

SUN & WIND ENERGY

Publishing company:

BVA Bielefelder Verlag GmbH & Co. KG
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Ravensberger Straße 10f
33602 Bielefeld, Germany

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Klingenberg Buchkunst Leipzig GmbH,
An der Hebemärchte,
04316 Baalsdorf/Leipzig, Germany
Website: www.Klingenberg-online.de

SUN & WIND ENERGY is an independent journal published six times a year. Subscription costs are 51 € per year plus shipping costs. Material in this publication may not be reproduced, reprinted or stored in any form without the publisher's written permission.

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Microcredit and renewables: In developing countries, many people have no access to the classic banking system. Often, »microloans« are the only way they can finance business investments. Most recently, microcredit has been used to finance renewable energy projects, too. But what role do microloans actually play when it comes to implementing renewables in developing countries? **Page 20**



Photo: Grameen Shakti

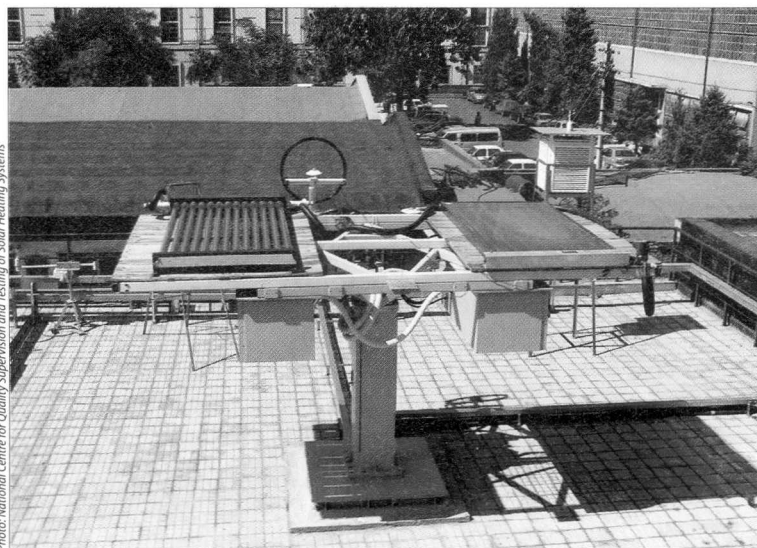


Photo: National Centre for Quality Supervision and Testing of Solar Heating Systems

Quality standards rising in China: The Chinese solar thermal market, which is dominated by open thermosiphon systems, is taking its first steps towards quality standards. The »Golden Sun« label is oriented towards the European Solar Keymark and already used by well-known manufacturers. Chinese institutes are in the starting blocks, to also provide their services to international collector and storage manufacturers. **Page 80, page 84**

The booming U.S. wind market is on track to set a new record this year with over 3,000 MW of new installations forecast, as compared to 2,452 MW in 2006. A major contributing factor for the sustained growth in U.S. wind capacity since 2005 is the continuity in availability of the federal production tax credit (PTC). However, wind industry performance is being tempered by supply chain shortages and policy uncertainty. **Page 160**



Photo: Dennis Schwartz

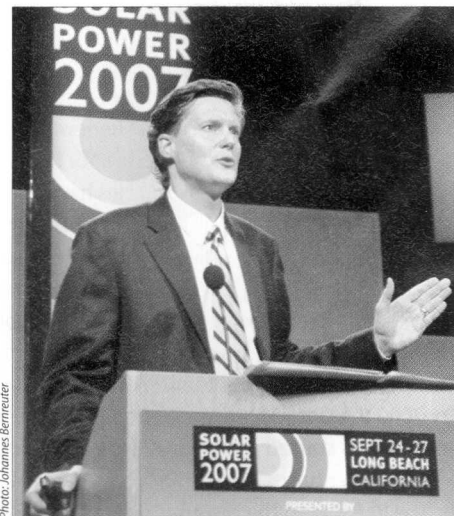
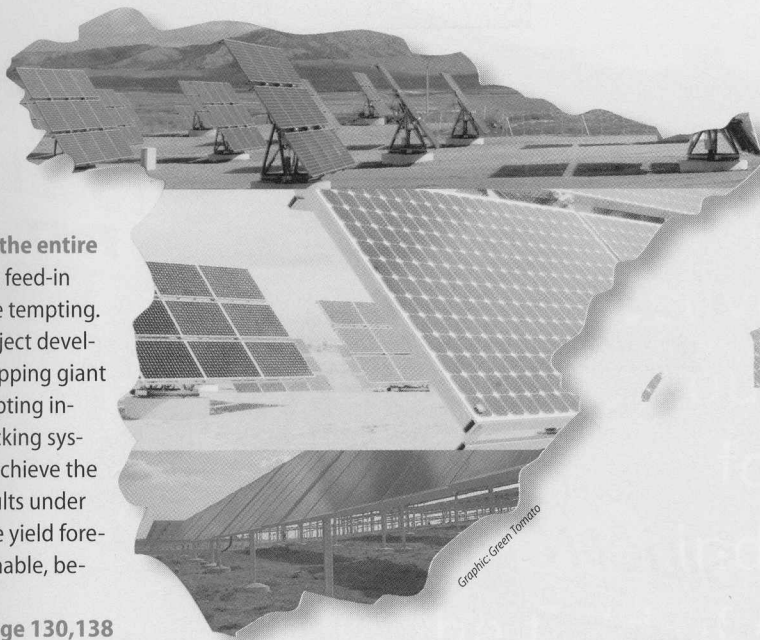


