



PRESIDENT GORBACHEV CALLS FOR DRAMATIC BOOST TO SOLAR ENERGY TO REVITALISE ECONOMY, FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY POVERTY

Solar Report Card Highlights Potential for Governments to Spur Robust Solar Markets. US receives a C+ Grade, UK D-, Germany A-, China D-, Russia F

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March 30, Geneva -- Green Cross International Founder Mikhail Gorbachev has urged world leaders and the private sector to make big investments in solar energy swiftly as a way out of the current economic crisis and as part of an emergency response to climate change. Mr. Gorbachev was addressing a press conference in San Antonio, Texas, where he addresses the 33rd NPRA International Petrochemical Conference.

“The oil industry is a key stakeholder. Their commitment is essential to turn the tide against the massive accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere,” Mr. Gorbachev pointed out. “This economic crisis must mark the beginning of a new sustainable development path that has been long overdue. Solar power needs big investments to expand and create significant effects. For the 2 billion people currently living without electricity, the sun is the best hope.”

Talking about the enormous potential that tapping solar energy holds, Mr. Gorbachev referred to the **Global Solar Report Card**, the first of its kind, analyzing 16 countries’ investments in solar energy. The full report can be found at www.globalgreen.org/solarreportcard

“Solar is a key strategic investment that can help combat energy poverty, create economic growth and help fight climate change,” noted Green Cross Energy Program Chair and Global Green USA president Matt Petersen. “We need governments to urgently shift subsidies for oil, gas and coal toward solar and renewable technologies to create jobs, improve the lives of those in need, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The G-20 must make long-term commitments to solar, enabling the private sector to further reduce costs via economies of scale and technological advancements.”

“The challenge today is to embed Green Economic policy in national economies worldwide - leadership by one country or region is not enough,” said Alexander Likhotal, President of the Green Cross International. “Latest estimates by the International Energy Agency show renewable sources account for only \$10 billion of the \$250-300 billion allocated to annual energy subsidies worldwide. If we are to deal with the current crises and the ones just around the corner, then every dollar, euro, or yen is going to have to work smarter and harder.”

Highlights of the Solar Report Card

The **Global Solar Report Card** by Green Cross International and its American affiliate, Global Green USA outlines successes and failures in 16 countries’ (and the state of California’s) efforts in designing promising policy frameworks for sustained solar development. It finds all countries still in the early phases of solar deployment, even Germany, which is currently setting the pace. The ranking is based on a 100-point system that allocates a maximum of 30 points to the amount of solar installed so far, and the remaining 70 points to drivers for future growth (56 points for financial incentives, 12 points for regulatory incentives and 2 points for educational and advocacy efforts).

The following are some of the highlights of the analysis:

- Germany (A-), which scored highest being the country with most PV installed and having put in place promising ‘drivers for future growth’, still finishes with only 70 out of a 100 possible points. The state of

California (B), also scored well in 2nd place, having implemented a 10-year \$3 billion rebate program for solar.

- Spain (C+), which saw tremendous growth since 2007, overtook the US in 2008 as the 3rd country with the most installed PV. A period of policy uncertainty followed by a decision to cap the market for 2009 negatively affected Spain's grade. However, based on Spain's installed capacity for 2008, Spain would score a B.
- The United States (C+), with the extension of its only federal-level financial support for solar, assured a much needed long term commitment to the sector. Additional support has since been allocated in the context of the stimulus package. Still, much more could be done in a country with such solar, financial and technological resources.
- Countries such as Italy (C+), France (C+) and Greece (C-) fare moderately because of still young markets, but all earn points for putting in place substantial drivers for growth. Recent efforts focused on lifting bureaucratic hurdles, which have in all 3 cases, acted as significant barriers to market take up. Solar markets are expected to grow in these countries moving forward.
- With recent policy changes, Australia (C) missed an opportunity to put in place a considered federal-level policy to capitalize on tremendous solar resources and spur significant investment in the country's solar sector. Similarly to the US, the country could do much more to reach its solar potential.
- Japan (C), once the leading country in terms of both production and installed capacity, scored low after ending its flagship program in 2005. Japan however, hoping to regain its solar panel makers' competitive edge in the world market, recently put in place the first step of a new residential PV program.
- China (D-), which seems committed to developing a clean energy infrastructure, has set ambitious targets and put in place a comprehensive renewable energy policy framework. However, the country scores poorly here because up until March 23rd, the specifics for solar PV were unclear. Indeed, China just released details for a PV rebate program. The country stands to gain a lot from supporting the deployment of solar, given its tremendous energy needs, high insolation and its position as one of the three largest PV producers in the world.
- Finally, countries that rate poorly in the study are Russia (F) and Poland (F), with no solar markets and no mechanisms to capitalize on their solar potential, and to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom (D-) with a very small market and no significant support for solar growth at this time. While the UK is in the process of designing a solar support program, impact will not be seen until the end of 2010.

About Green Cross International (GCI)

Green Cross International's Solar Initiative seeks to raise awareness about the potential of solar energy and promoting greater investments in solar markets in developed and developing countries alike. Through its network of 31 organizations, GCI wishes to support advocacy for solar support measures and education efforts on the benefits of solar energy. GCI also aims to launch a Global Solar Fund, an investment vehicle mobilizing public and private capital to support the growth solar markets in the developing world so as to combat climate change and energy poverty through solar electrification. In this perspective, the next Solar Report Card will include developing countries, examining barriers to investment in solar projects.

About Global Green USA

Global Green USA is the American affiliate of Green Cross International. For the last fifteen years, Global Green has been a champion of solar power as a smart climate solution and has helped influence state and national legislation to create incentives for solar power – particularly to benefit low-income families and communities. Global Green is building The Holy Cross Project with lead funding support from the Home Depot Foundation, the first solar powered, net-zero energy housing development in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward. Global Green is sponsoring the first in the nation Residential Buildings Zero Net Energy Bill in California, and recently provided the technical expertise and resources to help Community Housing Works build the first solar powered net-zero affordable housing complex in California, the Solara.

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