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ZSW Conducts Feasibility Study for Brazilian Photovoltaic Production

Stuttgart Researchers Analyze the Solar Industry's Prospects in Southern Brazil

Solar energy is to figure prominently in the future of the Brazilian state of Paraná with plans to build an end-to-end Photovoltaic value chain. The determination as to whether this is technically and economically feasible is now being made by the Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research Baden-Württemberg (ZSW) and its partners in this project.

ZSW has been advising policymakers and analyzing energy management systems for many years at regional, national and EU levels. Now the Stuttgart-based institute is taking its expertise to South America to help photovoltaic modules manufacturing get off the ground in Paraná. An agreement to this end was signed in Stuttgart on November 4 with Baden-Württemberg's Minister of Economic Affairs Nils Schmid in attendance.

Various energy and trade associations and the Brazilian/Paraguayan utility Itaipu have joined forces with the aim of setting up an end-to-end photovoltaic supply chain in Paraná that is to start with silicon production and culminates in solar module manufacturing. As part of this 'Green Silicon Project,' some 10,000 tons of silicon are to be used each year to make solar modules with a total output of 680 megawatts. Now ZSW is to conduct a scientific study to determine if and how this ambitious plan can be put into practice. To this end, ZSW experts will first comprehensively analyze the regional market as well as the global photovoltaics market. Then the team will investigate how this project would affect employment and value creation in the region. ZSW has a deep well of expertise and experience to draw on in this area. The institute has been tracking the impact of renewable energies on behalf of Germany's federal government since 2004.

"ZSW's studies, analyses and actionable recommendations are a big help to the policymakers who are shaping Germany's exit from nuclear power and fossil fuels. We will be delighted if our efforts contribute to a more eco-friendly power supply in Brazil," says Andreas Püttner, an economist and member of ZSW's Systems Analysis team.

This analysis will also examine the infrastructure, local supply chains and possible effects on the environment. The feasibility study is expected to be completed in around six months.

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ZSW is partnering with the two Fraunhofer-Institut divisions ISE and IPA to accomplish these tasks. The Solar Cluster Baden-Württemberg is coordinating the effort.

Paraná is bounded on the west by Paraguay. The Itaipu hydropower plant, one of the world's largest with 14 gigawatts capacity, is sited on this border and operated jointly by the two countries. The plan is for the photovoltaic factory to be built on this site and supplied with electricity sourced from the hydropower plant so solar modules can be manufactured with zero carbon emissions.

The Centre for Solar Energy and Hydrogen Research Baden-Württemberg (ZSW) is one of the leading institutes for applied research in the fields of photovoltaic energy, renewable fuels, battery technology, fuel cells and energy systems analysis. The three ZSW sites at Stuttgart, Ulm and Widderstall are currently staffed with around 230 scientists, engineers and technicians supported by 120 research and student assistants.

Press Officers

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