

Press Release
June 24, 2020

Uniper supports steel industry in reducing CO₂

- **Letter of intent signed with the State of Lower Saxony, the City of Wilhelmshaven, Salzgitter AG and Rhenus**
- **Climate-friendly sponge iron for steel production with green hydrogen is to be produced in Wilhelmshaven**
- **Cross-sector cooperation project of national importance**

Representatives of the companies Uniper, Rhenus and Salzgitter, the State of Lower Saxony and the City of Wilhelmshaven today signed a letter of intent at the Uniper power plant in Wilhelmshaven to conduct a feasibility study on the production and handling of environmentally friendly sponge iron for Salzgitter AG. For the planned direct reduction plant for the production of sponge iron with upstream hydrogen electrolysis, Uniper is offering a land use of the existing site of the Wilhelmshaven hard coal-fired power plant, the closure of which Uniper has already announced in the course of its withdrawal from coal-fired power generation. Thus, parts of the infrastructure already existing at the Wilhelmshaven site could be used in the future for a future-oriented project of the German steel industry.

Sponge iron is produced by direct reduction of iron ore and - using green hydrogen as a reducing agent - enables the steel industry to achieve the ambitious national and European climate protection targets. The use of sponge iron can reduce the CO₂ emissions of future steel production by up to 95% if it replaces the traditional blast furnace converter route.

In the intended development project, the aim is to show how the logistics, energy generation and steel production sectors can be efficiently linked within the framework of sector coupling at the deep-water port of Wilhelmshaven. The State of Lower Saxony and the City of Wilhelmshaven support the efforts to implement the project with the aim of promoting the economic development and securing jobs at the Wilhelmshaven location, combined with the structural change required by the coal phase-out.

Uniper's CEO Andreas Schierenbeck: "It is known that we intend to shut down the coal-fired power plant in Wilhelmshaven by the end of 2022 at the latest. The end of coal-fired power generation will help us achieve our goal of climate neutrality in Europe by 2035. That's why we are working with the state of Lower Saxony and the city of Wilhelmshaven to find economic prospects for future use. Anyone who has ever been here knows that the location offers an excellent infrastructure and thus ideal conditions for various projects with reference to the adjacent deep-water port. These include, for example, the landing, conversion and transport of energy. Our location is directly on the coast near the JadeWeserPort and is perfectly connected to waterways, rail and road. It is obvious that we are also looking at the site from a hydrogen perspective. The site will have a future, and we want to support the state and the region in making Wilhelmshaven an energy hub on the Jade River and accelerate the change towards a more environmentally friendly energy future."

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