

## CELL &amp; MODULE MARKET TALK | ITALY

*InterPV conducts a series of interviews with solar experts around the world in an effort to get their thoughts on the current status and future prospects for the renewable energy industry and to understand better the solar PV industry in the context of other renewable energy sources.*

Gerardo Capilupo is Executive Manager of D.G.Energy. D.G.Energy is a new Italian crystalline silicon PV modules manufacturer. Capilupo has been working in the PV field for almost ten years. He studied in England Competition law, with a special interest for the utilities market and worked in the office for gas and electricity market in London (the British Energy Authority), then worked on renewable energies plant regulation. Capilupo sees Italy is currently one of the most attractive countries for investors in renewables, especially photovoltaic and wind energy.

BY JEANNY LIM



## GERARDO CAPILUPO

ON THE RENEWABLE ENERGY INDUSTRY

**How much investment has been made into the renewable energy industry in Italy? And what are the future prospects?**

Italy is currently one of the most attractive countries for investors in renewables, especially photovoltaic and wind energy. Italy was expected to reach 1 GW in 2009 for PV—wind farms had a big expansion over the last two years. Nowadays, due to fear of bad impact on the landscape, every Italian region is slowing down the authorization process for new solar farms. On the other side, the Italian industry is doing very well, even if size of our new company is not yet comparable to the Germans and the Chinese. The size matter has always been an issue to address in Italian policy to support industry. Small and medium enterprises were very successful before globalization. On the contrary, today, size may be a problem for being competitive—especially in a market where price is so much relevant for investors. In the next years, the


small producers may be taken over by bigger groups, as it already happened to companies like Helios (Kerself) and SE Project (SOLON).

**How has the global economic crisis been affecting the renewable energy industry? Is there a specific technology sector that has been affected more severely? And is there a specific geographical region that has been affected more severely?**

The crisis had an effect on the PV market on the first part of 2009. The photovoltaic market is very much related to bank availability for financing. In the first half of 2009, Italian banks were not lending money, waiting for the situation to be cleared. And the market stopped. Many producers had to reduce working hours or stop production. It was worse in Italy than in other markets. At long last, after the first feed-in tariff scheme—run from 2004 to 2006—the Italian market was working on a

steady and sound basis. Facing the stop for six months were difficult. From June 2009 on, the market has recovered. And now demand is very strong, especially for PV.

**How much growth do you expect for the renewable energy industry?**

I can talk about the PV market. I think the most realistic forecast are those ones which give a compound annual growth rate of between 20% and 30% over the next few years. Very much will also depend on technological progress and reduction of manufacturing costs per watt peak. However, with new markets opening—we expect the U.S.A. to give a boost, but also several European countries are to adopt feed-in tariff schemes—we are going towards a very lively and strongly competitive market. 

*Jeanny Lim is Editor-in-Chief of InterPV. Send your comments to [swied@infothe.com](mailto:swied@infothe.com).*