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Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Solberg officially inaugurate NordLink by jointly pressing ‘digital button’

- **‘Green cable’ for exchanging German wind energy with Norwegian hydropower increases electricity supply security from renewable energies**
- **Chancellor Merkel: “NordLink is a milestone for sustainable energy supply and climate protection in Europe”**
- **Norway’s Prime Minister Solberg: “NordLink will be of great benefit to both Germany and Norway”**

By jointly pressing a ‘digital button’, German Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel and Norway’s Prime Minister Erna Solberg officially commissioned NordLink today. The ‘green cable’ will exchange German wind energy with Norwegian hydropower and connect two optimally complementary systems. The digital event was also attended by Germany’s Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy, Peter Altmaier, Schleswig-Holstein’s Minister President Daniel Günther and its Energy Minister Jan Philipp Albrecht, as well as Norway’s Energy Minister Tina Bru. The event, which for coronavirus reasons was held virtually, was hosted by top executives from the NordLink project partners: TenneT’s CEO and COO Manon van Beek and Tim Meyerjürgens, Statnett’s CEO Hilde Tonne as well as Markus Scheer, Management Board member of the KfW IPEX-Bank.

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel: “Today and with NordLink, Germany and Norway are moving even closer together. The first direct electricity bridge not only helps to stabilise energy prices in both countries. NordLink is a milestone for sustainable energy supply and climate protection in Europe. Because the focus is on exchanging renewable energy.”

Norway’s Prime Minister, Erna Solberg, said: NordLink will be of great benefit to both Germany and Norway. It will contribute to a more efficient use of power resources and lay the foundations for further investments in renewable production. It will also contribute to our joint efforts in lowering emissions. As Germany is phasing out coal power, NordLink will ease the transition from fossil to renewable power production. At the same time, it will provide access to energy when Norway needs it.

Manon van Beek said: “NordLink is an enormously important building block for the European energy transition in order to compensate for wind- and sunless periods and, at the same time, make green energy available safely and affordably in Europe. NordLink enables a climate-friendly electricity system, creates value in both countries, and is an important building block for achieving the climate targets. As a transmission system operator, TenneT is furthering the energy transition and grid expansion like no other in Europe, in order to transport renewable energies onshore and offshore, and integrate them into a modern energy system.”

Peter Altmaier said: “Today we’re celebrating the inauguration of NordLink, which is great. The German and Norwegian electricity markets are now directly connected, which is a win-win situation for both countries. And it’s an equally important step for integrating and securing the supply of

energy in Europe as well as for more climate protection and greater sustainability. Not only for us, but for many generations to come. In order for climate-friendly and, at the same time, cheap electricity from Norway to reach our major centres of consumption, we need further grid expansion within Germany. That's a challenge. But we're making progress, bit by bit. The opening of NordLink is a great success!"

Markus Scheer said: "NordLink is the most important project in the European energy sector and exemplifies the energy transition in Germany and Europe. KfW's participation is a clear commitment to climate and environmental protection – by exchanging electricity from wind and hydropower, which is made possible by the cable, we're creating security of supply, stable energy prices and increasing the share of renewable energies in the electricity mix. We're proud to be part of it and to have accompanied NordLink from the planning to the commissioning."

Tim Meyerjürgens said: "We delivered the 'green cable' within the expectations set for time, budget and quality. NordLink required a huge team effort to realise it. Everyone worked hand in hand on both the Norwegian and German sides. Almost six million working hours on land and at sea have been accumulated in the past five years. My respect and thanks go to this great team. As the world's leading operator of high-voltage, direct current transmission lines, we will continue to contribute our expertise in planning and constructing the ongoing expansion of the grid to deliver the energy transition. An important focus for us remains the North Sea – the future powerhouse of Europe. We will provide connection capacities for at least 27 gigawatts there by 2030, 17 gigawatts of which will be in the German North Sea. This is how we'll continue to ensure security of supply in a world that is increasingly powered by renewable energies."

Hilde Tonne said: "Today we're celebrating a technical masterpiece and a great and successful project. This interconnector is an important step towards a fully electric and renewable society in both countries. Everyone who helped complete the project on the Norwegian and German sides deserves a round of applause. This is an important day on route to transforming Europe into a climate-neutral society."

Daniel Günther said: "NordLink is a milestone for our ambitions in Schleswig-Holstein as a federal state furthering the energy transition. The new power line opens up entirely new prospects: in future, Schleswig-Holstein will be able to export significantly more electricity and store it as Norwegian hydropower – and feed it back when the wind takes a break. We want to develop the energy technology of tomorrow and use it in our federal state, and thus remain pioneers of the energy transition. The project impressively shows how Schleswig-Holstein and Norway bring together individual strengths that complement one another. As partners, we're setting a good example for joint European climate protection."

Jan Philipp Albrecht said: "The NordLink planning is a very good example of how climate protection and nature conservation in and around the sea can be thought together in a constructive exchange and how good solutions can be found. If we want to solve climate protection as the task of the century, then we need many more such beacon projects that act as a shining light. The climate protection ruling from Germany's Federal Constitutional Court and the adaptation of the Climate Protection Act now require courageous decisions. We have to think anew and we have to think radically if we want to achieve our climate goals. If we want to be climate neutral by 2045, the energy transition in the power sector must be completed much earlier."

Background

NordLink is a direct current highway without a downhill exit, i.e. a point-to-point connection, between the AC grids in Germany and Norway. Due to the length of the route and the large transmission capacity, direct current is used for low-loss transmission. The two cables (positive and negative pole) are connected to converter stations at each end. The converter stations were built in Wilster (Schleswig-Holstein) and Tonstad (southern Norway). At these sites, electricity is converted from DC to AC (or vice versa, depending on the direction of transmission) and fed into the German and Norwegian AC transmission grids, respectively, to supply green electricity to households and businesses.

German-Norwegian cooperation

The NordLink project was realised by a consortium in which the Norwegian transmission system operator Statnett and DC Nordseekabel GmbH & Co.KG each hold 50 percent. The transmission system operator TenneT and KfW each hold 50 percent of the shares in DC Nordseekabel. DC Nordseekabel is responsible for construction and permitting on the German side.

Further information at: www.nordlink.eu

Facts and figures

- 623 km long high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) transmission system
- 1,400 MW capacity at ± 525 kV
- Offshore: 516 km submarine cable
- Onshore: 54 km underground cable (Büsum - Wilster/Schleswig-Holstein) and 53 km overhead line (Vollesfjord - Tonstad/NO)
- Grid connection points: substations Wilster West (DE) and Tonstad (NO)

TenneT

TenneT is a leading European grid operator. We are committed to providing a secure and reliable supply of electricity 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, while helping to drive the energy transition in our pursuit of a brighter energy future – more sustainable, reliable and affordable than ever before. In our role as the first cross-border Transmission System Operator (TSO) we design, build, maintain and operate 23,900 km of high-voltage electricity grid in the Netherlands and large parts of Germany, and facilitate the European energy market through our 16 interconnectors to neighbouring countries. We are one of the largest investors in national and international onshore and offshore electricity grids, with a turnover of EUR 4.5 billion and a total asset value of EUR 27 billion. Every day our 5,700 employees take ownership, show courage and make and maintain connections to ensure that the supply and demand of electricity is balanced for over 42 million people.

Lighting the way ahead together.