



THE SUSTAINABLE SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVE

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Solar energy companies criticize EU green energy restriction

The state aid guidelines adopted today by the European Commission on renewable energy are strongly criticized by the renewable sector. The European solar manufacturers' initiative EU ProSun sees the EU guidelines as undesirable intervention in the national energy policies of the EU Member States. Milan Nitzschke, President of EU ProSun said: "On one hand the EU is not able to set effective targets for the expansion of renewable energy. On the other hand, it even limits the scope for Member States to promote renewable energy efficiently. For the Commission renewable energy seems to be more of a necessary evil that must be contained. Meanwhile, nuclear energy and coal continue to be massively subsidized."

With these new guidelines, the Commission dictates that EU Member States must calculate the support for green power through tenders. According to the Commission tendering will bring down costs, but this is false according to ProSun: "Tenders suspend small and medium size players and prevent competition." So, existing tendering models failed, costs were significantly higher and expansion targets were not achieved. Nitzschke said: "The myth of competitive tendering is textbook idiocy. In practice, it is not fit for purpose. Even Berlin's airport and the Finnish nuclear power plant Olkiluoto or Airbus A400m were advertised - with disastrous costs and years of delay."

ProSun welcomes that the new text has been at least partly watered down since its first draft. Smaller systems could be promoted as before and would not have to be advertised. Furthermore, the Commission gives Member States the opportunity to demonstrate that feed-in systems without tenders lead to lower costs. Germany and France have now announced plans to test tenders in parallel. "We'll see what results from these plans. I bet regressive payments without tender bureaucracy remain the superior instrument," says Nitzschke.

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