

Press release

Solar power for Rhenish region – RWE builds new photovoltaic plant in opencast mine

- **More than 22,000 solar modules to supply electricity for around 4,500 households**
- **New plant under construction in Hambach opencast mine; commissioning planned for September**
- **RWE already operates two solar plants and a battery storage system at Hambach opencast mine together with inter-municipal company NEULAND HAMBACH**

Essen, 11 April 2025

RWE has commenced construction work for a new photovoltaic plant in the district of Düren close to the municipality of Niederzier in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. 22,000 solar modules are to be installed on an area of 12 hectares at the western edge of the Hambach opencast mine – above the future shore of the planned Hambach Lake. The new photovoltaic plant is due to be commissioned in September. With a capacity of 13.9 megawatts peak (12 MW ac), it will generate enough green electricity to supply the equivalent of 4,500 homes.

Frank Rombey, Mayor of Niederzier: “For the municipality of Niederzier, the expansion of renewables is one of the pillars of structural change. It is important to invest in the economic development of the region right at our doorstep for the post-mining era.”

Katja Wünschel, CEO RWE Renewables Europe & Australia: “The start of construction for our new solar plant near Niederzier shows that the expansion of renewables in the Rhenish mining area is making good progress. It is important to us to get the people in the region on board – for example by involving the neighbouring municipalities. Our collaboration with the NEULAND HAMBACH organisation is a case in point. The region benefits in two ways: Solar plants supply green electricity and generate revenue.”

Two large photovoltaic facilities are already in operation in the Hambach opencast mine – one with integrated battery storage. Together, the two plants have a capacity of 47.2 MW peak and can thus supply the equivalent of around 14,500 households with green electricity. The battery storage system with a capacity of 8 megawatt hours makes it possible to match power feed-in even better to demand. RWE operates these plants together with NEULAND HAMBACH GmbH which represents the interests of the six municipalities located next to the opencast mine – Elsdorf, Jülich, Kerpen, Merzenich, Niederzier and Titz. The municipalities have the option to take a share in the new photovoltaic plant in Niederzier as well, once construction is complete.



Andreas Heller, Chair of the Supervisory Board of NEULAND HAMBACH GmbH and Mayor of Elsdorf: “Another 14 MW will be added to 47,2 MW of solar capacity that we are already operating in the RWE Neuland Solar Farm at the Hambach opencast mine. We are intending to take a stake in this plant too. It remains our objective to create a space that pays for itself with Neuland Hambach and that includes revenues from renewables plants in and around the Hambach opencast mine.”

Dr Lars Kulik, CTO Lignite at RWE Power: “The solar farms are the perfect way to use the land in the opencast mine during the decades until Hambach Lake is completely filled with water. At the same time they create prospects for RWE Power employees who are already helping to build and operate the solar farms with their knowledge and experience.”

Stepping up the expansion of renewables in the Rhenish mining area

RWE operates a total of eight onshore wind farms and seven [photovoltaic plants in the Rhenish mining area](#) – four of which have integrated battery storage. Further wind and solar farms in the region are under construction and in planning.

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RWE

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