

Contact:

Jens Holm, Policy Director
Tel: +46 708 250 889
holm@escm.solar

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ESMC feedback on:

European Commission proposal, implementing decision: guidelines for the implementation of certain selection criteria for net-zero strategic projects (NZIA Article 13)

General remarks

We welcome the guidelines, which aim to streamline Member States' selection processes for granting net-zero strategic status to projects of significant importance in rebuilding a European net-zero manufacturing ecosystem. For the solar PV manufacturing industry, it is urgently necessary to establish streamlined and efficient processes for fast-tracking permits and ensuring access to finance. Although only one criterion is required, European solar PV manufacturing projects would meet or exceed almost all criteria outlined in the proposal. However, a major shortcoming of the proposal is the absence of new financial support measures. Compared to other major economies – such as the United States, China, and India – the EU lags significantly behind in actively supporting net-zero projects, a concern also highlighted in the Draghi report. For this reason, we support the proposal but emphasize that new financial support mechanisms for net-zero strategic projects, both as OPEX and CAPEX, must be introduced at both the EU level and within Member States.

ESMC proposes:

Introduce new financial support mechanisms for net-zero strategic projects, covering both OPEX and CAPEX, at both the EU level and within Member States, ensuring alignment with the above-mentioned proposal.

Christoph Podewils, Secretary General, ESMC

Jens Holm, Policy Director, ESMC