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SOLAR ROADS – TECHNOLOGY OFFUTURE

Romaniuk Waclaw, Doctor of Technical Science, Professor
Institute of Technology and Life Sciences Branch in Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

At the end of December you probably read the news about the discovery in France of the first kilometer of the road made of solar panels. This news spread around the world, hitting its relevance, and yet, no one really understood, is it advisable to build it. Because, as you know, survive only those technologies that, first and foremost, and demonstrate their effectiveness. Suffice it to recall the recent history of the Chinese flying bus – however, it was a complete sham. So let's take a look at how the technology of building solar roads might be viable.

1 km solar roads in France, was built near a small village under a complex name Tourouvre-au-Perche, located in Normandy. This section of the road covered with solar panels total square footage of 2800 m^2. Cost is the construction of the colossal sum of € 5 million and it is planned that each day will pass about 2000 cars. For the past 2 years of testing, the panels will generate electricity, which would be enough for street lighting of the village with 3400 inhabitants.

Incidentally, a similar road is already built, then it even got its own title – SolaRoad. The world's first stretch of road covered with solar panels, is a 72-metre Bicycle path in the village of Krommenie in the Netherlands, which opened on 21 October 2014.

Then its construction was also spent € 5 million But in December of that year, the track had to make a repair, changing almost all the panels that were completely broken. And this despite the fact that it drove heavy vehicles and only pedestrians walk and ride bicycles. Besides, it turned out that massed on the track dirt and water are greatly reduced its efficiency, and pass on it the bike was blocking the sun.

Finally, after calculations it turned out that the construction costs of such route (about $1200 per m^2) is 3-4 times higher than the installation of solar panels on the roofs, and their self-sufficiency comes only after 50 years of operation. In this case, in fact, a one square meter solar roads gives about 70 kWh per year, and the lifetime is more than 20 years. But, the main trouble of these solar roads have proved their ability to generate electricity in sufficient quantity only in regions where there is a large number of Sunny days per year.

However, after 6 months of tests, SolaRoad was still recognized as an effective technology for was able to give a little more than expected 70kW of electricity per square meter. A year later the results (9800 kWh) compared with the results of solar panels of the same size, but mounted on the roof, and yet acknowledged that "high-rise" panel can generate 2 times more energy than "road". In addition, for invested in bike path funds to buy or produce otherwise order 520000 kWh.

French road named Wattway is not a bike, and besides it was built for less (of course, the public) money.

It is argued that testing the initially occurred at four car parks, and the panel is covered with a thin protective film, allegedly, was able to withstand the onslaught of cars. But Normandy is known for its cloudy weather. Here the number of Sunny days is around 44 figures, which is very small (for example, in Kiev, these days at least in 2 times more).

So, today, many experts are already predicting that the opening Wattway was a good PR move to France itself, but this way will be ineffective, that will become clear within six months of its operation. Of course, this idea fascinates with its beauty and aesthetics, she probably has little chance of survival. While solar panels installed on the roofs, are much more cheap and effective means of converting sunlight into electricity.