

## **WFC invites US Utilities Decision Makers to Germany for Solar Fact Finding Mission**

Germany is not known for its blue skies and sunny weather. Nonetheless, 31 US utilities executives and managers spent one week in June in and around Freiburg and Munich to study the latest in solar energy technology – and to discuss legislative approaches to securing long term renewable energy investments. The Event was co-organized by the Solar Electric Power Association and the Northwest Solar Center at Washington State University, and sponsored by PV module manufacturer First Solar.

Following the invitation of the World Future Council, representatives of leading utilities such as Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison and Duke Energy Corporation signed up to the solar fact finding mission between June 9 and 13, 2008, to visit top-end solar panel producers, experts and scientists. Among others, on-location visits were scheduled at the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, the 6,3 MW (enough to supply 1.600 family homes or the island Norderney for a year) solar park in Muehlhausen and leading German utilities such as ENWB and RWE.

One key issue was the German government's approach to secure and support investment in renewable energies and whether similar legislation can be facilitated in the US. The German so-called feed-in-tariffs law guarantees producers a fixed rate for renewable energies for 20 years.

In March of this year, the WFC had invited 70 lawmakers and experts to a workshop during the International Renewable Energy Conference in Washington, D.C. As a result, participants founded a US-wide Alliance for Renewable Energy to support the implementation of legislation to further and protect renewable energy investments.