



Lighting Africa 2010 Outstanding Product Awards

Lighting Africa is pleased to announce the list of products that have passed its off-grid lighting product quality testing specification. The manufacturers of these products are now eligible to become Associates of Lighting Africa. Associate status confers access to a set of business services, including business development activities, business to business referencing, marketing support services, and others. The products that have passed the test specifications, listed here in alphabetical order by manufacturer name, include:

- Barefoot Power - Firefly 12 LED
- Barefoot Power - PowaPack
- d.Light Design - Nova S200
- Greenlight Planet - Sun King
- Philips - Udaymini
- Solux - LED-50
- SunTransfer - SunTransfer 2

Five of these seven products were recently recognized in the Lighting Africa Outstanding Product Awards competition. The award winners were selected by a panel of six expert judges based on the results of rigorous product testing, evaluations by off-grid consumers in Sub Saharan Africa, and other factors such as price and environmental sustainability. The award winners, listed by category, were:

- **Task Lighting**
 - 1st Place: Greenlight Planet - Sun King
 - 2nd Place: Barefoot Power - Firefly 12 LED
- **Ambient / Room Lighting**
 - 1st Place: Barefoot Power - PowaPack
 - 2nd Place: d.Light Design - Nova S200
- **Top Performance**
 - 1st Place: Barefoot Power - PowaPack
 - 2nd Place: Sun Transfer - Sun Transfer 2
- **Best Value**
 - 1st Place: Barefoot Power - Firefly LED 12
 - 2nd Place: Greenlight Planet - Sun King

The award winners competed in a field that originally included 24 nominated products. After initial screening, 13 finalist products were selected for detailed evaluation, including laboratory testing and field evaluation by low income people living in off-grid homes. The field of nominated products included a strong set of excellent candidates, and a number of candidates narrowly missed being among the award winners. In some cases, improvement in a single performance parameter would have put the product into close competition to win and in others a decrease in price would have made the difference.

The laboratory testing used to assess the performance of the products were developed for Lighting Africa by the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems. The tests include performance measurements such as total lumen output, daily hours of service provided, lumen maintenance, battery storage capacity, charging system performance (e.g., solar module power

output), and a number of others. The test methods used in the process are available for download from <http://www.lightingafrica.org/node/7536>.

The consumer evaluation portion of the Product Awards process involved focus groups and in-home evaluations by low income people living in off-grid homes in Sub Saharan Africa. The focus group sessions were carried out over a period of several hours in the evening (e.g., 6:30 – 9:30 pm); in total, 53 people participated in five separate focus group sessions. In-home evaluations involved having 24 families evaluate products over periods lasting 10-15 days. Each participating family evaluated a total of four products. The products were given to the families one at a time; after each 10-15 day evaluation period, a representative of the family was interviewed in order to document the family's experience with and impressions of the product.

The product samples used in both the laboratory and consumer evaluation processes were procured from retail markets in Sub Saharan African countries. To be eligible to compete for an award, products had to be available for retail sale in at least one of the following countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, or Tanzania.

In the future, additional rounds of product testing will be conducted to enable other products to be considered for Associate status. More details about this opportunity will be forthcoming in the near future. If you are interested to participate, please contact Lighting Africa at qualityassurance@lightingafrica.org.