

Suntech predicts excess solar supply will move to U.S.

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Suntech said on February 3 that planned cuts to Germany's solar power incentives will probably prompt solar companies to ship excess panels to the United States, pressuring equipment there, reports [Reuters](#).



Germany is currently ranked as the top market for PV solar systems, with approximately 50% of the global market share, but planned 15% cuts to FiTs from April 1 could change this ranking.

"Anything that happens in Germany has a ripple effect," Roger Efir, Suntech's managing director for business development in the U.S.

Suntech predicts that the modules that would have ordinarily been sold to the German market will now go to the U.S, causing an increase in its market, possibly placing it in the top spot by 2013.

Efir also thinks that the U.S. solar market could show strong growth throughout 2010, potentially doubling from an estimated 500MW that were installed in 2009.

"There is an opportunity that we could hit 1GW in the U.S. this year," he said, but that would likely require about 300MW of large, utility-scale projects.

Ain't no place I'd rather be: A few years back, the idea of Tennessee becoming one of the hotbeds of solar materials manufacturing would have likely resulted in more than a few raised eyebrows. Not that the Volunteer State hasn't played a small part in the photovoltaics industry, since Sharp has been assembling crystalline-silicon modules in Memphis for awhile.



But over the past year, [Hemlock](#) and [Wacker](#) have announced plans to invest a couple billion dollars in polysilicon production facilities in different parts of the state, and last week single-crystal silicon start-up [Confluence Solar](#) said it will spend a couple hundred million to build a plant in Clinton. The Feds also awarded advanced energy manufacturing tax credits to Sharp (to add another module line) and Wacker (to go toward building that billion-dollar poly plant).

Although none of the factories has been completed and won't be for a couple of years, by the mid-2010s, tens of thousands of polysilicon will be produced in the state that has historically played a key role in the public utility/energy biz as the home of the massive Tennessee Valley Authority...