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## **Solar Scorecard 2.0 Finds Most Solar Panel Manufacturers Fail to Meet Sustainability Standards**

*Solar Scorecard and EPEAT Certification Allow Solar Panel Purchasers to Identify Safer, Sustainable Solutions*

SAN FRANCISCO—The [Solar Scorecard](#) announced its latest findings today, determining that most solar panel manufacturers fail to meet sustainability standards. The Scorecard evaluated 44 global solar panel manufacturers on their actions and commitment to sustainable practices.

“The Solar Scorecard promotes accelerated growth in the solar industry by rewarding the use of innovative technologies, and benchmarking risk-reduction practices such as chemical management systems for PFAS, lead, cadmium, and other materials,” said Sheila Davis, project coordinator for the Solar Scorecard.

“Unfortunately, most companies do not meet the Solar Scorecard standards, potentially creating risk for these companies, their customers, workers, and communities,” said Davis. “Our goal is to improve industry-wide transparency and accountability, and set high standards for environmental sustainability.”

The Solar Scorecard is a key factor in driving adoption of the [EPEAT®](#) eco-label—the only electronics ecolabel [recognized by the US EPA](#) for use by federal government agency purchasers of photovoltaics (PV) modules and inverters. EPEAT is a primary factor in scoring organizations for the Solar Scorecard.

Currently, only two solar panel manufacturers—First Solar and Hanwha Q-cells—have demonstrated their industry leadership by registering EPEAT products. Companies that eliminate and reduce their use of hazardous substances can mitigate their risk and gain a competitive advantage in a growing market for solar panels.

None of the 44 companies surveyed on the Solar Scorecard had committed to chemical reduction goals, or demonstrated the capacity to trace hazardous chemical exposures to workers beyond the first or second tier of their supply chain. Additionally, none of the companies met the Solar Scorecard standard in more than half of the categories used for scoring.

“Solar installations in the United States are expected to [quadruple by 2030](#), which will play a critical role in helping communities meet climate change goals,” said Alexandra McPherson, Director of the Investor Environmental Health Network at Clean Production Action, which oversees the Solar Scorecard. “Unfortunately, the solar industry’s environmental programs and practices have not kept pace. Chemicals used in the solar panel manufacturing process can harm workers and communities at the frontline of manufacturing, and chemicals such as PFAS are hazardous waste at the end of the lifecycle.”

The Solar Scorecard assigns a score to each company based on their adoption of sustainability-focused programs and standards, including [EPEAT certification](#), the [Chemical Footprint Project](#) (CFP), reducing worker exposure to hazardous chemicals based on [Clean Electronics Production Network](#) standards, and [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#).

While the overall results show a lack of sustainability standards in the industry, some companies are making progress in key areas. Manufacturers including AUO, Avancis, Mitsubishi, REC, Sifab, and Suntech have taken steps to reduce toxicity, including developing safer chemicals, and removing lead, cadmium, solder, and other toxic materials from various components and processes. Other companies, including Renesola, have established community partnerships to promote sustainability initiatives.

The first Solar Scorecard was published in 2010. Today, the Solar Scorecard is based on a survey of companies that represent 85% of the market share based on Department of Energy (DOE) and publicly available research. It is an initiative of [Clean Production Action](#), a mission driven, non-profit organization that designs and delivers strategic solutions for green chemicals, sustainable materials, and environmentally preferable products. In 2023, the Solar Scorecard team joined forces with the [Collaboratory for a Regenerative Economy \(CoRE\)](#) to address two of the most complex and challenging sustainability issues: hazardous chemical use and environmental health and justice.

More information is available at [SolarScorecard.org](https://solarscorecard.org).

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