

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the 2008 Annual Report of the IEA Photovoltaic Power Systems Programme. 2008 has been another remarkable year for photovoltaics. The awareness about the potential role of photovoltaics in the future energy supply has clearly increased among various public and private organisations. A landmark in this direction has been the publication of the IEA Energy Technology Perspectives (ETP) in June 2008. The message from ETP 2008 is very clear: What is needed in order to meet the challenges the world is facing is nothing less than a global revolution in ways that energy is supplied and used. ETP 2008 provides an analysis of different scenarios how the energy sector will need to be transformed over the next decades. According to the most advanced (BLUE Map) scenario which corresponds to IPCC emission reduction targets, renewable energy, by 2050, will account for 46 % of the global power. Among the renewable energy technologies underlying this scenario, photovoltaics will play a major role.

In the context of the 2020 renewable energy targets of the European Union and triggered by the expected grid parity costs of photovoltaics, the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (EPIA) recently estimated the possible contribution of photovoltaics up to 12 % of the electricity supply by 2020. Such figures are indeed impressive but their realisation requires rapid, strong and ongoing developments in research, technology, manufacturing and deployment as well as a dedicated cooperation among various sectors and countries.

As in all sectors, the difficult situation of the world economy has not made life easier for the photovoltaic industry. Nevertheless, and characterised by its long term and sustainable investment nature, photovoltaics is one of those promising sectors which can help to overcome the present crisis. Photovoltaics is therefore often part of the various economy recovery plans throughout the world.

As a leading international network of expertise, IEA PVPS has the mission and privilege to cooperate on a global level in this rapidly expanding technology area. IEA PVPS undertakes key collaborative projects related to technology progress, cost reduction and rapid deployment of photovoltaics in various applications. Providing objective and neutral high-quality information about relevant developments in the photovoltaic sector remains our highest priority. Due to the increasing recognition of photovoltaics as an important future energy technology, the interest in the work performed within IEA PVPS is continuously expanding.

Outreach for new membership within IEA PVPS continued in 2008. Malaysia joined the PVPS Programme as the 23rd member during the year. I welcome Malaysia as the most recent IEA PVPS member and look forward to a long and fruitful cooperation. China has joined one of our Executive Committee meetings as an observer. Contacts have been ongoing with South Africa, India, New Zealand, Thailand and Singapore.

On the Task level, the interest for a follow-up activity to the PVPS Task 2 on Performance, Reliability and Analysis of Photovoltaic Systems has remained high and ways are being sought to establish a new Task 13 on Performance and Reliability of Photovoltaic Systems. Grid integration, high penetration of photovoltaic systems in electric grids and the relationship with the topic of smart grids have been discussed as themes for future cooperation.

The overall communication efforts were continued through systematic distribution of PVPS products at conferences, workshops and by means of direct mailings. Communication was further supported by the PVPS website www.iea-pvps.org. Moreover, booths at the industry exhibition of the 23rd European Photovoltaic Solar Energy Conference in Valencia and Solar Power International in San Diego attracted a large number of visitors and provided an excellent forum for dissemination purposes.

2008 was another productive year for PVPS with many new results from the various ongoing projects. The detailed results are given in the Task reports of this annual report and all publications can be found at the PVPS website. I would like to congratulate all Tasks on their progress and achievements. The current status of photovoltaics in the PVPS member countries is described within the country section of this annual report.

A number of Executive Committee members have left us during the year, heading for new responsibilities or horizons. I would like to thank them for their strong support and valuable contributions. With this, I take the opportunity to thank all Executive Committee members, Operating Agents and Task Experts, who by their dedicated efforts, contribute to the collaborative work and success of PVPS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Nowak". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Stefan Nowak
Chairman