Strategies and trends in photovoltaics: east-west orientation as an alternative to the classic south-facing orientation

Düsseldorf, 04 June 2025 - A new orientation strategy is becoming increasingly important in the discussion about the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of photovoltaic systems: more and more project planners and operators are discussing an east-west orientation for their solar panels - as opposed to the previously dominant south-facing orientation. "The reason for this is a change in the price structure on the electricity market", comments Patrick Lemcke-Braselmann, Co-CEO of aream Group SE.

"Price fluctuations throughout the day mean that east- or west-facing systems often generate higher yields during the morning and evening hours. In contrast, south-facing systems produce peak output around midday, precisely when electricity prices tend to be at their lowest.."

In fact, the price of electricity is often very low, sometimes even negative, during peak solar around midday due to oversupply. In the so-called off-peak hours, on the other hand - i.e. in the morning and late afternoon - the electricity price remains more stable and is often significantly higher. An east-west orientation distributes electricity production over a longer period of the day and thus utilises the more lucrative price windows in a more targeted manner.

However, this does not tell the whole story. While east-west systems make better use of short-term market incentives due to their wider distribution of feed-in, south-facing systems achieve the highest total yield per hectare under optimal conditions. This remains an important factor, particularly for long-term investments. "Battery storage systems will play a crucial role in the medium term", says Lemcke-Braselmann. "They make it possible to store the electricity generated during the day as required and feed it in later - in the evening hours, for example. This reduces the advantage of a more even distribution that east-west systems have today."

This results in a differentiated picture for new projects: Those who want to utilise short-term yield advantages or primarily rely on high self-consumption rates may benefit with additional east-west systems. On the other hand, if you want to maximise electricity yield over a service life of 30 years or more, a south-facing orientation in combination with storage systems remains the preferred solution in Germany.

Group

aream Group, founded in 2005, is an investment and asset manager for institutional investors and industrial clients with a focus on sustainable infrastructure in the renewable energy sector. With its three divisions Fund and Asset Management, Project Development and Operation Management, aream covers the entire value chain for renewable energy investments. With a transaction volume of more than 2.5 billion euros, aream is one of the leading asset managers in this market, and its own portfolio of plants generates around 40 million euros worth of green electricity per year. Since 2008, aream has produced more than one billion kWh of green electricity. As part of the growth strategy, several solar and wind parks are to be realized or acquired in the coming years. Through its own project development alone, aream currently has a long development pipeline with great potential. Further information: www.aream.de.

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