

Press release

Solarpark Klettwitz Nord starts feeding in power

GP JOULE commissions first section of the Lausitz Energy Park.

Schipkau/ Reußenköge, 3 May 2022. One of Germany's largest open-space photovoltaic plants - the Lausitz Energy Park - is being built on a high dump of the former Klettwitz open-cast mine in the municipality of Schipkau. Once all construction phases have been completed, it will generate up to 300 MW of peak power. On 29 April, GP JOULE connected the first section, "Klettwitz Nord", with around 183,000 solar modules and a capacity of 90 MW, to the electricity grid. As of now, it feeds in around 91,530 MWh of solar power annually. Compared to the lignite previously extracted in Klettwitz, this saves over 64,000 tonnes of CO₂. GP JOULE was the general contractor responsible for planning and constructing the PV plant. In the next step, the energy turnaround specialist will take charge of the commercial and technical management of the solar park.

GP JOULE Anlagenbau EPC accompanies all construction phases of the Energiepark Lausitz from the initial idea to commissioning. "We plan and select the appropriate components and accompany the entire implementation of the project," explains Meik Georg Gessner. In addition to GP JOULE, the project initiators and owners of Energiepark Lausitz are Steinbock EE and Terravent Investments.

GP JOULE has been realising large solar parks in Europe and North America for more than thirteen years. The photovoltaic system on the high dump called for a special degree of attention. The backfilled soil is less stable than subsoil that has grown over the centuries. Special care was also required when digging the trenches for the pipelines and ramming the foundations. There is a wind farm right next door, with power lines running across the site. "We have already implemented several projects with difficult subsoils, e.g. in Ganzlin in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania with 65 megawatts on a former gravel pit. Or in Meuro, right near here, with 70 megawatts, also on a former open-cast mine. Thanks to this experience, we were able to better assess and take into account the special characteristics of the slag heap in Klettwitz," says Gessner.

Conducting the energy turnaround closely with the region

In Lusatia, people experience structural change, energy transition and climate change at first hand. It is no longer uncommon for wind and photovoltaic plants to be built on conversion sites from open-cast mining. The neighbouring wind turbines in Klettwitz have already undergone their first repowering. But climate change is also advancing. Rainfall has

decreased sharply, soils are drying out quickly and agricultural yields are falling.

Despite the visible climate changes, approval of a major project like the Lusatia Energy Park is not a foregone conclusion. "For us, it is therefore important to seek dialogue right from the start. If there are concerns, we address them. We also want to create added value in the region - this is the only way to make the energy turnaround truly sustainable," says Ove Petersen, co-founder and CEO of GP JOULE.

Such conversations are often about very practical things. For example, the residents attached importance to the fact that the construction site traffic was not routed through the villages. Wildlife was also in the focus of public discussion. It should be able to cross the solar park site comfortably and also use it as a retreat. Small animals can slip under the fence anywhere, and there are passages in the fence for deer and wild boar.

Hydrogen perspective

Work on the second construction phase, "Klettwitz Süd", is already underway. The pipes have already been laid and the substructures anchored in the ground. This part should also be completed by autumn this year.

Part of the solar power from the southern construction section will be used to produce climate-neutral hydrogen. A nearby service station will offer this at two petrol pumps. A network of interested companies has already been established in the region that want to use the "green" gas for their trucks, buses, refuse collection or construction site vehicles. The project is designed in such a way that as demand increases, production can also be increased. Then hydrogen filling stations could also be built. "Mapping the value chain locally and generating hydrogen on site with solar power makes the energy turnaround truly tangible in the literal sense. It also ensures a degree of independence from energy imports - that is more important than ever today," says Petersen.

Images



Caption: With 90 megawatts, GP JOULE has connected "Klettwitz Nord", the first of three sections of the Lausitz Energy Park, to the grid.

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About GP JOULE

Founded in 2009 based on the belief that a 100% renewable energy supply is feasible, GP JOULE is now a system provider for integrated energy solutions from solar, wind and biomass power as well as being a partner at the supply level for electricity, heat, hydrogen and electric mobility. GP JOULE is thus a pioneering company in sector cross-linkage. Around 500 people work for the medium-sized group of companies in Germany, Europe and North America. GP JOULE is the winner of the Schleswig-Holstein Business Environment Award 2019 and the German Renewables Award 2020.

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