

## Press release

*Natural gas storage / VNG / WINGAS / Barbknecht / Seele / Security of supplies*

### **WINGAS and VNG cooperate on Jemgum natural gas storage facility**

- **Project to reinforce security of supplies**
- **Caverns to be commissioned from 2013**

**Leipzig, 10 September 2009.** The two natural gas companies WINGAS and VNG - Verbundnetz Gas Aktiengesellschaft (VNG) have today declared their intention to cooperate on the development of the Jemgum cavern storage facility in the district of Leer in Lower Saxony. VNG intends to take on about a third of the planned storage capacity from WINGAS as storage operator.

Natural gas storage facilities are a key tool for ensuring a secure energy supply. The liberalization of the European energy market and the rising demand for natural gas mean that additional storage capacities will be required in the future. The two companies are creating the capacities required - but not just for their own needs; they will be marketing them to third parties, too.

Jemgum offers ideal conditions for the development of the planned high-capacity underground natural gas storage facility. The geological properties of underground salt domes in the region ensure safe natural gas storage. There is scarcely another salt formation in North-West Europe that has been explored in such detail and which has already been proved to be suitable for natural gas storage.

The member of the VNG Executive Board responsible for gas procurement, Klaus-Dieter Barbknecht, said he was extremely pleased about the cooperation. "The declaration signed today represents another important step for VNG as a natural gas company. It will allow us to highlight the additional opportunities in the European natural gas market for our partners. The excellent geographical location and the logistics of the Jemgum storage facility are ideally suited. It already became clear in the first phase of the project that two partners with international experience of the gas industry are working together here. That makes it an enjoyable and promising venture," Mr Barbknecht explained.

Dr. Rainer Seele, Chairman of WINGAS GmbH & Co. KG explained that, "With the European Union having to import increasing amounts of natural gas, the need for

additional natural gas storage facilities is also growing. The construction of the facility in Jemgum therefore enables us to make a vital contribution to ensuring a secure energy supply for Europe. We are pleased that VNG, another key energy supplier, is involved in the project. That underlines not only the importance, but also the value, of the storage capacities."

European energy company WINGAS and energy service provider EWE are cooperating to develop the natural gas storage facilities at Jemgum in Lower Saxony. The two companies plan to create up to 33 caverns in the underground salt domes in the next few years. The storage facilities will be developed together by the two companies but operated separately following completion from 2013. WINGAS will initially build up to 18 caverns with a geometric volume of up to 750,000 cubic metres each. VNG intends to take on about a third of the storage capacities from WINGAS.

WINGAS GmbH & Co. KG is a European energy company and has natural gas trading and sales activities in Germany, Belgium, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, the Czech Republic, and Denmark. Its customers include municipal utilities, regional gas suppliers, industrial firms and power plants. Since 1990 WINGAS has invested more than 3 billion euros in the development of its own natural gas transport and storage infrastructure. The WINGAS TRANSPORT pipeline network, which is over 2,000 kilometres long, connects the major gas reserves in Siberia and the natural gas fields in the North Sea to the growing markets in Western Europe. In Rehden in North Germany, WINGAS has the largest natural gas storage facility in Western Europe - with a working gas volume of over four billion cubic metres - and it is also a partner in the second-largest storage facility in Central Europe situated in Haidach in Austria. Furthermore, additional natural gas storage facilities are currently being built in Great Britain and Germany in order to secure the supply of natural gas in Europe.

More information is available at [www.wingas.de](http://www.wingas.de).

VNG - Verbundnetz Gas AG is an international group of companies and a reliable supplier of natural gas from Norwegian, Russian and other sources to major users and municipal distributors in Europe. VNG has been active in the natural gas sector for over 50 years. Today, VNG is Germany's third largest gas importer and ranks among Europe's top ten. In 2008, with its workforce of about 640, VNG delivered 171.4 billion kWh of gas and generated sales of 5.5 billion euros.

For more information please visit [www.vng.de](http://www.vng.de).