

The Solar Power Plant in Kobern-Gondorf (1990)

Abstract

In 1988, RWE Energie AG built a ground-mounted photovoltaic plant in Kobern on the Moselle, which was initially only used for testing and demonstration purposes. As this report from *Deutschlandspiegel* reports, the plant was the largest in Europe at the time. It is still used today as a test field for new developments in photovoltaics, but also for commercial electricity production. The monthly program *Deutschlandspiegel* was commissioned by the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government from Deutsche Wochenschau GmbH from 1954 to 1999. It was primarily used to present the Federal Republic of Germany abroad.

Source

/Reporter: High above Kobern, closer to the sun, something else is produced from sunlight: Electricity. Europe's largest solar power plant has been built here by the Rhine-Westphalian electricity company. 300,000 silicon solar cells deliver an output of 340 kilowatts. This technology is called photovoltaics. The incident sunlight knocks electrons out of the atoms of the silicon crystals. Electrons and the simultaneously created electron holes move in opposite directions and can be extracted as electricity at the metal contacts of the solar cells.

Solar cells generate direct current, which is converted into alternating current by inverters and fed into the medium-voltage grid. Although solar energy is free and inexhaustible, converting it into electricity is still quite expensive. However, our fossil fuels coal and oil will be exhausted and the CO₂ content of the atmosphere will rise as a result of the combustion processes, which is very worrying for the global climate.

The Federal Minister of Research will therefore provide 100 million marks in funding for photovoltaics this year. In the future, ecological reasons will outweigh economic ones in energy production.

Source: Deutschlandspiegel 427/1990. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv.

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