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Ministry for the Environment, Energy and
Climate Protection of the State of Lower Saxony



■ PRESS RELEASE

16 July 2026

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Start of ground investigations for AquaDuctus

Important milestone for the first offshore hydrogen pipeline in the North Sea. The ground investigations will provide the basis for the project's further planning and development.

Kassel. AquaDuctus Pipeline GmbH launches ground investigations for the planned AquaDuctus hydrogen import pipeline. Following the receipt of the required permits, work within the planning corridor will commence no earlier than 20 July 2026. The investigations mark a key milestone in the project's ongoing technical and environmental development.

The ground investigations offshore and on the island of Norderney, as well as offshore near Hilgenriedersiel, comprise geotechnical and geophysical analyses to assess soil and subsurface conditions along the planned route, both at sea and in the coastal area. The data collected will provide an essential basis for defining the pipeline route, selecting suitable construction methods, and ensuring the safe and environmentally responsible implementation of the pipeline project.

“By carrying out these ground investigations, we are taking the next important step towards realising AquaDuctus,” says Sven Becker, Managing Director of AquaDuctus Pipeline GmbH. The investigations will be conducted using a range of largely non-intrusive survey methods. Only a limited number of carefully selected locations will require small-scale sampling activities, for example to assess the load-bearing capacity of the subsurface in greater detail. Environmental and water protection considerations will be comprehensively taken into account throughout the process.

“It is important to us that these investigations are carried out as carefully and efficiently as possible,” Becker continues. “At the same time, they provide the foundation for the further planning needed to implement the project safely and responsibly.”

With AquaDuctus, AquaDuctus Pipeline GmbH is developing the German North Sea as a key hydrogen import corridor and creating the prerequisites for connecting offshore hydrogen production projects, such as the SEN-1 energy generation area, to the mainland. The pipeline project is therefore a vital building block in establishing a high-performance hydrogen infrastructure in Germany and across Europe.

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AquaDuctus – A key project for European hydrogen supply

AquaDuctus is classified as an “Important Project of Common European Interest” (IPCEI) and a Project of Common Interest (PCI) and is funded by the German federal government and the state of Lower Saxony. The pipeline is also part of the hydrogen core network confirmed by the Federal Network Agency, which forms the basis of a nationwide hydrogen infrastructure. AquaDuctus will open up the North Sea import corridor – a decisive step towards the decarbonization of German industry. The project developer for AquaDuctus is Kassel-based AquaDuctus Pipeline GmbH, a wholly owned subsidiary of transmission system operator GASCADE Gastransport GmbH.

About GASCADE

We supply Germany and connect Europe – with the energy of tomorrow. GASCADE Gastransport GmbH, based in Kassel, operates one of Germany's largest transmission networks, covering around 4,200 kilometers, and stands for reliable and high-performance transport solutions for natural gas and hydrogen. Through its pipeline system, GASCADE connects central energy flows in the heart of Europe and acts as an international hub – with direct connections to numerous neighboring countries.

GASCADE has already converted 400 kilometers of its network to hydrogen. With a clear focus on decarbonization and security of supply, the hydrogen network operator is involved in key onshore and offshore hydrogen projects to develop import corridors in the North Sea and Baltic Sea and secure Europe's hydrogen supply.