



## **Our plan for North Rhine-Westphalia**

### **RWE is leading the way in the transition to green energy**

Expanding renewables, flexible backup capacities and hydrogen as well as future-oriented structural change are essential for transforming our industrial society. RWE will play a key part in these endeavours. With investments totalling up to 15 billion euros gross by 2030, RWE wants to actively drive the energy transition in its home market of Germany. We have particularly strong links to the energy state of North Rhine-Westphalia, where the company was founded over 100 years ago. Here, we will implement projects that will contribute towards achieving the national climate protection targets and, at the same time, ensure that the state will remain attractive as an industrial location.

### **Our contribution to expanding renewables in North Rhine-Westphalia**

During the period through to 2030, RWE wants to construct renewable energy facilities with a capacity of 1 gigawatt (GW) in North Rhine-Westphalia, of which 500 megawatts (MW) are to be built in the Rhenish mining district. Our projects comprise the expansion of onshore wind farms as well as ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) systems. Wherever possible, the company will combine PV arrays with electricity storage systems to create hybrid power plants and also implement demonstration projects for floating and agri PV systems. RWE also intends to participate in local and regional decarbonisation concepts through the expansion of renewables, e.g. by generating green hydrogen close to the production facilities, businesses, and transport companies where it will be used.

In order for this to work, the federal government must accelerate and simplify planning and approval procedures, and a solution must be sought to solve the conflict between climate protection and the preservation of local natural habitats. At the same time, more land needs to be made available by state and regional planning authorities and the approval processes should be accelerated at that level too.

In the onshore wind context, it would be helpful to open up spaces in commercial woodland. Also, red tape should be cut when it comes to approving repowering projects, alongside which the availability of sites needs to be secured in the long term.

Simplified and standardised approval procedures should be introduced for constructing ground-mounted photovoltaic arrays, including those that are combined with electricity storage systems, on land formerly used for opencast mining. Furthermore, access to low-yield agricultural land using the “state opening clause” in the Renewable Energies Act should make the expansion easier.

**RWE will collaborate with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Innovation, Digitalisation and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to draw up a set of measures for accelerating the expansion of renewables.**

### **Our contribution to flexible and secure power plant capacities**

For the period through to 2030, RWE is planning to build flexible gas-fired power plants with a clear decarbonisation path and a capacity of at least 2 GW at its existing coal-fired power plant sites. The facilities are to be “H<sub>2</sub>-ready”, meaning it will be possible to adapt them for hydrogen use quickly once it becomes available in sufficient volumes. Our existing power plant sites in the Rhenish lignite district have the necessary connections to the power, water and gas grids, or else they can be connected relatively easily. Once these locations are also connected to new infrastructures, such as a hydrogen supply, they can make a significant contribution towards reducing carbon emissions from flexible power generation facilities.

This requires a financial incentive system if these plants, whose operating hours will go down as the share of renewables capacities rises, are to remain commercially viable. The necessary framework must also be established to operate these plants using decarbonised fuels such as hydrogen in the future. Here, a connection to the future hydrogen grid and an instrument like contracts for difference (CfDs), are essential to ensure that these carbon-free power plants remain competitive.

**RWE will actively contribute to the discussion on creating the necessary conditions and, if commercially viable, submit proposals for the future use of current coal-fired power plant sites to the Ministry of Economic Affairs of North Rhine-Westphalia.**

## **Our contribution to a hydrogen economy**

Hydrogen will play a key role in decarbonising the economy. As an established industrial state with an excellent infrastructure, North Rhine-Westphalia is in an ideal position to build a viable hydrogen economy. Another advantage of this location is easy access to Dutch and Belgian supply grids. Together with partners, RWE will actively participate in ramping up the hydrogen economy. In this context, the company also wants to drive the development of industrial-scale electrolysers with a capacity of up to 700 MW in the state.

A suitable funding scheme, to be developed by the state and federal governments, is required if the projects are to be implemented. The conditions for a fully operational hydrogen infrastructure are perfect in North Rhine-Westphalia's Ruhr area.

## **Our contribution to structural change in the Rhenish mining district**

RWE will continue to be actively involved in structural change processes, in particular in the Rhenish mining district. The company is fully committed to the agreement on the future development of the district between the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Zukunftsagentur Rheinisches Revier (ZRR) development agency for the region, as well as the strategic direction set out in the economic and structural programme. With our activities in the renewables sector as well as flexible power plant capacity for security of supply, we are securing jobs and creating value in the region. By actively managing land use, we also want to support businesses and industry to relocate to the area. To this end, RWE will convert selected mining and power plant sites in collaboration with the state government as part of the "Projekte.Struktur.Wandel" organisation for structural change. In addition, RWE is also continuing its close collaboration with the Indeland, Garzweiler and Hambach initiatives for repurposing the land formerly used for opencast mining, to ensure that the interests of the region are taken into account during the recultivation process. Recultivating land to a high standard and a biodiversity strategy will ensure the protection of species and biodiversity in newly created habitats.