

Energy Efficiency

## Holcim Says Demand for Climate-Neutral Concrete Rising in Germany

**Swiss-based building materials company Holcim is registering rising demand for climate-neutral concrete, Clean Energy Wire reports, citing an article in Hamburger Abendblatt.**

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"We register big interest from many companies in climate-neutral construction who want to include this type of concrete in their call for tenders," Thorsten Hahn, said head of the company's operations in Germany. He said his company used a new formula to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from concrete from 300 kg to 200 kg, and offsetting the remainder through wetland projects in Germany. Hahn said it would even be possible to cut emissions further, adding that current norms and regulations don't allow this yet. The resulting concrete costs 20 to 30 percent more than conventional concrete.

Hahn said the share of this "climate-neutral" concrete of total sales was still small, adding this was not surprising given that his company has only been offering the product for a few months, and that it would take some time to create awareness. Asked about the rising costs for emissions, given that the Holcim cement factory in Lägerdorf in northern Germany emits one million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, Hahn said he wouldn't mind if the price of emissions rose significantly more. "We are planning for it to do so," he said.

Hahn said the plant is part of a pilot project to use hydrogen made with renewables, and to capture unavoidable emissions in cement-making to be used elsewhere, a process called carbon capture and usage (CCU). "Then we want to scale up quickly in order to actually make the whole cement plant a CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral plant. We hope that by 2028 we will be able to produce climate-neutral cement in Lägerdorf."

Cement production is one of the most carbon-intensive industrial processes and causes two percent of German and eight percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, according to the environmental NGO WWF. The material is indispensable for infrastructure and building construction and demand will likely continue to increase, meaning that finding a low- or no-CO<sub>2</sub> production process is essential for climate protection. Germany's national hydrogen strategy names cement as one of the industries without current alternatives for deep emission cuts. German cement maker HeidelbergCement last month pulled forward its emission reduction targets. It now wants to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> output by 30 percent by 2025, five years earlier than previously planned.

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