in Brussels 2018, numerous awardees of the prestigious Becquerel Prize, awarded annually at the EU PVSEC for excellence in solar PV research, passed a resolution to build up large-scale European PV production along the entire value chain.

Over the past decades, the renewable generation of electricity by photovoltaic solar energy (PV) has come down in costs dramatically and is now economically competitive with conventional generation using fossil fuels or nuclear reactors in an increasing number of markets. Convinced that solar electricity will play a dominant role in the energy supply of 2050 and given the leading role held by European research institutes in the development of PV technology, awardees of the Becquerel Prize collectively drew up a resolution. At the largest European photovoltaic conference, the 35th EU PVSEC in Brussels, the award-winning European scientists collectively expressed their concern that the European photovoltaic industry is threatened to be lost due to the strong competition from Asia. In particular, this pertains to the cell and module production, which makes up a large part of the value chain. This loss presents a strategic risk to the future electricity supply of Europe.

The resolution drawn up by the Becquerel awardees covers four essential points: The European Union together with the governments of the Member States (including Great Britain, Norway and Switzerland), should set down the boundary conditions for a new large-scale European PV production along the entire PV value chain. The governments of all European countries should actively carry out measures to support the deployment of PV, through tariff policies or fiscal incentives or through legislative measures mandating the integration of PV in all new buildings. The European Commission should rapidly implement an eco-label which includes recycling criteria for PV modules in order to appreciate the value of sustainable products. Finally, the EU research policy should support the recreation and expansion of a European photovoltaic industry, among other things through the next call for tenders in the Horizon2020 Europe Program.

Text of the resolution with the names of the signees:

Resolution: Photovoltaic Solar Electricity Generation in Europe

On the occasion of the EU Photovoltaic Solar Electricity Conference in Brussels 2018, the Awardees of the Becquerel Prize - the most prestigious European Prize on Solar Electricity - passed the following resolution:

Renewable generation of electricity by photovoltaic solar energy (PV) has come down in cost dramatically in the past decades and is now economically competitive with conventional generation using fossil fuels or nuclear reactors in an increasing number of markets.

PV can be utilised in every region of the world, in the form of small and medium size decentralized systems to very large power plants. It is also very well suited for use in rural areas of developing countries. Moreover, the generation capacity can be expanded rapidly. Therefore PV offers a safe, affordable and sustainable solution for large-scale power generation to serve increasing electricity demand and for ambitious climate change mitigation.

PV was initially massively developed, produced and deployed in **Europe**, thanks to successful support programmes in many European countries, such as Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, etc.

However, the PV industry in Europe has recently suffered from strong competition by the Asian PV industry. It is now threatened to become subcritical and may therefore be lost if no action is taken.

Being absolutely convinced that photovoltaic solar electricity will be one of the most important sources of electricity by 2050, and will, thus, be of strategic importance, also for Europe, we support the following Resolution:

- A. That the European Commission and the governments of all European states work together to create a framework, which allows for the launching of a new and large-scale European PV production plant, over the whole value chain (e.g. wafer, cell and module production). Such a framework should involve (a) suitable credit facilities; (b) site infrastructure; (c) intergovernmental cooperation.
- B. That all governments in Europe (i.e. in the EU including GB, and also in Norway and Switzerland) again **actively support the deployment of PV by adequate means**, such as tariff policies, fiscal incentives, legal requirements to include PV in all new buildings, etc.
- C. That the European Commission immediately launches an **eco-labelling of PV modules**, including recycling aspects, in order to distinguish and provide value to sustainable products.
- D. That the **Research Policy of the EU** be *inter alia* directed towards recreating a PV manufacturing industry in Europe (EU including GB, plus Norway and Switzerland) by a corresponding formulation of the **Horizon Europe Program** (for the period 2021-2027) and by the reservation of an adequate share of funding for PV, with a concrete formulation of focused research goals, directed towards manufacturing issues in this sector.

Signed by:

Viacheslav Andreev – Christophe Ballif – Andreas Bett – Andres Cuevas – Stefan Glunz – Adolf Goetzberger – Winfried Hoffmann – Joachim Luther – Stefan Nowak – Gabriel Sala – Hans-Werner Schock – Arvind Shah – Wim Sinke – Richard M. Swanson – Peter Würfel – Masafumi Yamaguchi

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