

First Solar achieves 5 GW photovoltaic production

Tempe, Ariz., November 17, 2011 — First Solar, Inc. announced cumulative production has reached 5 GW, or 66 million solar modules, capable of generating enough clean electricity to power about 2.5 million homes. The company began commercial production in 2002 and has since grown to manufacture 36 production lines on three continents.

First Solar recently announced that implementing technologies and processes derived from its research and development program produced a 17.3 percent efficient cadmium telluride solar cell in July, resulting in average module conversion efficiency of 12.4 percent from its best-performing production lines during the third quarter.

Efficiency gains have also enabled the company to begin production of 87-watt modules, which produce higher amounts of electricity when installed in the field.

Five GW of solar generation displaces 3.3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, the equivalent of taking 650,000 average cars off the road or planting 84 million trees each year.

On a life cycle basis, systems using First Solar modules also have the lowest carbon footprint and fastest energy payback time — the amount of time a system must operate to recover the energy that was required to produce it — of any other photovoltaic technology. This enables systems using First Solar modules to provide the greatest and fastest environmental benefits.