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http://www.climatespectator.com.au/commentary/solar-battles-rise-fore

Solar battles rise to the fore

The re-election of President Barack Obama in the United States last week generated relief for the clean energy industry, as he was seen as the more likely of the two candidates to extend support for renewables and bring in measures to address climate change.

The American Wind Energy Association said that the Production Tax Credit for wind would probably be extended beyond December 31.

There is speculation that Obama may opt for a carbon tax to plug the US deficit. A tax starting at $US20 per metric tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent and rising at about 6 per cent a year could raise $US154 billion by 2021, according to Nick Robins, an analyst at HSBC Holdings.

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The election relief for stock market investors in clean energy was only fleeting. After rising in the early hours of Wednesday November 7, the WilderHill New Energy Global Innovation Index (NEX) then slipped back sharply, from 114.50 to 109.30 over succeeding days, in response to wider concerns about the US' looming 'fiscal cliff'.

The mood across the Atlantic, meanwhile, was sombre as China took to the World Trade Organization the issue of European incentives for local content use. The European Union expanded the scope of its dumping investigations, to probe alleged trade-distorting subsidies given by the Beijing government to Chinese manufacturers.

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European PV demand is expected to decline in 2013 by up to 50 per cent from the 2012 level of installation, according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance. The outcome of the dispute is not likely to reverse the slide.

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