

The European PV Sector is taking the lead

The European solar electricity industry takes the lead in developing ambitious projects of cooperation and defining the basis for future partnerships.

Thursday 11th December, Brussels, the PV industry was in the starting block to start a major initiative for the European photovoltaic sector: **PV Catapult**. Invited by MEP Mechtild Rothe, PV industrialists and researchers gathered at the European Parliament to launch several coordinated activities to prepare the future of a strong European solar electricity sector.

Solar electricity is growing fast: the worldwide market for solar electricity has been developing at an average rate of 30 to 40% the last 5 years. In terms of annual installed capacity, Europe holds second place behind the Japan and European industry is working hard to rapidly close this gap.

The industry is today facing major issues, which can only be overcome through common efforts: the need for greater cooperation with the research community, the necessity to further develop its technical advantage, overcoming barriers in European and export markets, and the need for the development of financial tools enabling the development of new ambitious projects. The European industry adopted this year in June a new three-year strategy. PV Catapult is largely contributing to its deployment by mobilizing all the actors of the PV sector.

The PV Catapult project:

PV Catapult is a new Coordination Action within the 6th Framework Programme of the EC, it will run over 2 years and will involve more than 70 partners from the European industry, the research community and other major stakeholders of the PV sector.

The objective of PV Catapult is to coordinate specific activities in the field of photovoltaic (PV). The main areas of work that will be developed are:

- Design alternative strategies for European PV sector according to the main stakes for the industry
- Facilitate the transfer of results from the European Research to the European PV industry
- Determine PV market potentials and develop a roadmap
- Engage the construction sector to enhance uptake of photovoltaics
- Address socio-economic and financial issues relevant to the PV sector
- Identify opportunities and barriers in a changing European Market
- Identify opportunities and barriers in export markets
- Work on measurement standards and prediction of the performance of PV modules
- Cross-fertilize and disseminate results to the whole sector

PV Catapult is not seen as “one more project” but is considered today by the European PV Industry as the main basis to undertake these activities. It addresses the real issues the sector is facing today. PV Catapult will offer the opportunity for all actors in the sector to work together and discuss issues of crucial relevance, as well as to give a valuable input for the whole sector.
