



Frankfurt am Main,  
26 June 2024

## Biogas as a cornerstone for the energy transition

**EnergyDecentral 2024 - 12 to 15 November in Hanover, Germany - Leading trade fair for decentralised energy supply in parallel with EuroTier exhibition and Inhouse Farming Feed & Food Show - Interview with Horst Seide, President of the German Biogas Association demands a clear signal in favour of biogas**

**"You won't find the word biogas in the German government's power station strategy" - this is how Horst Seide, President of the German Biogas Association, describes the situation in his industry in the run-up to EnergyDecentral 2024, which takes place in Hanover, Germany, from 12 to 15 November. In the interview conducted with the DLG (German Agricultural Society), Seide calls for a clear signal in favour of biogas and provides insights into the technologies that will be on show at the exhibition centre in Hanover, Germany.**

"Biogas can do everything that fossil LNG (liquefied natural gas) can do and, compared to hydrogen imports, is available immediately and regionally. Nevertheless, you won't find the word 'biogas' in the German government's power station strategy," says Horst Seide, President of the German Biogas Association, explaining the situation in the biogas industry a few months before EnergyDecentral kicks off in Hanover, Germany, 12-15 November. "In the electricity sector, where biogas is the strongest in terms of sales, things are not looking good at the moment. We have a large number of plants here that need follow-up funding," he adds.

### **Leading biogas plants into a more flexible future**

According to Seide, there are currently nearly 10,000 plants with a total output of around six gigawatts, which generate over 33 terawatt hours of electricity annually. This corresponds to around six percent of electricity consumption in Germany and the same amount of heat, which is mainly used in rural areas. "For hundreds of plants, the Renewable Energy Act (EEG) remuneration period will end in the next few years," says the President of the Biogas Association. "And recent tendering rounds for follow-up remuneration have been oversubscribed three times over." Seide is convinced that without a significant increase in tender volumes in what is termed the "regular segment", it will not be possible to maintain the biogas plant portfolio at its current level.

"At least 1,800 megawatts are needed annually in the biomass tender alone to stabilise the existing power plant fleet," says Seide. At the same time, biogas plants need to be led into a more flexible future. In order to incentivise the conversion of biogas plants, the flexibility surcharge should be adjusted to inflation and higher interest rates and increased to at least 120 euros per kilowatt.

### **Combined heat and power generation of central importance in the municipal heating transition**

The President of the German Biogas Association emphasises that biogas plants have storage advantages, as they can store biogas and biomethane for a period of time and on a seasonal basis. This means that the amount of electricity generated by the plants can be distributed much better in flexible operation adapted to the supply of wind and solar power: through additional gas storage and more engines. In 2023, over 14 terawatt hours of heat were generated in Germany using combined heat and power (CHP) directly at the biogas plant. "This means that CHP plays a key role in the municipal heating transition," says Seide. "The second option we are talking about is the upgrading of biogas to biomethane. Around 4.9 terawatt hours of heat were generated from biomethane in 2023 using combined heat and power plants or combustion plants on the natural gas grid."

Even though biomethane can be fed directly into the grid and is therefore of interest to consumers with gas heating, Seide believes that the growth market is at a very low level. Biomethane currently has a share of just one percent in the German natural gas grid and therefore does not play a major role in the heat supply, according to Seide. Most of it is converted into district and local heating and electricity in combined heat and power plants. In total, the amount of heat supplied from biogas and biomethane in 2023 covered the needs of 1.8 million households.

### **REPowerEU: a strategy to transform the European energy system**

The aim of the REPowerEU strategy - which was launched by the European Commission two years ago - is to reduce dependence on fossil fuels from Russia and accelerate the transition to climate-neutral energy. An integral part of the strategy is an action plan that aims to increase EU biomethane production to 35 billion cubic metres annually by 2030. "Innovation and financial support to increase biogas production play a key role," says the President of the German Biogas Association. "We need around 5,000 new biogas plants to achieve the ambitious EU target." Seide believes this is realistic. "Within the EU, we can see that neighbouring countries such as France are in the process of massively expanding the biogas and biomethane sector. In the same vein, Germany previously managed to build around 6,000 biogas plants in less than ten years after 2006."

### **Danger of technological dependence on foreign countries**

Seide sees a major problem with the number of newly built biogas plants. In 2022, around 30 biogas plants were decommissioned in Germany, compared to just over 100 newly built biogas plants, he reports. According to Seide, too many legal obstacles and slow approval procedures are hindering the necessary expansion of biogas utilisation in Germany.

If the development in Germany continues as before and subsidies remain as restrictive as they are now, Seide believes there is a risk that Germany will also be left behind technologically. "The predominantly medium-sized companies in the industry are among the leading drivers of innovation in Europe. The majority of these companies will be exhibiting at the exhibition grounds in Hanover, Germany. However, there is a risk that this expertise, which has been built up over 20 years, will increasingly shift abroad, as the focus there is still on biogas, unlike in Germany."

You can read the full interview here [XX](#)

### **Exhibitor bookings continue**

Companies can still register an exhibitor stand at EnergyDecentral: [www.energy-decentral.com](http://www.energy-decentral.com)

The EnergyDecentral Team is available for further questions: +49(0)69 24 788-955, [energy@dlg.org](mailto:energy@dlg.org).

### **Updates on EnergyDecentral 2024:**

[www.energy-decentral.com](http://www.energy-decentral.com)

[www.facebook.com/EnergyDecentral](https://www.facebook.com/EnergyDecentral)

[x.com/EnergyDecentral](https://x.com/EnergyDecentral)

[www.linkedin.com/groups/3610863/](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3610863/)

[www.youtube.com/user/bioenergydecentral](https://www.youtube.com/user/bioenergydecentral)

### **Media contact**

Malene Conlong

+49 69 24788-213

[m.conlong@dlg.org](mailto:m.conlong@dlg.org)

### **About DLG**

With more than 31,000 members, DLG is a politically independent and non-profit organisation. DLG draws on an international network of some 3,000 food and agricultural experts. Through its subsidiary, DLG International, DLG operates has subsidiaries in nine countries and also organizes over 30 regional agricultural and livestock exhibitions worldwide. DLG's leading international exhibitions, EuroTier for livestock farming and Agritechnica for agricultural machinery, which are held every two years in Hanover, Germany, provide international impetus for the local trade fairs. Headquartered in Frankfurt, Germany, DLG conducts practical trials and tests to keep its members informed of the latest developments. DLG's sites include DLG's International Crop Production Centre, a 600-hectare test site in Bernburg-Strenzfeld, Germany and the DLG Test Centre, Europe's largest agricultural machinery test centre for Technology and Farm Inputs, located in Gross-Umstadt, Germany. DLG bridges the gap between theory and practice, as evidenced by more than 40 working groups of farmers, academics, agricultural equipment companies and organisations that continually compare advances in knowledge in specific areas such as irrigation and precision

farming.

**[www.dlg.org](http://www.dlg.org)**