

Vice President Sharp Solar Europe: “If we don’t get better feed-in tariffs, the Turkish solar market will be irrelevant”

There is almost no other European country with as much solar energy enormous potential as Turkey. In order to tap into this potential and create a developing solar market, the Turkish government is negotiating the strengthening of feed-in tariffs for electricity produced from renewable energies. As soon as the early summer, the Turkish government announced stronger support for photovoltaics – but nothing has been decided as yet.

Hamburg, 07 October 2009. When the Turkish government announced stronger support of solar energy in June of this year, this gave real prospects to a long-term strengthening of the solar industry in one of the sunniest countries in the world. In the land of the Bosphorus Strait, the sun shines on average more than seven hours per day and therefore gives radiant intensity of 1,300 kilowatt hours per square metre in an area of more than 800,000 square kilometres. Until now, the feed-in tariff for electricity produced from renewable energies had a fixed cap of 5.5 Euro cents per kilowatt hour.

“A strong a reliable support system is the basis for a new and growing market. We call on the Turkish government for an effective and attractive feed-in tariff in the short term, as this is the only way for the Turkish solar market to attract investors, home owners and the solar industry. In this way, the government will show whether it is really serious about developing the solar market and moving towards power supply from renewable energies. If we don't get better feed-in tariffs, Turkey will be missing a great opportunity and the market will become irrelevant in the long term,” says Peter Thiele, Executive Vice President Sharp Energy Solution Europe.

The discussion about the form of the feed-in tariff for all renewable energies will be reopened by the Turkish parliament no earlier than October, after the parliament’s summer break. “Sharp has been monitoring the development of the Turkish market for a long time. We have been operating there without our partner FORM for several years. This year, Sharp is celebrating 50 years in the solar industry and has significantly built up many markets in that half century. We can therefore say from experience: if you want a strong market, you must ensure advantageous conditions and good feed-in tariffs for healthy market development. The objective must be to create incentives for investors, ensure sustainable growth of the local solar industry and therefore establish a strong solar market in the long term,” says Peter Thiele.

Currently, Turkey sources around 70 percent of its energy requirements from abroad. The use of the solar potential and the expansion of renewable energies makes Turkey less dependent on foreign energy supplies and reduces CO2 emissions. Electricity consumption per inhabitant is currently 2,500 kilowatt hours and corresponds to around 60 percent of the European average consumption. Estimates by the consulting company focusconsult are assuming that with increasing wealth and population growth, annual

electricity requirements in Turkey will increase by up to 50 percent every five years. As such, Turkey lies behind China, India and Brazil in fourth place for growth in electricity consumption.

“We have high and growing electricity requirements in Turkey. Gaps in energy supplies forecasted by experts, which cannot be filled by existing power plants, should urge us to rethink even faster and accelerate the development of renewable energies. Attractive feed-in tariffs as of this year would consist of a clear signal for the conversion to safe and environmentally-friendly energy supply. Decentralised solar power plants supply energy when it is needed most: at peak load times around midday. As such, solar energy is a key pillar in the reliable energy supply of the future,” explains Tunc Korun, Board Member Temiz Enerji Sistemleri A.S.

“The high energy demand of companies must be taken into consideration when determining the feed-in tariff. Other than individuals, companies are to be won over as investors in large solar power plants. They can play a major role in developing a strong and dynamic solar market,” continues Mr Korun.

For 50 years, Sharp has been a driving force behind the use of photovoltaics and has made key contributions to the development of the European solar market. With innovation, cost-effectiveness and sustainability, Sharp intends to continue leading the global solar power market in the future as well. In 2010, the company will put the world's first gigawatt factory into operation in Sakai, Japan. The solar pioneer is already manufacturing solar cells in its production facilities in Europe, North America and Asia and thus boasts a direct presence on the world's markets. 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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Sharp has firmly anchored environmental protection in its corporate culture with its global environmental strategy. The so-called super-green strategy comprises the manufacture of energy-saving and energy-generating products in ecologically advanced factories, as well as responsible recycling. One important goal for the company on the path to being an "Environmentally Advanced Company" is the significant reduction in direct and indirect CO2 emissions from operational procedures and products. Sharp has defined environmental standards for all factories and products worldwide and revises and dynamically improves these standards continually.

Further information on Sharp environmental activities can be found on the Sharp Green Site at www.sharp.de/green_site.