

# Sustainability in action

SENS staff organise their own bee colonies at the Würzburg location

**Würzburg/Eszen. The team at STEAG Solar Energy Solutions (SENS), a subsidiary of the Essen-based energy company STEAG GmbH, is growing steadily. A leap of 12,000 employees at a stroke is not normally possible at the Würzburg site, despite all the growth efforts. However, this was the case a few days ago: 12,000 bees moved in in front of the company building in Carl-Zeiss-Strasse and were ‘welcomed’ by a small team.**

The project was initiated by the Sustainability Circle, which was founded at the beginning of the year as an interdepartmental, voluntary association of employees who introduce the topic of sustainability into company processes in a variety of ways.

In collaboration with Bee-Rent GmbH the idea of keeping our own bees has now been put into practice. The company, which is active throughout Germany, wants to counteract the rampant bee mortality by leasing bee colonies. It is the common goal of Bee Rent and its customers, who sponsor one or more bee colonies, to contribute to the ecological balance of the region. In the course of a year, the two small wooden boxes at the edge of the car park at the SENS headquarters produce around 20 kilograms of honey, which is ideal as a customer gift or ‘thank you’ for the team.

## Professional beekeeper takes care of the bee populations

The service provider, who cooperates with regional beekeepers, takes care of regular checks, winter preparations and the honey harvest. In the case of SENS, the experienced beekeeper Matthias Thoma from Bee-Rent is managing the project at the Würzburg site. He carries out quality controls up to four times a year. There is also a health check twice annually, as well as supplementary feeding and preparation for the winter. Once a year the honey is centrifuged, processed, checked and finally filled into jars. In this way the well-being of the SENS bee colonies is ensured all the year round.

“It’s particularly important for us to ensure the health of the bees and their growth. That’s why we check in advance exactly where the bees do well. At SENS in Würzburg the colonies have found a suitable new location where they will feel completely at home,” says Matthias Thoma.

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### **Management proud of employee initiative**

SENS CEO André Kremer is also delighted with the 12,000 new members of his team: “I was very pleased about the initiative by our Sustainability Circle, because it shows that we are not only committed to the subject in theory, but also actively put it into practice. I’m therefore proud that at SENS we’re now making our contribution to counteracting the drastic rate of bee mortality.”

Good to know: after cattle and pigs, the bee is the third most important farmed animal worldwide. These highly useful pollinators are essential for crop yields, biodiversity and a functioning ecosystem, and they make an important contribution to a balanced diet. In a world without the honeybee, the harvest of 75 percent of crops would be much smaller. Overall bees thus generate global value of 265 billion euros per year almost unnoticed. All the more reason for SENS to support these very important creatures.

### **Extinction of bees would have dramatic consequences**

As Albert Einstein said, once the bee disappears from the earth mankind has only four more years to live. The situation is serious: in Germany alone, half of the approximately 560 species of wild bees are threatened with extinction, as the natural habitat is being further and further destroyed by specific factors. Given more than 2000 species of native agricultural and wild plants depend on pollination by bees to a level of 80 percent, this poses a major challenge for nature.

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### **About STEAG**

For over 80 years, STEAG has stood for efficient and reliable power generation, both in Germany and abroad. As an experienced partner, we support our customers comprehensively in all phases of power supply. We design, develop, implement, operate and market highly efficient energy solutions – from distributed generation facilities based on renewable energy sources to large central power plants and recycling of their by-products. Together with customized solutions in the field of electricity and heat supply, we also provide a wide range of energy services – increasingly on the basis of renewables.

### **About STEAG Solar Energy Solutions**

STEAG Solar Energy Solutions GmbH (SENS) is a service provider based in Würzburg with worldwide operations in the field of renewable energies. Its range of services includes the development and construction of turnkey solar parks, the maintenance and operational management of PV systems and the implementation of energy solutions for commerce and industry – such as rooftop PV systems, e-charging stations and energy storage systems. SENS has been part of the STEAG Group since July 2019 and employs approx. 270 people at seven locations in Germany and abroad.