

## **Sharp is focussing on Greece: ideal conditions for a boom in photovoltaics**

**A new feed-in tariff regulation for solar power boosts the Greek photovoltaics market. The solar pioneer Sharp supports the massive expansion in photovoltaics in the Mediterranean country and is relying on solar power to drive economic growth.**

**Hamburg, 10 February 2009.** Great photovoltaics potential, not much installed solar capacity - the Greek solar market is despite good feed-in tariffs and ideal climatic conditions not well developed. A new regulation in the Greek photovoltaics law should change that. In the middle of January the Greek Parliament passed amendments to promote renewable energies, in order to help the market to grow quickly. "The amendment to the law has come at the right time. It is not yet too late for Greece to join the European photovoltaics boom – and in so doing secure both environmental and economic benefits," according to Peter Thiele, Executive Vice President of Sharp Energy Solution Europe (SESE).

The reforms include guaranteed feed-in tariffs of 40 to 50 cents per kilowatt hour over 20 years and the decision to remove an annual cap of 0.8 gigawatts for new installations. According to information from the Greek photovoltaics association HELAPCO, the feed-in tariff will not change before 2010; it will therefore not be subject to any depression until then. Plant contractors also have a realisation period of 18 months from approval of the application – with a new installation they can therefore count on the current tariff practically until the start of 2012. During the course of this year a special programme should also be passed for a further 750 kilowatts, which envisages higher tariffs for roof installations.

The solar pioneer Sharp is pressing ahead with the use of solar power in Europe and supports Greece's commitment. "Above all the removal of the extension limit is a major improvement and confirms our strategy to focus on Greece as a market for the future," says Peter Thiele. "Greece's commitment to photovoltaics is at the same time an economic programme for the country – solar energy creates jobs in manufacturing, commerce and trade. In the largest solar market in the world, Germany, for example, it is estimated that around 48,000 people are employed in the solar power industry," adds Peter Thiele.

In accordance with European Union requirements Greece has to cover 20.1 per cent of its total power requirement with renewable energies by 2010 – compared with a share of 12.1 per cent in 2006; with increasing energy requirements this is a target which cannot be achieved without the heavy use of photovoltaics. The heavy use of

solar power has several benefits for the Mediterranean state. As well as reducing its CO2 emissions, Greece will no longer be dependent on fossil fuels. In addition solar plants produce power precisely when there is greater demand: air conditioning systems and refrigerators require a great amount of energy in the summer and at midday.

As a solar pioneer, Sharp can look back on 50 years of experience with solar energy. Crystalline photovoltaic modules, thin-film solar modules, light concentrators – Sharp has more solar technologies in its product portfolio than any other manufacturer, so that it can meet the different requirements of the broad range of application areas and installation situations. From silicon production, to cell manufacture, right through to module production, Sharp covers the entire value creation chain in the production of solar modules. To date, Sharp has produced solar cells with a total capacity of more than two gigawatts and is thus the world's largest photovoltaic manufacturer.

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