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Renewable Energy Update

an Allen Matkins
market intelligence
publication

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[China's influence continues to grow in California's solar power market](#)

Grist - Jan 18

Chinese solar power manufacturers are the dominant foreign player in the California solar power industry and their stake in the market is expected to keep growing, according to a report in Grist. The [California Solar Initiative](#), a state program with a mandate to install 3,000MW of rooftop PV panels, reports that it purchased 39% of its panels from Chinese manufacturers in the final quarter of 2010. A single Chinese panel manufacturer, Yingli Green Energy, has increased its market share from 1.2% in 2009 to 17.5% in 2010. Yingli's numbers dwarf those of the largest California-based PV manufacturer, Sun Power, which controlled 6.3% of the market in 2010. Grist suggests that domestic companies could be poised to reclaim more of the California market as PV panel demand in the state surges.

Related News:

[Analysis: Global trade war on horizon for solar industry](#)

[U.S. solar industry at risk over China's control of rare earths market](#)

[U.S. closes energy deals with China](#)

RENEWABLE ENERGY FOCUS

[Study predicts 20.5GW of PV installations in 2011](#)

PV Magazine - Jan 18

Following a 130% leap last year, global solar PV installations are headed for another record year in 2011, according to a [report](#) from IMS Research. The study says that at least 22 countries will install 50MW or more of PV this year, and another 18 counties will install at least 100MW each, bringing the total for worldwide PV installation to 58GW by the end of 2011. IMS is optimistic about the year ahead for PV installation despite market troubles in the EU, the Middle East and Africa, and predicts the situation will improve even more over the next two or three years.

[DOE grants \\$967M loan guarantee for Arizona solar project](#)

Reuters - Jan 20

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded a \$967 million loan guarantee for the 290MW Agua Caliente Solar project in Yuma County, Arizona. Solar developer NRG purchased the project from First Solar, which also provided the PV panels for the project, in late 2010. Under the terms of the deal between First Solar and NRG, First Solar must install, operate and maintain the project. The federal loan marks the third wave of DOE funding for solar projects in the past year; the agency awarded loan guarantees worth a combined \$5 billion to three California projects in the summer of 2010.

[Conservation group sues federal agencies to halt Ivanpah solar project](#)

Reuters - Jan 18

Non-profit conservation group Western Watersheds Project has filed a lawsuit against several government agencies alleging they did not complete proper

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Washington, DC

September 20-22, 2011

[Solar Power International 2011](#)

Dallas, TX

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Recent Opportunities

[Pacific Gas and Electric Company](#)

environmental due diligence before issuing permits for a planned 370MW Ivanpah solar power project. The lawsuit names the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Land Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service, and individual agency officials as defendants, none of whom have yet to comment on the case. The group filed the lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Related News:

[Environmentalists battle energy developers over Mojave projects](#)

[Permits frustrate California solar developers](#)

New York Times - Jan 19

Complex municipal permitting processes are hurting the California PV installation industry, according to the New York Times. The report examines the permitting difficulties faced by Orange-based Verengo Solar Power. Company reps say they are overwhelmed by wildly-varying bureaucratic requirements in the different jurisdictions the company operates in; they require a full-time staff of 15 just to handle all the paperwork. The Times refers to a solar industry-backed [study](#) that suggests that streamlining municipal permitting processes in California could provide a billion-dollar windfall to the solar PV industry over the next five years.

Related News:

[Verengo Solar receives \\$9.7M investment](#)

[CPUC approves 140MW San Diego solar plant](#)

Earth Techling - Jan 18

The California Public Utilities Commission has given San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) permission to sign a 20-year energy purchase deal with Centinela Solar Energy. Under the terms of the deal, SDG&E will purchase 297GWh per year from Centinela's 140MW Imperial Valley facility, which is expected to go online in 2013. The deal represents an effort from SDG&E to increase its lagging renewable energy portfolio closer to the percentage [mandated](#) by state government.

Related News:

[CPUC signs more solar deals, faces opposition](#)

[L.A. County approves EIR for 230MW solar plant](#)

[California firm starts \\$100M solar feed-in tariff fund](#)

Solar Industry - Jan 19

Santa Monica-based financial services firm Pure Power Advisors (PPA) has started the Solar FIT Fund, a \$100 million tax-equity investment fund for ground-mounted solar projects in California. The fund will provide financing for all phases of development and operation for solar projects between 1.5MW and 20MW in size. The fund will use a financing structure that employs federal energy tax credits and grants. PPA representatives note that the aggregating effect of the fund on solar projects will give individual projects more leverage for negotiation and financing.

[Solar projects face gov't review in San Luis Obispo](#)

San Luis Obispo Tribune - Jan 16

After repeated redesigns to conform with environmental standards, two large solar projects proposed for construction on the Carrizo Plain are due for final review by San Luis Obispo County officials. Officials have already pronounced the environmental impact statement for SunPower's 250MW California Valley Solar Ranch improved over previous plans. First Solar's 550MW Topaz solar farm has also undergone redesigns to fit government environmental standards. Environmental advocacy groups initially expressed concern that the projects would harm such protected species as the giant kangaroo rat and the San Joaquin kit fox.

