

ABB and solar energy



Claes Ryttoft

Dear Reader,

In September 2014, ABB presented its Next Level Strategy, charting the company's plans for growth for the period 2015 to 2020. An important part of this strategy is a commitment to ecologically sustainable technologies.

Sustainability can be approached from numerous angles, ranging from choice of materials across energy efficiency to human safety. ABB's R&D activities are working on all of these aspects. The present issue of ABB Review, however, focusses on one particular and highly visible contribution to sustainability in energy: photovoltaics.

Photovoltaics is a rapidly growing part of the global energy mix. It is inherently scalable, clean, and is under favorable conditions already able to compete without subsidies. Although ABB does not manufacture the actual photovoltaic panels, the company offers all other parts of the value chain ranging across inverters, transformers, protection and control and is proud to be the only company able to supply this complete range. ABB's position was further consolidated by the acquisition of the company, Power One, in 2013.

This issue of ABB Review features an interview with Michael Liebreich, chairman and founder of Bloomberg New Energy and leading expert on photovoltaics, who thought provokingly presents his vision of the future of the technology and what it will take to get there.

The subsequent articles look at a selection of the numerous products and technologies ABB offers to support the photovoltaic value

chain. Besides the more mainstream articles looking at different contributions to and aspects of grid connectivity, some more unorthodox applications are also covered, such as irrigation using solar powered pumps. The least orthodox of photovoltaic applications is an airplane. ABB is proud to be part of the Solar Impulse team, whose experimental plane is at the time of writing making a journey around the world powered entirely by solar-generated electricity.

Photovoltaics has come a long way from the largely experimental technology it was only some years ago. I trust that this edition of ABB Review will present you with insights and food for thought on this exciting source of energy and how it can be harnessed, connected to the grid and integrated with other forms of generation.

I would like to use this opportunity to remind you that besides the print version, ABB Review is available electronically, both as a pdf and as an app for tablet devices. Please visit www.abb.com/abbreview for more information.

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