

## ***Wind behind China in race for green jobs (Reuters)***

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China is winning a global race to create "green collar" jobs, six months after countries worldwide launched US\$500 billion in spending plans to drive a low-carbon economy.

Following the economic downturn, both the United States and Europe aim to spur jobs in a green push to fight climate change and boost energy security, but China may leapfrog both goals this year in new wind power - a key measure.

China passed the US in the number of new wind turbines built in the first half of this year, data from Beijing-based specialists Azure International showed, and it was also increasing its share of the main market for solar power, Europe.

"I think China is definitely winning the race," Wu Changhua, China director of the London-based environment body The Climate Group, said. She cited support for low-carbon LED lighting and electric cars, as well as wind and solar power.

"A low-carbon economy is mainstream thinking," she said, adding that mainland development was helped by swift centralised decision-making.

In wind power, local demand often means local jobs - that is especially true on the mainland, where an unofficial rule says all installed turbines must include 70 per cent local content. Foreign companies' market share is falling.

"In the first half [of 2009] that decline continued," Sebastian Meyer, head of research at Azure, said.

In solar power, Germany will dominate demand this year, according to Barclays Capital.

But Chinese manufacturers will continue to grab an increasing share of production despite a fall in prices, their key differentiator, New Energy Finance analyst Jenny Chase said.

China accounted for about a third of the market for global solar-cell production last year, while Europe's share declined to about a quarter, according to a survey by German industry publication Photon.

The wind ranking may change - China added about 4.5 gigawatts in the first half of the year, Mr Meyer said. That would put the country on track to pass the US, which installed 4GW, according to the American Wind Energy Association.

The Global Wind Energy Council expected China to take top spot this year, secretary general Steve Sawyer said. Two weeks ago, Beijing fixed the price for wind power using a so-called feed-in tariff, and an economic stimulus and credit loosening have boosted projects.

"This year, plans to develop have been accelerated under the stimulus environment, it has to do with infrastructure across the board. Banks have more imperative to lend," Mr Meyer said.

The US is likely to be China's chief rival in new wind power, analysts say, overtaking Europe, where some countries suffer planning delays.

"The permitting process has been easier in the United States than in certain countries in Europe," said HSBC's Robert Clover.