

## Coal Commission strengthens role of natural gas

- **Safe and climate-friendly energy production with gas**
- **Wintershall at E-world in Essen (5-7 February)**
- **Forsa survey: Natural gas will become even more important**

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**Berlin / Essen.** The course has been set for more climate protection: "Coal-fired power plants are set to be phased out by 2038, but the role of natural gas, on the other hand, will be strengthened. That's good news for the climate!" said Mario Mehren, CEO of Wintershall, at the opening of the E-world trade fair in Essen. "We welcome that the role of natural gas is being strengthened as a backup and storage system. Now the decision needs to be translated into concrete laws to ensure reliable and climate-friendly energy production."

Just one week after the Coal Commission set up by the German government presented its final report, Europe's largest energy trade fair, E-world, begins in Essen. As an internationally active gas and oil producer, Wintershall will be showcasing its own activities from 5 to 7 February at **E-world in Essen (Hall 1, Booth 338)**. Wintershall produces hydrocarbons worldwide and also sells them, for example in north-western Europe. "The natural gas industry can make the energy transition a success. With its storage facilities, pipelines and gas-fired power plants, we're ready to secure the electricity market after the planned phasing out of nuclear and coal-fired power. This is because

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natural gas can optimally compensate for the fluctuations in renewable energies," says Dirk Elvermann, member of the board and responsible for Finances, Sales and Commercial. "Natural gas is the reliable partner for more climate protection. We're ready!"

In its report, the Coal Commission also foresees necessary investments in new gas-fired power plants. Gas power plants could also be built cost-effectively at some German locations where there are coal-fired ones, since parts of the facilities and infrastructure can continue to be used. One of its proposals is to convert the coal-fired power station in Jänschwalde, Brandenburg. "This proposal could be a blueprint for other power plants, since gas-fired power plants provide flexible power generation and emit significantly less CO<sub>2</sub> than coal-fired power plants," Mehren said. The industry is also breaking new ground and working intensively on aspects concerned with green gas and the decarbonisation of natural gas. "Natural gas is already the cleanest conventional energy source today."

### **Clear vote: Natural gas increasingly important for the energy supply**

The majority of Germans expect natural gas to play an even greater role in providing energy in the future. This is the outcome of a survey conducted by the independent research institute Forsa. More than half (56%) of those surveyed believe that more natural gas will be required than is currently needed to ensure energy supplies in the future.

According to the Forsa survey, more than half of all respondents consider the versatile energy source to be the optimal supplement to renewable energies: if the energy transition is to be successful, renewable energies need a partner. They cannot achieve this alone. For 51% of Germans natural gas is this partner. This puts natural gas, the cleanest fossil fuel, well ahead of wood and oil (21% and 16%). 18% want nuclear energy and 12% coal as a supplement to

renewables. Only 8% of the respondents do not believe that a supplementary energy source is necessary.

**Wintershall Holding GmbH**, based in Kassel, Germany, is a wholly owned subsidiary of BASF in Ludwigshafen. The company has been active in the extraction of natural resources for 120 years, and in the exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas for over 85 years. Wintershall focuses on selected core regions where the company has built up a high level of regional and technological expertise. These are Europe, Russia, North Africa, South America, and increasingly the Middle East region. The company wants to expand its business further with exploration and production, selected partnerships, innovation and technological competence. Wintershall employs about 2,000 staff worldwide from 50 nations and is now Germany's largest, internationally active crude oil and natural gas producer.

At the end of September 2018, BASF and LetterOne signed a binding agreement to merge their respective oil and gas companies, Wintershall and DEA (Deutsche Erdöl AG). Subject to regulatory approvals, the transaction is expected to close in the first half of 2019. Wintershall DEA would become the leading independent oil and gas producer in Europe. BASF and LetterOne are planning an initial public offering (IPO) for Wintershall DEA in the medium term.

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