

Encavis biodiversity strategy: Creation of valuable habitats for plants and animals with simultaneous electricity production by ground-mounted solar plants

Europe has committed to be net zero by 2050. This will only be possible if renewable energies are massively expanded, and the construction and operation of photovoltaic and wind power plants will take place across the board.

"We are firmly convinced that in particular photovoltaic ground-mounted solar plants are ideally suited to creating and preserving valuable habitats for local fauna and flora and that the areas thus benefit both climate protection and nature and species conservation," says our CIO/COO Mario Schirru. "Therefore, from 2025 at the latest, we will be even more considerate about biodiversity in the acquisition process and during operation of all new solar projects. We achieve this by compensating for potential biodiversity losses through offset measures and ensuring that our solar parks generally have a positive impact on biodiversity."

To this end, we will document the development of the natural balance of our plant areas with suitable monitoring. This monitoring should include the area under the modules as well as the gaps and edge areas. Through regular inspections at least every two years with external experts, we will compare the condition of the area before and after the construction of the solar park. In doing so, we make sure that the initially determined quality of biodiversity has not deteriorated – in best case it has improved. Based on the results of the monitoring, we will adjust our green maintenance accordingly.

Already today we are working with an experienced team of environmental specialists to reduce the potential negative impact of our projects on biodiversity.

When building new solar farms, we make sure that existing breeding and nesting sites, such as hedges, trees or landscape elements, are retained as far as possible. Necessary pruning of hedges and trees for construction work and wood maintenance measures are always taken care of before the breeding season. When reseeding the open area, seeds with regional and, if possible, perennial plants and herbs are used. In this way we give nature the opportunity to regenerate itself sustainably. If necessary, we carry out reseeding after five years.

We design the fencing of the facility in such a way that it does not create a barrier effect for small mammals and amphibians - an appropriate ground clearance of the fence or sufficient mesh sizes in the area close to the ground are guaranteed. The use of barbed wire, lattice masts and electrical lines are avoided, especially in the area close to the ground. Encavis is also trying to provide a wide strip of green with near-natural hedges outside the fence around the facilities.

The maintenance of our plants is usually extensive. The use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides as well as liquid manure is prohibited. The use of chemicals is also avoided. In addition, Encavis

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guarantees the complete dismantling and professional disposal of the plants at the end of their service life.

According to scientists, reducing carbon emissions is an effective way to combat climate change and its impacts on species and ecosystems. As a renewable energy company, we are tackling both the climate and biodiversity crises through a sustainable expansion of green energy.

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