

Press release

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Vattenfall opts for efficient research projects to boost its business

Challenging market conditions and a slower rate of investment for Vattenfall mean that several R&D projects are no longer required for its business operations. Vattenfall is thus prioritising research which can further strengthen the development of its business over the coming years.

The continued challenging conditions on the energy market with lower revenues mean that Vattenfall had to reassess its research priorities over the next few years.

“Tough market conditions are expected to continue for another few years, and we are restructuring our research and development operations as it is becoming increasingly important to have the right knowledge at the right time to meet the ever-changing needs of business,” says Karl Bergman, Head of R&D Nordic.

Vattenfall’s decision will affect R&D throughout the Group. It will concern more than forty employees, about ten in the Nordic region and thirty in Continental Europe/UK. Several redundancies are on the cards and negotiations are being held with co-determination representatives. We will find socially responsible solutions.

“This can lead to reduced costs, but that’s not what it’s mainly about, as having funds available gives us scope to pursue new projects. We are evaluating our research portfolio in order to invest in R&D projects which can contribute more quickly to our business development in the coming years, and for some time afterwards”, says Karl Bergman.

Vattenfall will focus on R&D projects within smart electricity grids as well as wind, hydro, coal and nuclear power. Within renewable hydro power, projects will be continued to lessen its environmental impact and improve its regulation capability, which is also a precondition for the generation and expansion of wind power.

Within nuclear power, we are – just as before – investing mainly in Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Company’s (SKB) method for the safe final repository of spent nuclear fuel, as well as in projects designed to ensure safe and stable operation over the long term. Vattenfall is also continuing to run R&D projects that develop coal power as a regulator, which is important in Germany in order to compensate the variations in demand for electricity and from the generation of wind power. Moreover, we are investing significantly in wind energy R&D – mainly onshore – smart grids and electrical transports.

Vattenfall will discontinue its R&D activities regarding coal power with CCS and close down a number of R&D projects in offshore wind power and gas power. We will, though, continue our engagement in CCS through knowledge exchange. For example we have initiated a cooperation with the Canadian company Sask Power.

“We now need to prioritise our R&D investments and choose whatever is most needed. We are opting for efficient research projects that can contribute further to our business operations, now and in the future”, says Karl Bergman.

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