Photo: Johannes Bernreuter

Call for political action: Rhone Resch, president of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), vehemently called for an extension of the investment tax credit for solar panels beyond 2008. During the Solar Power 2007 in Long Beach, California, S&WE spoke with him about the outlook of the U.S. photovoltaic market. Read more about America's largest solar conference and exhibition on **Page 144,150**



Graphic: Green Tomato

Movement over the entire surface: Pleasing feed-in tariffs in Spain are tempting. Investors and project developers, when equipping giant solar farms, are opting increasingly for tracking systems in order to achieve the best possible results under clear skies. Yet the yield forecasts are questionable, beam sceptics.

Page 130,138



Photo: Wilhelm Breuer

The »European Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference and Exhibition (EU PVSEC)«, which this year took place for the 22nd time, has become as important as it is vast with 520 stands covering 30,000 m². On top of this was a tightly packed conference programme with over a thousand presentations. Highlights of the important event on

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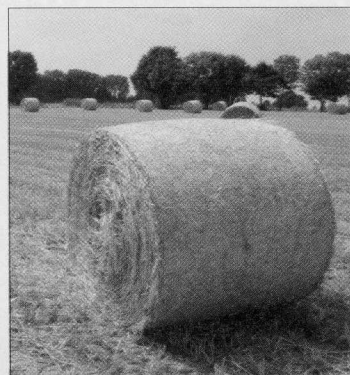


Photo: North Rhine-Westphalian Chamber of Agriculture

Fuels from the fields: Corn, straw or whole plants are being grown as the »oil« of the future on our fields. With agriculturally produced biomass, farmers can save money which would be spent on fossil fuels and the disposal of waste corn. Boiler manufacturers have developed special corn or straw boilers, which are specially adapted for biogenic fuels of all kinds.

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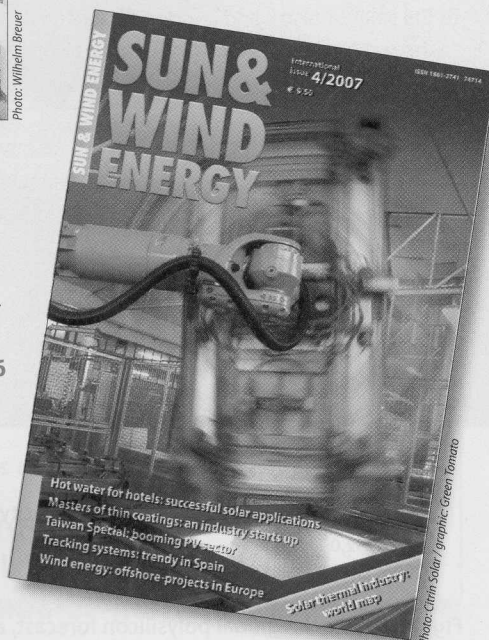


Photo: Citrus Solar / Graphic: Green Tomato

Hot water for hotels: successful solar applications
Masters of thin coatings: an industry starts up
Taiwan Special: booming PV sector
Tracking systems: trendy in Spain
Wind energy: offshore-projects in Europe
Solar thermal industry: world map

Big business with the sun: The idea quickly took shape; the implementation took several months. But now it is here: The first world map of the solar thermal industry shows 186 factories in 41 countries.

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