

Hitachi Rail and A2A agree innovative solar panel partnership

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Hitachi Rail and A2A have signed a 20-year Virtual Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the construction of new innovative Solar PV plants which will cut 7,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year. This is the equivalent to annually creating a 5-hectare forest with 42,000 new trees.

The partnership will see A2A – through its subsidiary A2A Energy Solutions – install over 40,000 solar panels over the next two years on both the surrounding land and roofs of the Reggio Calabria, Naples and Pistoia production facilities. The panels will cover more than 100,000 square metres, the equivalent to 14 football pitches. A2A will support the initial investment and the maintenance for the entire 20-year contract period. In return, Hitachi Rail will purchase the green energy produced by the solar panels at the agreed prices.

The new generation Solar PV panels are capable of producing around 19 GWh/year of energy. This is equal to 60% of the average annual needs of Hitachi Rail's six Italian sites (31 GWh/year). The partnership will supply green energy for self-consumption to Hitachi Rail's production areas hosting the panels in Reggio Calabria, Naples and Pistoia. The Virtual PPA will also support Hitachi Rail sites in Genoa, Tito Scalo and Turin via an Exchange Scheme with the national electricity grid.

The Virtual PPA will deliver significant environmental savings, enabling Hitachi Rail to cut approximately 7,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. In the context of major recent rises in energy costs, the partnership will also deliver significant savings on industrial costs at Hitachi Rail's plants.

The agreement is Hitachi Rail's latest action in support of Hitachi Ltd.'s global goal of achieving zero emissions from its main production sites by 2030 and carbon neutrality across its value chain by 2050, as announced at COP26. In the period 2020-21, Hitachi Rail achieved a reduction of 30.5% of CO₂ emissions, by both improving its energy consumption and through a wider use of energy from renewable sources. The latest renewables plan included in the PNRR – the Italian recovery and resilience plan – envisages the development of 60 GWH/year of solar sources: with this agreement, Hitachi Rail will therefore produce around 25 per cent of Italy's targeted solar power generation capacity.

Photo credit: Hitachi Rail