Corporate News

centrotherm photovoltaics develops next generation solar cell

- **Investment of approx. EUR 10 million for research and development**
- **Higher degree of efficiency for multi- and mono-crystalline silicon**
- **Process improvement for conventional cells**

Blaubeuren, August 12, 2008 – centrotherm photovoltaics AG is concentrating the know-how of over 25 experts from all areas of solar cell production in a cross-Group development project. This project, in which the company is investing a total of approximately EUR 10 million over a period of two years, aims to develop a new generation of solar cells, and the related production process, accompanied by significant enhancements in efficacy. In doing so, centrotherm photovoltaics benefits from the fact that essential parts of the value-chain relating to the manufacturing of solar cells and solar silicon can be realized within the Group. For example, the Group benefits from in-house access to experts from the areas of total-process development, metallization, wet chemistry, and production line layouts. The International Solar Energy Research Centre in Constance provides additional research support. A new, improved design is being developed for the front and rear sides of conventional solar cells as part of the project. centrotherm photovoltaics has already intensively researched the requisite alternative process routes and their cost structures in an initial phase of the project, and has significantly improved them in the laboratory. The optimal process sequences for multi- and mono-crystalline solar silicon for mass production will now be prepared over the coming months.

"We aim at an efficiency of at least 16.5 percent for multi-crystalline, and at least 18 percent for mono-crystalline solar silicon," explained Dr. Peter Fath, Chief Technology Officer, centrotherm photovoltaics. "Our development activity also takes the structure of the manufacturing process into account to allow our customers to benefit promptly from the results. The continued aim of our research and development is to make a contribution to reducing manufacturing costs in photovoltaics."

Independently from the development of the next generation solar cell, centrotherm photovoltaics has registered successes in optimizing processes for conventional solar cells. In this area, improvements have been achieved with the thermal diffusion process to manufacture cell diode structure. This allowed significant improvements in the degree of efficiency to be achieved particularly for multi-crystalline silicon with low output quality.

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