RWE

Press release

Circular economy: RWE gives monopile foundation covers a new lease of life

- **RWE is the first company to install reused hard covers from Dutch company Circular Covers B.V.**
- **For RWE's 1.1 gigawatt Thor offshore wind farm, 36 out of 72 of the reusable covers have arrived in Thyboron Port**
- **Covers will protect foundations from harsh weather conditions at sea until the turbines are installed in 2026**
- **RWE's commitment to sustainability also includes using CO_2-reduced steel towers and recyclable rotor blades**

Copenhagen, 14 February 2025

It looks like small UFOs have landed at Thyboron Port, Denmark. But these are foundation covers for RWE's 1.1 gigawatt (GW) Thor offshore wind farm. RWE has recently taken delivery of 36 of the total of 72 innovative reusable monopile hard covers, sourced from the Dutch company Circular Covers B.V. These covers will be used to protect the monopile foundations from the harsh conditions at sea until the turbine towers are installed next year. By deploying reused covers, RWE is once again demonstrating its commitment to sustainability and circularity.

Sven Utermöhlen, CEO of RWE Offshore Wind: "We are committed to sustainability improvements and innovations at our offshore wind projects, and the reusable covers are an important part of this. At RWE, we are the first in the world to install covers from Circular Covers B.V. that have previously been used on the high seas. These covers reduce waste and increase circularity whilst the initiative exemplifies our dedication to sustainable practices. In addition, our Thor wind farm will pilot turbine towers made from CO_2-reduced steel and use recyclable wind turbine blades."

The covers serve as a temporary yet essential solution for shielding against seawater, rain, and bird droppings until the turbine towers are installed on the monopiles. Usually, the covers are disposed of after use because they were tailor-made to a specific offshore project. However, the covers from Circular Covers B.V. are made from glass fibre reinforced composite panels bolted to a steel frame, and the design allows the panels to be adjusted and reused for different sizes of monopiles. It is expected that the individual panels of the covers could last 15 years and even more, depending on how often the diameter needs to be adjusted.

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The 72 covers for the Thor project were previously installed at an offshore wind farm off the Dutch coast. RWE is the first company in the world to reuse these covers and give them a new lease of life. After their deployment at RWE's Thor wind farm, the adjustable covers will be utilised at other upcoming offshore wind projects.

RWE to deploy CO_2-reduced steel towers and recyclable rotor blades

The Thor wind farm is located 22 kilometres off the west coast of Jutland in the Danish North Sea and will comprise 72 wind turbines, half of which will feature CO_2-reduced steel towers, with 40 turbines utilising recyclable rotor blades. Measures to decarbonise steel production for the turbine towers include using green electricity as well as using scrap steel in place of iron ore. Due to a new type of resin with a special chemical structure the composite materials used in the recyclable rotor blades can be separated again, once the blades reach the end of their operational life. The properties of the individual materials remain intact so that they can be reused in new casting applications, for example in the automotive industry or in consumer goods.

Delivery of Thor offshore wind farm well underway

Foundation installation work - including the deployment of the reusable covers - will start this spring, with turbine installation scheduled for 2026. After commissioning in 2027, the wind farm will have the capacity to produce enough green electricity to supply the equivalent of more than one million Danish households. The wind farm's operations and maintenance plan expects to create 50 to 60 local jobs in a new service building at the Port of Thorsminde.

Leading global player in offshore wind

RWE already has 19 offshore wind farms in operation, including Rødsand 2 off the Danish coast. Besides Thor in Denmark, the company is currently building three large-scale offshore wind projects: the Sofia offshore wind farm (1.4 GW) in the UK, the Nordseecluster (1.6 GW) off the German coast and, together with TotalEnergies, the OranjeWind offshore wind farm (795 megawatts) in the Netherlands.

For more information about RWE's Thor offshore project, please visit: thor.rwe.com

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Images for media use are available at the RWE Media Centre (credit: Circular Covers B.V.)

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RWE is leading the way to a clean energy world. With its investment and growth strategy Growing Green, RWE is contributing significantly to the success of the energy transition and the decarbonisation of the energy system. Around 20,000 employees work for the company in almost 30 countries worldwide. RWE is already one of the leading companies in the field of renewable energy. RWE is investing billions of euros in expanding its generation portfolio, in particular in offshore and onshore wind, solar energy and batteries. It is perfectly complemented by its global energy trading business. RWE is decarbonising its business in line with the 1.5-degree reduction pathway and will phase out coal by 2030. RWE will be net zero by 2040. Fully in line with the company's purpose - Our energy for a sustainable life.

Forward-looking statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements. These statements reflect the current views, expectations, and assumptions of management, and are based on information currently available to management. Forward-looking statements do not guarantee the occurrence of future results and developments and are subject to known and unknown risks and uncertainties. Actual future results and developments may deviate materially from the expectations and assumptions expressed in this document due to various factors. These factors primarily include changes in the general economic and competitive environment. Furthermore, developments on financial markets and changes in currency exchange rates as well as changes in national and international laws, in particular in respect of fiscal regulation, and other factors influence the company's future results and developments. Neither the company nor any of its affiliates undertakes to update the statements contained in this press release.

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