[to Release 2011 Photovoltaic Program Power Purchase Agreement Request for Offers](#)

[Southern California Public Power Authority Request for Proposals for Renewable Energy Projects](#)

[San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Request for Qualifications for Design-Build Solar Photovoltaic Projects](#)



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[Fresno faces deluge of solar project proposals](#)

Solar Home and Business Journal - Jan 16

Fresno County officials are considering permit requests from a dozen companies vying to build 300MW worth of solar projects in the municipality. The boom in solar project permit inquiries echoes similar trends in neighboring Kern, Kings and Tulare counties. The requests are mostly to build on farmland in the western part of Fresno County around Coalinga, Firebaugh and San Joaquin. Fresno is considered a prime area for solar development due to its excellent generation conditions, proximity to transmission lines, and local, state and federal energy policies that offer generous incentives to renewable energy projects.

[Iron pyrite shows promise for PV panel manufacturing](#)

LA Times - Jan 14

A research team from the University of California at Irvine asserts that iron pyrite could provide an alternative source of material for the manufacture of thin film photovoltaic solar panels. The team claims the cheap, abundant mineral could be used to replace expensive rare earths in manufacturing thin film for PV panels, while converting sunlight into electricity at about the same rate. Industry expert Shyam Mehta is dubious about the team's chance of success with the discovery, citing marketing difficulties as a common roadblock to wide adoption of new solar energy technologies.

[Vestas, WWF team to create enviro-friendly product label](#)

New York Times - Jan 18

A consortium of companies and environmental groups including Danish wind giant Vestas and the World Wildlife Foundation will launch a product label that tells consumers the extent to which wind energy was used in the manufacture of their purchases. The campaign, called "Windmade," will be managed by a non-profit organization and will require participating companies to undergo an as-yet-undecided certification process. Vestas CEO, Ditlev Engel, says the program is intended in part to stimulate consumer preference for renewable energies such as wind, which would result in increased demand for turbines.

[U.S. smart grid investment in step with global industry: study](#)

Intelligent Energy - Jan 14

The U.S. is keeping up with global investment in smart grid technology and applications but still faces massive upgrading expenses, according to a [report](#) from market research firm SBI Energy. The report says Department of Energy funding for smart grid projects increased from \$83 million in 2009 to \$125 million in 2010, with an additional 16% jump to \$144 million in 2011. The report also cites 27 smart grid projects funded with the \$5 billion the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act earmarked for that purpose. Despite this progress, SBI says the expense of fully upgrading the U.S. grid remains large, with cost estimates running from a few hundred billion to as much as a trillion dollars.

Related News:

[Report from Stanford smart grid conference](#)

[DOE to launch renewable energy initiatives in tribal communities](#)

Department of Energy - Jan 19

U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu has announced the availability of up to \$10 million in funding for two initiatives aimed at the promotion of renewable energy use among tribal nations. The energy efficiency and renewable energy deployment initiatives for tribal communities will receive up to \$4 million each to research future energy efficiency improvements or renewable energy projects.

The initiatives will be able to access as much as \$1.5 million each for capacity building and strategic planning.

[Kaiser Permanente to install 4MW of fuel cell servers in California facilities](#)

Environmental Leader - Jan 20

Health insurer Kaiser Permanente will install seven solid oxide fuel cell servers producing a combined 4MW of energy at seven of its California facilities. Bloom Energy manufactured the servers, known as Bloom Boxes, and will install and service the units for Kaiser. Kaiser anticipates the Bloom Boxes will cut the use of fossil fuels at the facilities by as much as 34%. The installations continue Kaiser's renewable energy initiative for its California facilities; the company is in the process of installing 15MW of solar panels and is considering using thermal and wind energy to further offset its use of nonrenewable energy.

Related News:

[Bloom Energy launches power purchase program for fuel cell system](#)

NOTABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS AND DEALS

[Fotowatio, SoCal Edison sign 120MW power purchase deal](#)

San Francisco Examiner - Jan 15

Fotowatio Renewable Energies has signed a 120MW power purchase deal with Southern California Edison for four solar projects in Kern and Los Angeles Counties. Fotowatio plans to finance, build, own, maintain, and operate the facilities. The projects are due to be online in 2013, and are planned to connect to existing transmission lines. Global energy developer Fotowatio has 230MW of solar projects currently producing power, with plans to build projects that will produce 2,200MW.

[Sempra buys \\$875M stake in two foreign utilities](#)

Wall Street Journal - Jan 19

San Diego-based utility operator and wholesale generator Sempra Energy has announced it will pay \$875 million for a stake in two South American utilities owned by AEI. The purchase builds on Sempra's existing stake in the utilities, giving the company full ownership of Chilquinta Energia in Peru and a 76% share of Luz del Sur in Peru. Sempra CEO Donald Felsing says he expects the deal will provide "stable, long-term returns." The deal is slated to close in the second quarter of 2011.

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