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BUY OR SELL-Solar stocks are low, but are they a good buy?

- * Subsidy cuts, weak European markets cast shadow
- * Sales still strong for the year
- * Analysts mixed on solar outlook through year end

Shares of solar power companies have been hit hard this year by the one-two punch of a weak euro and concerns about the strength and stability of their largest market -- Europe.

At the same time, demand has surged ahead of scheduled subsidy cuts and most analysts say new government incentives in places like China and the United States will eventually prop up support for the renewable power source.

Since the start of 2010, the Wilderhill Clean Energy Index , an index made up of green energy companies, has sunk 18 percent. The S&P 500 .SPX, by comparison, has dropped less than 1 percent since January.

China's decision over the weekend to loosen controls on its currency, which some analysts say will translate into a gradually stronger yuan, will also likely help solar companies that export to China, while it could hurt Chinese manufacturers that sell overseas.

Are strong sales and relatively low-cost stocks in the solar sector enough to bring investors back, or is uncertainty about public policy and Europe casting too long of a shadow?

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